

English Translations of

# Collection of “Noor ala Al-Darb” Programs

By:

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### Completion of the Chapter on Supererogatory Prayer

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### Completion of the Chapter on Supererogatory Prayer

#### 1- Ruling on reciting Du`a'-ul-Istiftah in each Rak`ah of Tarawih

**Q: A questioner asks: What is the ruling on reciting Du`a'-ul-Istiftah (opening supplication when starting the Prayer) in each Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) in Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan)?**

**A:** It is prescribed for both the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) to recite Du`a'-ul-Istiftah if possible. If the Imam starts recitation of the Qur'an immediately after pronouncing Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer) without reciting Du`a'-ul-Istiftah, the Ma'mum should not recite this Du`a' and just listen (to the recitation of the Qur'an). If the Imam starts recitation and the Ma'mum has not yet recited Du`a'-ul-Istiftah, the latter should not recite the Du`a' but should just listen to the recitation. If both the Imam and the Ma'mum recite Du`a'-ul-Istiftah, this is more preferable like the Faridah (obligatory act). However, there is nothing wrong if the Imam does not do this Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) by not reciting Du`a'-ul-Istiftah, which is not obligatory, but rather a desirable Sunnah. If the Imam recites Du`a'-ul-Istiftah quickly and starts the recitation of the Qur'an and the Ma'mums are late in reciting Du`a'-ul-Istiftah, they should not recite this Du`a', but rather listen to the recitation of the Qur'an. However,

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it is obligatory for both the Imam and Ma'mum to recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) even when the Imam is reciting. The Ma'mum must recite Al-Fatihah and then listen to the Imam's recitation as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [﴿"Do you deliver recitation after your Imam?" We said, "Yes!" He \(peace be upon him\) said, "Do not do it again except with the Opening Chapter of the Qur'an \(i.e. Al-Fatihah\) as whoever does not recite Al-Fatihah in their Prayer, their Prayer is invalid.﴾](#) Therefore, a Ma'mum must recite Al-Fatihah with subvocal voice both in the obligatory and supererogatory Prayers and then listen to the recitation delivered by the Imam during Tarawih, Fajr

(Dawn), Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night) and Friday Prayers. It is obligatory for a Ma'mum to recite Surah Al-Fatihah with subvocal voice during such Prayers and then listen to the recitation delivered by the Imam as this is the correct opinion maintained by scholars in this respect.



**Q: If an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) performing Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) recites Du`a'-ul-Istiftah (opening supplication when starting the Prayer) after Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer) and follows it with the recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and some Qur'anic Ayahs (verses) and he then performs the second Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) and ends these two Rak`ahs of Tarawih with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) and then stands up to perform another two Rak`ahs of Tarawih and pronounces Takbirat-ul-Ihram: Should he recite Du`a'-ul-Istiftah again? Or is the Du`a' recited in the first two Rak`ahs sufficient in this case? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Du`a'-ul-Istiftah is recited in the first Rak`ah only both in the obligatory and supererogatory Prayers after

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Takbirat-ul-Ihram. It is not prescribed for a praying person to recite this Du`a' again in the second or third Rak`ah. If a person ends two Rak`ahs of Tarawih or two supererogatory Prayers, it is prescribed to recite Du`a'-ul-Istiftah on starting the second two Rak`ahs. This is the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) with regard to the supererogatory and obligatory Prayers, such as Tarawih and Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon); when each two Rak`ahs are performed separately, it is more preferable for a praying person to recite Du`a'-ul-Istiftah on starting each two Rak`ahs directly after Takbirat-ul-Ihram, saying: [﴿Subhanak Allahumma wa bi hamdika wa tabaraka ismuka wa ta`ala jadduka wa la ilaha ghairuka \(Glory be to You, oh Allah, and Your is the Praise! Blessed is Your Name and Exalted is Your Majesty! There is no god but You!\)﴾](#) or recite any authentic formula of Du`a'-ul-Istiftah (before the recitation of Al-Fatihah).



## 2- Ruling on Du`a'-ul-Istiftah in supererogatory and Witr Prayers

**Q:** A questioner wants to know whether it is permissible for a praying person to recite Du`a'-ul-Istiftah (opening supplication when starting the Prayer) in the supererogatory and the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) Prayers, and if it is permissible to seek refuge with Allah from the four things from which the Messenger (peace be upon him) sought refuge with Allah (Exalted be He): [﴿O Allah! I seek refuge with you from the torment of Hellfire, torment of the grave, the trials of life and death and tribulation of Al-Masih-ul-Dajjal \(the Antichrist\).﴾](#) Or, does this only apply to the obligatory not supererogatory Prayers? As for the Du`a' (supplication) recited after finishing the formula of seeking refuge with Allah (Exalted be He)

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**from the four things mentioned above, is it necessary to be recited in the supererogatory Prayer? May Allah grant you success and reward you with the best.**

**A:** Du`a'-ul-Istiftah is permissible in all Prayers; supererogatory and obligatory. It is permissible for a praying person to recite this Du`a' in the supererogatory Prayers, such as Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) and Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer). A Muslim can recite this Du`a' after Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer). Similarly, the formula of seeking refuge with Allah (Exalted be He) from the above-mentioned things and other formulas of Du`a' recited at the end of Prayer are all permissible in both supererogatory and obligatory Prayers. After the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught his Companions how to recite the Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer), he added: [﴿Then, one can choose whatever Du`a' is most beloved to him and recite it.﴾](#) In another wording, he added: [﴿Then, one can choose whatever Du`a' he likes.﴾](#) Therefore, it is prescribed for a Muslim to supplicate to Allah (Exalted be He) at the end of the supererogatory and obligatory Prayers after invoking peace and blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him). They can supplicate to Allah (Exalted be He), saying: [﴿O Allah! I seek refuge with you from the torment of Hellfire, torment of the grave, the trials of life and death and tribulation of Al-Masih-ul-Dajjal \(the Antichrist\).﴾](#) They can invoke Allah (Exalted be He) with whatever Du`a' they like; for example, they can say: [﴿O Allah! Help me remember You, thank You, and worship You in the best manners.﴾](#) Also, there is another Du`a'

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which the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him), reading: [﴿O Allah, Indeed I have wronged myself excessively, and none can forgive sins except You, so forgive me out of Your forgiveness, and have mercy on me. Truly, You are the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.﴾](#) This is a great Du`a', which the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq when he said: [﴿O Allah's Messenger! Teach me an invocation with which I may invoke Allah](#)

in my Prayers." The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Say: 'O Allah, Indeed I have wronged myself excessively, and none can forgive sins except You, so forgive me out of Your forgiveness, and have mercy on me. Truly, You are the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.'" The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to Mu`adh (may Allah be pleased with him): ("O Mu`adh! Do not forget to say after each Prayer: 'O Allah! Help me remember You, thank You, and worship You in the best manners.'" The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to say at the end of each Prayer: "O Allah! I seek refuge with You from miserliness, I seek refuge with You from cowardice, I seek refuge with You from being brought back to a bad stage of old life, I seek refuge with You from the afflictions of life, and I seek refuge with You from the torment of the grave.") Also, he (peace be upon him)

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used to say: (Oh Allah! Forgive me my previous and future sins, whatever I concealed or revealed and whatever You are more knowledgeable about it than me. You are the One Who makes (some people) forward and (some) backward. There is none to be worshiped but You!) These are different formulas of Du`a' that can be recited at the end of each Prayer. One can recite some other formulas of Du`a'; for example: "O Allah! Forgive me and my parents. O Allah! Save me from Hellfire. O Allah! Set my heart and deeds right. O Allah! Grant me lawful provision. O Allah! Set all my affairs right," and so on.



**Q: Your Eminence Shaykh, is it sufficient for a praying person to recite Du`a'-ul-Istiftah (opening supplication when starting the Prayer) only once? Or should a praying person recite this Du`a' on starting each two Rak`ahs (unit of Prayer) in some Prayers, such as Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer)?**

**A:** Du`a'-ul-Istiftah is not obligatory, but it is desirable only once in each Prayer. It is worth mentioning that it is recited on starting any Prayer before the recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an). A praying person can say: [\(Subhanak Allahumma wa bi hamdika wa tabaraka ismuka wa ta`ala jadduka wa la ilaha ghairuka \(Glory be to You, oh Allah, and Your is the Praise! Blessed is Your Name and Exalted is Your Majesty! There is no god but You!\)\)](#) or recite another formula of Du`a'-ul-Istiftah before the recitation of Al-Fatihah. This is better and more preferable though there is nothing wrong if it is not recited.



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### 3- Ruling on the Du`a' recited on finishing the Qur'an in Tarawih

**Q: A female questioner asks: Is it Bid`ah (innovation in religion) to recite Du`a' Khatm Al-Qur'an (supplication upon completing the reading of the entire Qur'an) in Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) on the last night of Ramadan every year in the mosque?**

**A:** This practice is not Bid`ah, but rather Mustahab (desirable) and Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him)), which the Salaf (righteous predecessors) and some of the Prophet's Companions used to do after finishing the recitation of the Holy Qur'an. They would recite good supplications whether during Tarawih or other Prayers. Also, they would do so whenever they finished the recitation of the Holy Qur'an whether in Prayer or not, in the hope of having their supplications answered by Allah. This practice was a habit of the Salaf and some of the Prophet's Companions were reported to have done it. Therefore, there is nothing wrong with doing it; rather, it is Mustahab as it brings in much good. May Allah accept the deeds of all Muslims.





**Q: Is Du`a' Khatm Al-Qur'an (supplication upon completing the reading of the entire Qur'an) Bid`ah (innovation in religion)? Is it (such an invocation) obligatory for a person who did not offer the last two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) on the night when the last part of the Qur'an is recited? We seek your guidance. May Allah reward you.**

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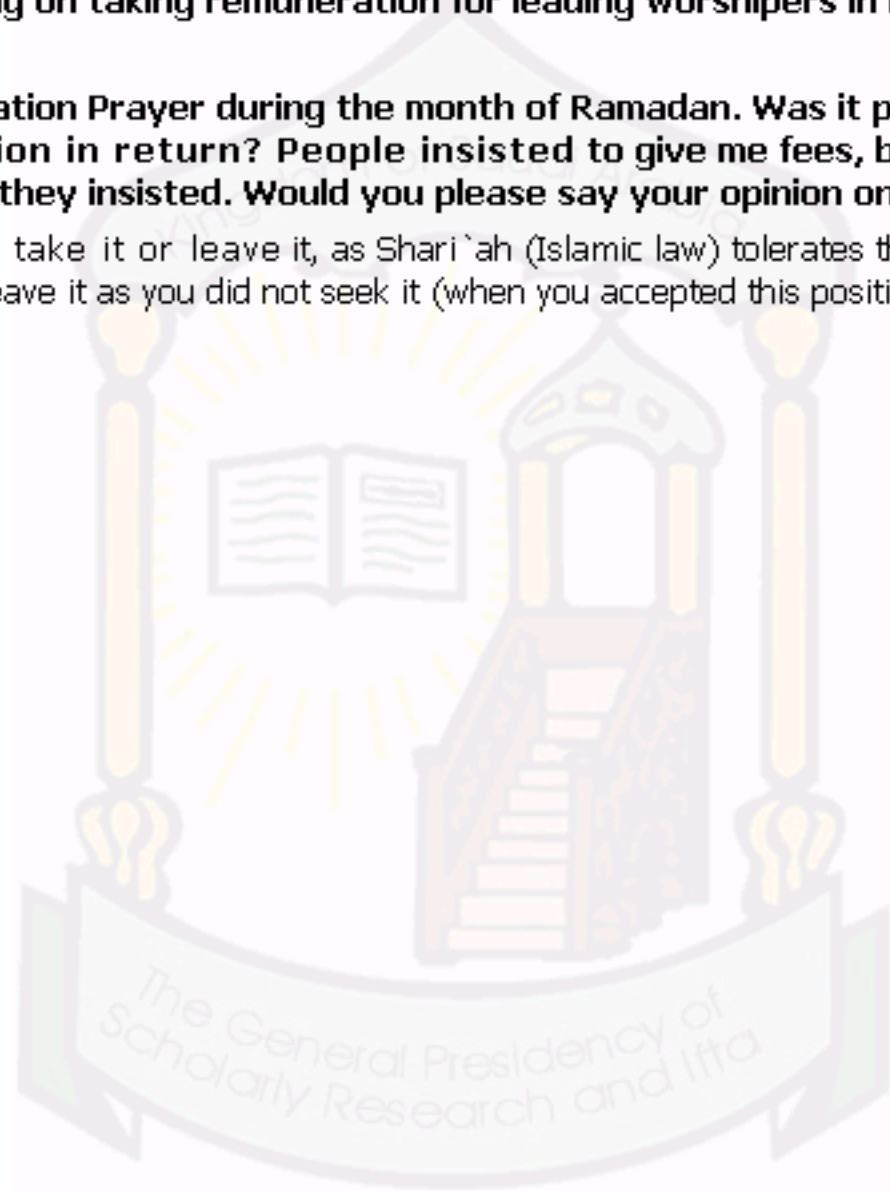
**A:** Du`a' Khatm Al-Qur'an is permissible upon finishing recitation of the whole Qur'an. Scholars used to do so since the Companions era until now. So it is permissible to do it, and it does not constitute a Bid`ah. As for the second question, I could not understand it. But if you would like to ask: Is it a must that finishing the recitation of the whole Qur'an be in the last two Rak`ahs of Tarawih Prayer? (The answer is) No, it is not a must. One can finish it at the beginning, middle or end of Tarawih, as there is no fixed time for it. The point is that when someone finishes reciting the Qur'an they can invoke Allah right after finishing, whether at the beginning or at the end of Tarawih.



#### 4- Ruling on taking remuneration for leading worshipers in Ramadan

**Q: I led congregation Prayer during the month of Ramadan. Was it permissible for me to take remuneration in return? People insisted to give me fees, but I said I did so for Allah's Sake. Yet, they insisted. Would you please say your opinion on this issue?**

**A:** You can either take it or leave it, as Shari`ah (Islamic law) tolerates this matter. However, it would be better to leave it as you did not seek it (when you accepted this position).





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5- Meaning of: "...and wash me of my sins with water, snow, and hail"

**Q: A Syrian from Damascus asks: what is the meaning of the Du`a' (supplication) which reads: " ... and wash me of my sins with water, snow, and hail?"**

**A:** In the literal sense, it is a Du`a' to Allah to wash one with water, snow, and hail, but the meaning is to wipe out and forgive one's sins completely.



## 6- Ruling on starting each two Rak`ahs of Salat-ul-Layl with Du`a'-ul-Istiftah

**Q: Can Du`a'-ul-Istiftah (opening supplication when starting the Prayer) be recited in each two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of Salat-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night)? Is it permissible to repeat it after starting the two Rak`ahs in which Surahs Al-A`la: (Glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most High,) and Al-Kafirun (Say: (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to these Mushrikûn and Kâfirûn): "O Al-Kafirûn (disbelievers in Allâh, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar)!)) are recited? What about the Rak`ah in which Surah Al-Ikhlâs (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.)) is recited?**

**A:** Yes, it can be so. According to the Sunnah (actions following the example of the Prophet), it is Mustahab (desirable) to recite Du`a'-ul-Istiftah which reads: (Subhanaka Allahumma wa bihamdika wa tabaraka ismuka wa ta`ala jadduka wa la ilaha ghayruk (Glorified be You, O Allah. And all praise is due to You, Blessed is Your Name and Lofty is Your Majesty, there is no deity but You)) in every Salah (Prayer),

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whether it is Tarawih (supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) or other Prayers. There is no problem if a person leaves it, but it is Mustahab to say this concise Du`a' after Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer). Moreover, a person can also recite any other Du`a'-ul-Istiftah, which has been authentically reported from the Prophet. There is no problem in skipping it, however it is better for a person, whether Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) or Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer), to say it. Yet, if the Imam skipped it, and started to recite the Qur'an, it would be better for the Ma'mum not to recite it but to keep silent. However, if the Imam makes a pause after Takbirat-ul-Ihram, it is from the Sunnah to recite Du`a'-ul-Istiftah, whether one is Imam, or Ma'mum. Keeping silent as a Ma'mum without reciting Du`a'-ul-Istiftah in case the Imam skipped it is based on the Hadith of the Prophet which reads: (When the Imam starts to recites (the Qur'an) in the Salah, keep silent.)



## 7- Merits of Qiyam-ul-Layl

**Q: I would like Your Eminence to describe the manner in which Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) is offered.**

**A:** Salat-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) is a great means of getting close to Allah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The best](#)

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fasting after Ramadan is in Allah's month of Muharram, and the best Salah after the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers is Salat-ul-Layl.) There is great merit in performing Salat-ul-Layl: in the Qur'an, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) describes His Believing Worshipers, namely "Servants of the Merciful", by saying: [\(And those who spend the night in worship of their Lord, prostrate and standing.\)](#) Also, He (Glorified be He) describes "the pious people" by saying: [\(They used to sleep but little by night \[invoking their Lord \(Allâh\) and praying, with fear and hope\].\)](#) [\(And in the hours before dawn, they were \(found\) asking \(Allâh\) for forgiveness.\)](#) Moreover, He said to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): [\(O you wrapped in garments \(i.e. Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\)!\) \(Stand \(to pray\) all night, except a little -\) \(Half of it or a little less than that,\)](#) In another verse, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [\(Their sides forsake their beds, to invoke their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend \(in charity in Allâh's Cause\) out of what We have bestowed on them.\) \(No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do.\)](#) So, Salat-ul-Layl is of great merit and virtue. It is better to divide the Rak`ahs in twos. This is based on the Hadith in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Salat-ul-Layl is two Rak'ahs followed by two Rak'ahs \(and so on\), and when one of you fears the break of dawn \(Fajr Prayer\), let them offer a single Rak'ah to make the Salah they have offered Witr \(Prayer with an odd number of units\).\)](#) Thus, a person can pray whatever they want (after `Isha' Prayer) dividing the Rak`ahs in twos, then ends them with one Rak`ah as Witr.

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Yet, it is better to offer Salat-ul-Layl during the last third of the night. However, there is no problem if a person offers Salat-ul-Layl in the earlier part of the night (after `Isha' Prayer) in case of being afraid of falling asleep without offering it; as a precaution. In other words, if one is able to do it in the last part of the night, it is better; if not, one can pray it earlier (after `Isha' Prayer) then ends it with Witr. The minimum of Witr is one Rak`ah after Isha' (Night) Prayer and its Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis). However, if one wants to pray three Rak`ahs as Witr, it is better to make Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after the second Rak`ah and pray the third independently. By the same token, if a person wants to pray five Rak`ahs as Witr, it is better to make Taslim after each two Rak`ahs then end with one Rak`ah, thus all number of Raka'hs are performed in the same way; [\(Most of the time the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) used to pray eleven Rak`ahs as Witr by making Taslim after each two Rak`ahs and at the end praying one](#)

Rak`ah.) (Sometimes, he might have prayed thirteen Rak`ahs as Witr by making Taslim after each two Rak`ahs and at the end praying one.) There is latitude in this matter, all praise be to Allah. One can pray twenty Rak`ahs as Witr,

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thirty, forty, etc., by making Taslim after each two Rak`ahs and ending the whole Salah with one Rak`ah. An important point here is that one must be very careful to be serene, and have Khushu` (the heart being submissively attuned to the act of worship) and avoid being hasty. For instance, to pray five, or six Rak`ahs being serene, and having Khushu` is better than praying nine, or eleven Rak`ahs without these states. Also, the Sunnah is to offer Salat-ul-Layl regularly, whether in the first part of the night (after `Isha'), midnight or the last part, however, it is better to be in the last part if it is possible for one to do so; the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (If anyone is afraid that he may not get up in the latter part of the night, they should observe Witr in the first part of it; and if anyone is eager to get up in the last part of it, they should observe Witr at the end of the night, for Prayer at the end of the night is witnessed (by the angels) and that is preferable.) (Related by Muslim in his Sahih [Authentic Hadith Book]). In another Sahih (authentic) Hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (Our Lord (Exalted be He) descends every night to the sky of the world when the last third portion of the night begins. He says: 'Is there any supplicant to answer him? Is there any seeker for My Favor to give him? Is there any seeker for forgiveness to forgive him?') (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

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This is a great Hadith; it tells us that the last portion of night is the best one for Qiyam-ul-Layl, because it is the time when Allah (Exalted be He) descends to the sky of the world. Allah's descent is in a manner that befits His Majesty, without any resemblance between Him and the creation; by the same token, Allah makes Istiwa' (Allah's rising over the Throne) in a manner that befits Him, gets angry in a manner that befits Him, gets pleased in a manner which befits Him, and be merciful in a manner that befits Him, etc., without any resemblance between Him and the creation, (Glorified and Exalted be He). Moreover, no one knows how this descent is done except Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). For instance, the Attributes of Allah mentioned in the following verses and others are in a manner that befits His Majesty, without any resemblance between Him and the creation in theses attributes. Allah says: (The Most Gracious (Allâh) rose over (Istawâ) the (Mighty) Throne (in a manner that suits His Majesty).), (Allâh is pleased with them and they with Him.), (... who incurred the Wrath of Allâh (i.e. the Jews).) etc. These Attributes (of Allah) must be believed in a manner that befits Allah's Majesty (and is only known by Him), without Tahrif (distortion of the meaning), Takyif (descriptive designation of Allah's Attributes), Ta`til (negation of the meaning or function of Allah's Attributes), nor Tamthil (likening Allah's Attributes to those of His Creation). Yet, there is no problem if a person observes Qiyam-ul-Layl in a regular manner with a fixed number of Rak`ahs which they are able to pray, or even more in case of being physically energetic. the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

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(The deed liked most by Allah is one which the doer adheres to constantly, even if it is small.) Thus, regular observance is better; moreover, it would be more beneficial if one did more in case of being physically energetic.





## 8- Tahajjud

**Q: A questioner from Riyadh asks: How should we perform Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer)? Should we perform it loudly or subvocally? Please guide me, may Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** There is latitude in performing night Salah (Prayer), all praise be to Allah. The person may perform Salah as much as they wish. They may offer one, three or more Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) after the Sunnah (supererogatory) Prayer following the `Isha' (Night) Prayer. Also, they may delay them to the last or middle part of the night. They may offer two Rak`ahs, then they may offer any number of Rak`ahs they are able to perform: four, six, eight, or ten Rak`ahs. They may recite Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each two Rak`ahs, and then perform Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) as the Prophet (peace be upon him) did. They may perform three, five, seven as Witr or perform ten Rak`ahs

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and conclude with another one as Witr. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) used to perform eleven Rak`ahs, reciting Taslim between each two Rak`ahs and perform a Witr at the end.\)](#) It was reported from her, Um Salamah, and others that [\(He sometimes performed Witr by offering seven consecutive Rak`ahs, or by sitting for the sixth Rak`ah and reciting the first Tashahhud \(testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of Prayer\), then standing up to perform the seventh Rak`ah before Taslim.\)](#) [\(He sometimes performed five consecutive Rak`ahs, sitting only at the end of the fifth Rak`ah. Also, he sometimes offered eight Rak`ahs, reciting Taslim between each two Rak`ahs, then perform five consecutive Rak`ahs as Witr. Thus, they become thirteen Rak`ahs.\)](#) [\(He sometimes performed nine consecutive Rak`ahs as Witr, sitting in the eighth Rak`ah to recite the first Tashahhud, then standing up to perform the ninth Rak`ah and to recite Taslim.\)](#) All of these options are authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(The \(optional\) night Salah is performed as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.\)](#) This means that it is better to perform two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs, reciting Taslim at the end of each of the two Rak`ahs, then pray Witr

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by performing one Rak`ah. If they perform any of the other ways of Tahajjud, there is nothing wrong with this. It is permissible to offer one Rak`ah only as Witr, or to offer three Rak`ahs, reciting Taslim after two Rak`ahs then pray one Rak`ah as Witr. Also, it is permissible to offer three consecutive Rak`ahs, sitting only after finishing them, or to offer five Rak`ahs as Witr, reciting Taslim at the end of each two Rak`ahs, then offering the last one. This will be better than than offering the five Rak`ahs consecutively. There is no problem if they offer five consecutive Rak`ahs, sitting only after finishing them. This matter is open to choice, all praise be to Allah. This Salah should be offered with Khushu` (the heart being submissively attuned to the act of worship) and tranquility, without rushing. It is better that the praying person performs this Salah with much Khushu` when performing Tartil



(slow recitation of the Qur'an). They may choose between reciting silently or out loud, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) sometimes recited this Salah out loud or silently. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(The Prophet sometimes recited silently and sometimes recited out loud.\)](#)

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The praying persons have the choice to do whatever suits them. If they think that they can offer the Salah with more Khushu` when reciting silently, there is nothing wrong with this. It will be better and more comfortable for them to recite silently. If they think that they can offer the Salah with more Khushu` when reciting out loud, there is no problem with this. They may recite out loud if they do not annoy any people or disturb any sleepers or other praying persons. If they find that they become more attentive with an out loud recitation, they are permitted to recite out loud. To sum up, the praying person may choose between silent and out loud recitation and perform whatever is suitable. However, they should not raise their voice to the extent that they disturb other praying persons or sleepers, as they should consider the persons around them. In Ramadan, they may recite out loud in the Masjid (mosque), if the Imam does the same to enable the people to hear him and to benefit them.



**Q: I hope that you clarify how to offer Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night), along with mentioning the number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) that I should offer as well as supplications in Ruku` (bowing) and Sujud (prostration), and the Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) that are desirable to be recited in each Rak`ah.**

**A:** Qiyam-ul-Layl is an ordained worship and Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet). Also, it is performed by the pious people and the Prophet (peace be upon him) himself. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿O you wrapped in garments (i.e. Prophet Muhammad [peace be upon him])!﴾ ﴿Stand (to pray) all night, except a little -﴾

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) is meant in the two Ayahs. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿And in some parts of the night (also) offer the Salât (prayer) with it (i.e. recite the Qur'ân in the prayer), as an additional prayer (Tahajjud optional prayer - Nawâfil) for you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)﴾ to the end of the Ayah. Allah (Glorified be He) says about His Servants in Surah Al-Furqan: ﴿And those who spend the night in worship of their Lord, prostrate and standing.﴾ Allah (Exalted be He) says describing His believing Servants: ﴿They used to sleep but little by night [invoking their Lord (Allâh) and praying, with fear and hope].﴾ ﴿And in the hours before dawn, they were (found) asking (Allâh) for forgiveness.﴾ Qiyam-ul-Layl is a stressed Sunnah either at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of the night. But, performing it at the end of the night in its last third is better. If the praying persons find hardship in doing so, they may offer Witr (Prayer with odd number of units) at the beginning of the night, consisting of one, three, five, seven Rak`ahs or more, offering two Rak`ahs followed by another two Rak`ahs. They should do their best to perform Tartil (slow recitation of the Qur'an) and then offer one Rak`ah as Witr. There is latitude in the recitation, as they may recite Ayahs from the first, middle, or last part of the Qur'an. Also, they may complete a Khatmah (complete reading of the entire Qur'an) from the beginning of the Qur'an to its end and repeat it again. All of these options are good and desirable, and there is no restriction in this regard. However, the Sunnah guides us to perform Tartil in the recitation, as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿And recite the Qur'ân (aloud) in a slow, (pleasant tone and) style.﴾ The Prophet (peace be upon him) recited the Qur'an clearly to benefit the people who listened to him.

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It is desirable in Tahajjud to seek mercy from Allah when reading the Ayahs of mercy, to seek refuge with Allah when reading the Ayahs of warning, and to recite Tasbih (saying" (Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]) when reading the Ayahs of Tasbih, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do. The Sunnah guides us to recite Taslim after offering two Rak`ahs, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿The (optional) night Salah is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.﴾ This means offering two Rak`ahs followed by another two Rak`ahs. ﴿If anyone of your fears that dawn is about to come, let him pray one Rak`ah as Witr.﴾ They may recite Surah Al-Hamd ﴿Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.﴾ in the last Rak`ah, and perform

prescribed Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer), which was taught by the Prophet, and is known by the scholars. The Sunnah guides us not to rush when offering the Salah, and to be tranquil, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to be tranquil in Salah, had Khushu` in Ruku` (bowing) and Sujud (prostration) and also performed Tartil. The praying person should do the same, following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him). If they offer one, three, five Rak`ahs or more as Witr, there is nothing wrong with this. This matter is open to choice, all praise be to Allah, as Qiyam-ul-Layl has no restrictions. However, it is better to offer eleven

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or thirteen Rak`ahs, following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him), as he recited Taslim after each two Rak`ahs and offered one Rak`ah as Witr. However, there is no problem if they offer more than one Rak`ah.



## 9- Time of Tahajjud

**Q: A listener asks Your Eminence: "Please inform me about the way and the approximate time of offering Tahajjud, as I do not know whether it is offered in the last third of night or not. Is it permissible for women to offer it? May Allah reward you with the best."**

**A:** Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) starts upon the completion of `Isha (Night) Prayer and continues up to dawn. Ibn Hudhafah (may Allah be pleased with him) related that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Allah has blessed you with a prayer that is better for you than red camels: Witr \(Prayer with an odd number of units\), between `Isha' Prayer and the break of dawn.\)](#) If the person offered Witr

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at the beginning, in the middle, or in the last part of night, they follow Sunnah (acts, sayings or approvals of the Prophet). It is better to offer it in the last part of the night, if it is possible. If not, Muslims may offer it at the beginning of the night before sleeping, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(If a person is afraid that they may not get up in the latter part of the night, they should observe Witr in the first part of it; and if a person is eager to get up in the last part of it, they should observe Witr at the end of the night, for Prayer at the end of the night is witnessed \(by the angels\) and that is preferable.\)](#) `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) offered Witr in all parts of the night, as he offered it at its beginning, in its middle, and in its last part. At the end of his lifetime, he used to offer it before the break of dawn.\)](#) This means that at the end of the Prophet's life, he offered Witr at the last part of night. Also, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The most beloved Salah \(Prayer\) to Allah is the Salah of Dawud. He used to sleep for half of the night, then get up and pray for a third of the night, then sleep for a sixth of the night.\)](#) The best action is to offer Tahajjud at the fourth or fifth part of the night, after dividing the night into six parts. If they perform Witr and Tahajjud in the last third part of night,

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this will be better, as Jabir related that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(If anyone is afraid that he may not get up in the latter part of the night, he should observe Witr in the first part of it; and if anyone is eager to get up in the last part of it, he should observe Witr at the end of the night, for Prayer at the end of the night is witnessed \(by the angels\) and that is preferable.\)](#) Also, it is better to offer Tahajjud in the fourth or fifth part of the night, after dividing the night into six parts, because this will be like Dawud's Salah. Thus, they combine the last part of the night, the fifth part, and the fourth part, starting at the beginning of the last half of the night. All of these options bring great blessings, all praise be to Allah.



**Q: I heard about Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) on your program and that the best time for performing it is the last third of night. I want more information about Tahajjud Prayer and the number of its Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), may Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** The best time for performing Tahajjud Prayer is the last part of the night, if possible. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *«Anyone who fears that they may not get up at the end of the night, let them offer Witr at the beginning of the night; and anyone who is eager to get up at the end of the night, let them offer Witr at the end of the night, for Salah at the end of the night is witnessed (by the angels) and that is better.»* (Related by Muslim in his Sahih) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said

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in another Sahih (authentic) Hadith: *«Our Lord (Blessed and Exalted be He) descends every night to the nearest (lowest) heaven, when a third of the night remains, and says: Is there anyone to invoke Me, so that I may respond to their invocation? Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant them their request? Is there anyone seeking My Forgiveness, so that I may forgive them?»* This Divine descent is a great opportunity for Du`a' and worship on the part of believers, since Allah (Glorified be He) says: *«Is there anyone to invoke Me, so that I may respond to their invocation? Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant them their request? Is there anyone seeking My Forgiveness, so that I may forgive them?»* Thus, if the believing men and women can perform Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) during the last third of the night, this is better so that they may receive the Generosity of our Lord (Glorified and Exalted be He) Who descends at that time. Yet performing Witr early at night suffices. This Divine Descent is in a way that befits Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). The Hadith mentioned above speaks about one of Allah's Attributes. This Descent is in a way compatible with the Glory of Allah whose manner is known to none but Him. Likewise, Istiwa' (Allah's rising over the Throne in a manner that befits Him) is in way a compatible with the Glory of Allah which none but He (Glorified and Exalted be He) knows the manner in which it takes place. Allah (Exalted be He) says: *«The Most Gracious (Allâh) rose over (Istawâ) the (Mighty) Throne (in a manner that suits His Majesty).»* Its meaning is that He ascended and rose over. Yet this Istiwa' is in a manner that befits Him (Glorified be He) where none of His Creatures resembles it. The same applies to His Descent to the nearest heaven, i.e., it is a descent in a way that befits Allah whose manner is known to none but Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). Allah does not resemble His Creatures in any of His Attributes, neither His Descent, Istiwa',

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Hearing, Sight, Speaking, nor any other Attribute. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: *«There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.»* The best number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) for performing Tahajjud is either eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs, patterning after the Prophet (peace be upon him). Yet, sometimes the Prophet (peace be upon him) would perform Witr as seven, five or three Rak`ahs. The least number of Rak`ahs regarding Witr is just one Rak`ah to be

performed after the Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed after an obligatory Prayer) of `Isha' (Night) Prayer. It suffices one to perform Witr as three, five or seven Rak`ahs. Yet, the best number of Rak`ahs for performing Witr is either eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs, where one should offer Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each two Rak`ahs and end one's Salah (Prayer) with one Rak`ah, as this was the practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) night Salah is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.\)](#) i.e. two by two, [\(...and when one of you fears that dawn is about to break, pray one Rak`ah as Witr to make what \(the Rak`ahs\) you have prayed odd-numbered.\)](#) One should end one's Salah with one Rak`ah. There is nothing wrong with one performing optional night Salah as twenty, forty or more Rak`ahs and ending one's Salah with one or three Rak`ahs as Witr. The matter is open to choice, praise be to Allah, since the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not determine a fixed number of Rak`ahs for this Salah. Rather, he left this undetermined, where he said: [\(The \(optional\) night Salah is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.\)](#) This proves that the matter is open to choice, praise be to Allah. Yet the best number for optional night Salah

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is either eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs, whether in Ramadan or at any other time, patterning after the Prophet (peace be upon him).



**Q: My question is about when Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) should be performed? Should it be performed early, or late at night? What is the ruling if one recites Surah Ya-Sin or Tabarak from the Noble Mus-haf (copy of the Qur'an) while praying it so that one can avoid committing mistakes in the recitation? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Tahajjud begins from after `Isha' (Night) Prayer until the end of the night. Yet, the best time to perform Tahajjud is late at night for whoever can wake up late at night. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Anyone who fears that they may not get up at the end of the night, let them offer Witr at the beginning of the night; and anyone who is eager to get up at the end of the night, let them offer Witr at the end of the night, for Salah at the end of the night is witnessed \(by the angels\) and that is better.\)](#) (Related by Muslim in his book of Sahih) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: [\(The Salah which is dearest to Allah is that of Prophet Dawud \(David, peace be upon him\) for he slept half of the night and woke up for Salah for the third of it and \(then\) slept the sixth part of it.\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) described it as: [\(The Salah which is dearest to Allah.\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: [\(Our Lord \(Blessed and Exalted be He\) descends every night to the nearest \(lowest\) heaven, when a third of the night remains, and says:](#)

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[Is there anyone to invoke Me, so that I may respond to their invocation? Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant them their request? Is there anyone seeking My Forgiveness, so that I may forgive them?\)](#) (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim) This proves that it is preferable to perform optional night Prayer late at night, since it is most likely to be accepted. Our Lord (Exalted be He) says: [\(Is there anyone to invoke Me, so that I may respond to their invocation?\)](#) and so on. It can also be performed during the middle of the second half of the night, patterning after Prophet Dawud (peace be upon him), during the fourth and fifth thirds of the night, where Salah (Prayer) during these times is most likely to be accepted, its reward is greater as this time is more virtuous than early at night. Yet, whoever fears that they may not wake up late at night, they can perform Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) early at night after performing `Isha' Prayer and before sleeping. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Our Lord \(Glorified and Exalted be He\) descends every night to the nearest heaven...\)](#) This Divine descent is in a way that befits Allah, whose manner is known to none but Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is described with Descending, Istiwa' (Allah's rising over the Throne in a manner that befits Him), Speaking, Willing, Hearing, Sight, to the end of the other Attributes stated in the Glorious Qur'an and the Sahih (authentic) Sunnah. Thus we must describe Allah (Glorified be He) with these Attributes in the way that befits Him (Glorified and Exalted be He) without Tashbih (comparison) to His Creation. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [\(There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.\)](#) , [\(Say \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\): "He is Allâh, \(the\) One.\)](#) [\("Allâh-us-Samad \(السيد الذي يصدق إليه في الحاجات \[Allâh the Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, \(He neither eats nor drinks\)\].\)](#) [\("He begets not, nor was He begotten.\)](#) [\("And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him."\)](#)

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And: [\(So put not forward similitudes for Allāh \(as there is nothing similar to Him, nor He resembles anything\).\)](#) There is no peer to Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), nor a co-equal to Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). He is Perfect in His Self, Names, Attributes and Actions. He descends in a way that befits His Glory which none but Him (Glorified and Exalted be He) knows its manner, to the worldly heaven at the last third of night. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [\(Is there anyone to invoke Me, so that I may respond to their invocation? Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant them their request? Is there anyone seeking My Forgiveness, so that I may forgive them?\)](#) If one is sure that they will wake up late at night, it is better to perform Witr at this time. On the other hand, if one cannot wake up late at night, one can perform it early at night. The least number of Rak`ahs regarding Witr is just one Rak`ah to be performed either early or late at night. Yet, the more Rak`ahs one performs, the better, where one should offer Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each two Rak`ahs as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) night Salah is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.\)](#) [\(...and when one of you fears that dawn is approaching, pray one Rak`ah as Witr to make what \(the Rak`ahs\) you have prayed odd-numbered.\)](#) What is meant is that performing Tahajjud at night should be performed two Rak`ahs followed by two, where one should offer Taslim after each two Rak`ahs, and then perform one Rak`ah separately in which one should recite Surah Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) followed by Surah Al-Ikhlās. This is the Sunnah. The best number for Witr is eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs since this was

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the number most often offered by the Prophet (peace be upon him). Anyone who wishes to perform more Rak`ahs, there is nothing wrong with this, since there is no fixed number for Witr. Thus, there is nothing wrong with one performing Witr as many as fifty, sixty or a hundred Rak`ahs, offering Taslim after each two, and performing one Rak`ah separately at the end. Yet, the best number for Witr is eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs. One can also perform Witr as three, five or seven Rak`ahs. The Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is to offer Taslim after each two Rak`ahs; however, one can perform Witr as three or five consecutive Rak`ahs sitting down for Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer) only in the last Rak`ah. This was authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him). One can also perform Witr as seven consecutive Rak`ahs, and sit down for Tashahhud only in the last Rak`ah. It is also permissible to sit down in the sixth Rak`ah to recite the first Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of Prayer) and then to stand up for the seventh Rak`ah. There is nothing wrong with either way, since both manners were reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him), i.e. sometimes he would offer seven consecutive Rak`ahs and at other times he would sit in the sixth to recite Tashahhud and then rise before making Taslim to offer the seventh. Moreover, he (peace be upon him) performed Witr as nine consecutive Rak`ahs, where he sat down in the eighth Rak`ah to recite the first Tashahhud and then stood up for the ninth Rak`ah. Yet, what is preferable is what was most often done by the Prophet (peace be upon him), i.e., he would offer Taslim after each two Rak`ahs. This is what is preferable and what matches his (peace be upon him) saying: [\(The \(optional\) night Salah is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.\)](#) This means that one should offer Taslim after each two Rak`ahs. May Allah grant us all success.

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**Q: A listener says: "Scholars say that the best time for Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) is the last third of the night, but I do not know the way of dividing the night, whether it is divided from sunset to sunrise or from sunset to the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer."**

**A:** Night starts from the sunset and continues to the break of dawn, and the best time for it is the last third, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Our Lord \(Exalted be He\) descends every night to the world's sky when the last third portion of the night begins. He says: Is there any supplicant to answer him? Is there any seeker for My Favor to give him? Is there any seeker for forgiveness to forgive him?\)](#) This is a great time, as it is the time of the descent of Allah as well as the time to supplicate to Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). Thus, it is the best time, being also followed by the last part of night.





**Q: A message was received from Libya wherein a questioner asks: What is the proper time for Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night)? What is the best time for Du`a' (supplication)? What should one say when offering Du`a'? May Allah reward you with the best.**

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**A:** The best time is the last third of the night, if it is possible. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: *Whoever fears that they may not get up in the latter part of the night should observe Witr in the first part of it; and if anyone is eager to get up in the last part of it should observe Witr at the end of the night, for Prayer in the last part of the night is witnessed (by the angels) and this is preferable.* (Related by Muslim in his Sahih [Authentic Hadith Book]). Also, the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: *Our Lord (Exalted be He) descends every night to the lower heavens when the last third portion of the night begins. He proclaims, "Is there any supplicant that I may answer him? Is there any seeker of My Favor that I may grant it to him? Is there any seeker of forgiveness that I may forgive him?"* (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim). This great Hadith implies that offering Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) in the last part of the night is preferable. Thus, one should supplicate to Allah, repent to Him during this blessed time. Tahajjud may be offered in the middle of the night, which is also a great, blessed time, or it may be offered at the beginning of the night after offering `Isha' (Night) Prayer. All of these options bring goodness and blessing. If someone fears they may not get up in the last part of the night, the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to offer it before sleeping. *The Prophet (peace be upon him) advised Abu Hurayrah and Abu Al-Darda' to offer Witr (Prayer with odd number of units) before sleeping.* The reason - Allah knows best - is that they

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studied Hadith and he feared that they might not get up during the last part of the night. In conclusion, it is preferable to offer Qiyam-ul-Layl at the last part of the night. However, if someone fears that they may not get up during the last part of the night, they may offer Witr at the beginning of it, all praise be to Allah. As for the Prophet's (peace be upon him) statement: *Allah descends,* this description, in the opinion of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (adherents to the Sunnah and the Muslim mainstream), confirms the Attributes that befit Allah. This 'descent' befits Allah's Majesty, and no one should inquire about the manner of this descent. Allah does not ask His creatures about all of His Attributes and the way they describe Him, be it Istiwa' (Allah's rising over the Throne in a manner befitting His majesty), Mercy, Anger, Satisfaction or any other Attribute. However, we should affirm Allah's Attributes in a way that befits Him (Glorified and Exalted be He) without Tahrif (distortion of the meaning), Ta`til (negation of the meaning or function of Allah's Attributes), Takyif (descriptive designation of Allah's Attributes) or Tamthil (likening Allah's Attributes to those of His Creation), according to Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah and scholars such as Malik ibn Anas (may Allah be merciful to him), Al-Shafi`y, Ahmad, Al-Thawry, Ibn Al-Mubarak, Al-'Awza`y and others. Abu Al-`Abbas Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah be merciful to him) collected their sayings in a beneficial book entitled 'Fatwa Al-Hamawiyah'. Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah affirm all of Allah's Attributes that are mentioned in the

Qur'an and the authentic Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet), such as Istiwa', Descent, Anger, Satisfaction, Mercy, Hearing, Seeing, Speaking and others in a manner befitting Allah's Majesty. All of them have the same view regarding the Attributes of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), as they confirm them

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in a manner that befits Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) without Tahrif, Ta`til, Takyif or Tamthil. Allah (Glorified be He) states: **(Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.)** **(Allâh-us-Samad (السيد الذي يضمن إليه في الحاجات) [Allâh the Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, (He neither eats nor drinks)].)** **(He begets not, nor was He begotten.)** **(And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him.)** and: **(There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.)** and: **(So put not forward similitudes for Allâh (as there is nothing similar to Him, nor He resembles anything). Truly! Allâh knows and you know not.)** All Muslims must affirm the Attributes and Names of Allah (Glorified be He), as they are mentioned in the Noble Qur'an and the authentic Sunnah. They should believe that they befit Allah's Majesty (Glorified and Exalted be He), and believe in their reality and authenticity. Muslims should also believe that Allah's Attributes are not like that of His creatures, because they are specific to Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). This is the view of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah, who are the Al-Firqah Al-Najiyah (the Saved Sect) and the people of the Truth. Thus, we must

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follow them and adhere to their approach as well as obey Allah and His Messenger, worship Him sincerely, follow Shari`ah (Islamic law) and avoid Bid`ah (innovation in religion). Ahl-ul-Sunnah (adherents to the Sunnah) were the Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and their followers adhere to this way, as they worshiped Allah Alone sincerely and believed in everything of which Allah informed His Messenger. They remained steadfast upon the Way of Allah and affirmed His Attributes and Names in a manner that befits Him. Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah were the Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him), and their followers are the Al-Firqah Al-Najiyah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: **(My Ummah (nation based on one creed) divides into seventy-three sects, one of which will be in Paradise and seventy-two will be in the Fire. It was asked, "O Messenger of Allah, who are they?" He said, "Al-Jama`ah (i.e. the group).")** This group is Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah, the victorious group, about whom the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: **(A group from my Ummah will remain obedient to Allah's Command, and those who desert or oppose them shall not be able to do them any harm. They will prevail over others until Allah's Command is established (i. e. Resurrection Day).)** Scholars are on top of this group;

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and the Hadith scholars are on top. This sect is headed by the Prophet (peace be upon him). They are the best people of this Ummah; then, they are followed by the scholars of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah. Hadith scholars are the leaders and Imams of this sect, and the scholars of Al-Haqq (Truth) are of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah and the Saved Sect. All the men and women who follow Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah in adhering to Al-Haqq, believing in the Names and Attributes of Allah in a manner that befits Him and adhere to His Shari`ah, are of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah and are called the Saved Sect. Also, they are called 'the sect that will remain victorious until the Day of Resurrection'. May Allah make us of Ahl-ul-Sunnah, adhering firmly to Al-Haqq and avoiding Dalalah (deviation from the right path).





**Q: Tell us about Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night). When does Allah (Glorified be He) descend to the lowest heaven? In which hour does this take place?**

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**A:** Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) is Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) and an act of worship that draws a person closer to Allah. The best time to perform Tahajjud is during the final part of the night, i.e. the fourth or fifth part of the night after dividing the night into six parts. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The most beloved Salah to Allah is that of Dawud \(David, peace be upon him\). He would sleep half of the night, pray one-third, and sleep one-sixth.\)](#) He (peace be upon him) also said: [\(Every night when it is the last third of the night, our Lord \(Glorified and Exalted be He\) descends to the nearest heaven and says: 'Is there anyone to supplicate to Me so that I may respond to their supplications? Is there anyone to make a request of Me so that I may grant them their request? Is there anyone asking My Forgiveness so that I may forgive them?'\)](#) It is Sunnah for the Mu'min (believer) to seek to pray during these two times - namely, the fourth and fifth parts of the night - following the example of Dawud (peace be upon him), who used to sleep half of the night, pray one-third (the fourth and fifth parts of the night), and then sleep the last sixth of the night in order to be strong enough to do his daytime work. However, if a person prays the last third of the night when Allah descends to the lowest heaven, this is also good. The middle of the night is considered to be the hour after half the night's hours have passed, which differs each night. If the night is twelve hours long, the middle of the night is in the seventh hour after sunset. However, if the night is eleven hours long, then the middle of the night begins five and a half hours after the sunset, and so on.

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**Q: How do I perform Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night)? What is its definite time? Please bear in mind that I finish my work at 10:30 p.m. How many Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) is Qiyam-ul-Layl? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** You may pray however many Rak`ahs you can at night if Allah enables you to get up to offer Qiyam-ul-Layl. The best time to perform Qiyam-ul-Layl is during the last third of the night, though if you perform it in the middle or in the first part of the night, this is good as well. You may perform two Rak`ahs by two, ending them with the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) in which you recite the two Surahs (Qur'anic chapters) of Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and Al-Ikhlās. There is no specific number Rak`ahs prescribed for Qiyam-ul-Layl; you may pray three, five, seven, nine, eleven, or thirteen Rak`ahs. Thirteen Rak`ahs is the maximum number the Prophet (peace be upon him) performed during Qiyam-ul-Layl, but if you pray more than thirteen Rak`ahs, such as twenty or more, ending with one Rak`ah as Witr, this will be good. More importantly, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [«Burden yourself with what you have the capacity to do! For Allah does not get bored until you get bored.»](#) He (peace be upon him) also said: [«The most beloved deeds to Allah are the most constant,](#)

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[even if they are small.»](#) All is good; after the `Isha' (Night) Prayer, you may pray one Rak`ah as Witr after performing the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) of the `Isha' Prayer. You may also perform three Rak`ahs, reciting Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after two Rak`ahs and then perform one as Witr; perform five Rak`ahs, reciting Taslim after every two Rak`ahs and then perform one as Witr; or perform five consecutive Rak`ahs. There is nothing wrong with doing any of this, according to one's convenience. You should fear Allah as much as possible without burdening yourself, for Qiyam-ul-Layl is a Nafilah (supererogatory act), not an obligatory Prayer. It is better, if possible, to perform it at the last third of the night. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [«Every night when it is the last third of the night, our Lord \(Blessed and Exalted be He\) descends to the nearest heaven and says: 'Is there anyone to supplicate to Me that I may respond to their supplications? Is there anyone to make a request of Me so that I may grant them their request? Is there anyone asking My Forgiveness so that I may forgive him?」](#) So, if you are able to perform Qiyam-ul-Layl during the last part of the night, this will be better. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was reported to have said: [«If anyone of you fears that they will not get up at the end of the night, let them pray Witr at the beginning of the night, but if anyone of you thinks that they will be able to get up at the end of the night, let them pray the Witr at the end of the night, for Salah at the end of the night is witnessed \(by the angels\) and that is better.»](#) It is reported that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: [«My friend \(Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him\) directed me to fast for three days of every month, perform the two Rak`ahs of Duha \(forenoon\) Prayer, and](#)

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[perform the Witr before going to bed.»](#) He (peace be upon him) directed Abu Al-Darda' to do the same. The reason - and Allah knows best - is that they used to study Hadith at the beginning of the

night and feared they would then fail to get up to offer the Witr during the last part of the night, so they were directed to perform Qiyam-ul-Layl and Witr at the beginning of the night. However, if a person has a desire to get up during the last part of the night and is able to do so, this will be better, as we mentioned before. May Allah grant us all success.



**Q: Please guide me with regard to Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer), which I perform at 11:00 p.m. and recite the Qur'an out loud. Is there a specific time for performing it?**

**A:** It is preferable to offer Tahajjud during the middle or the last part of the night. However, there is nothing wrong with performing it early in the night before you go to sleep. Offering it in the middle of the night is better and during the last part of it is the best. If you fear that you will not be able to get up during the last part of the night, there is nothing wrong with performing it after the `Isha' (Night) Prayer before going to bed. But it is better to offer it during the last part of the night, for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *(If a person fears that they will not get up at the end of the night, let them pray the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) at the beginning of the night, but if a person thinks that they will be able to get up at the end of the night, let them pray the Witr at the end of the night, for Salah (Prayer) at the end of the night is witnessed (by the angels) and that is better.)*

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Muslim in his Sahih) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: *(Every night when it is the last third of the night, our Lord (Blessed and Exalted be He) descends to the nearest heaven and says: 'Is there anyone to supplicate to Me that I may respond to their supplications? Is there anyone to ask something of Me so that I may grant them their request? Is there anyone asking My Forgiveness so that I may forgive them?') In another wording, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (Is there anyone begging, that I may give to them? Is there anyone seeking forgiveness, that I may forgive them? Is there anyone repenting, that I may relent toward them?') This takes place during the last third of the night, which is the best time for Tahajjud and worship. This descent on the part of Allah - reported in many Hadiths Mutawatir (a Hadith reported by a significant number of narrators throughout the chain of narration, whose agreement upon a lie is impossible) and Hadith Sahih (authentic) - is in a way that befits Him and is not like the descent of human beings. It is descent in a manner that befits Allah, just like His Istiwa' (Allah's Rising over the Throne in a manner that befits Him), Anger, and Pleasure befit Him. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) does not resemble His Creatures in His Istiwa', Anger, Pleasure, Love, Speech, and so on. The Descent of Allah is in a manner which none knows except Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). Similarly, Allah does not resemble His Creatures in any of His Attributes. Allah (Glorified be He) says: *(There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.)* And: *(So put not forward similitudes for Allâh (as there is nothing similar to Him, nor He resembles anything).)**

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And: *(Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One) ( "Allâh-us-Samad (السيد الذي يصدق إليه في الحاجات [Allâh the Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, (He neither eats nor drinks)].) ("He begets not, nor was He begotten.) ("And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him.")* This is the rule followed by Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah that the Names and Attributes of Allah should be appropriate to Him. His Names are represented in those Attributes: Al-Rahman (the Compassionate) Al-Rahim (the Merciful), Al-`Alim (the All-knowing), Al-Hakim (the



Wise), Al-Sami` (the All-Hearing), Al-Basir (the All-Seeing). All these Names and Attributes should be accredited to Allah without Tamthil (likening Allah's Attributes to those of His Creations). They should also be accredited without Ta`til (negation of the meaning or function of Allah's Attributes). Ahi-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah so accredited the Attributes and Names of Allah and admitted them as they are, along with believing in them as a fact in a manner that is appropriate to Allah (Glorified be He) and does not liken Him to any of His creatures (Glorified and Exalted be He). This is a view adopted by some Ahi-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah of the Companions, the Tabi`in (followers), and those who followed them, such as Malik, Al-Shafi`i, Ahmad, Abu Hanifah, Al-Thawry, and others of the Muslim Imams (initiators of Schools of Jurisprudence) who adhered to this view in following the example of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and his Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all).



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### 10- Daily prescribed supererogatory Salahs

**Q: Are there supererogatory Salahs (Prayers) to be offered every day and night? Did the Prophet (peace be upon him) use to offer them?**

**A:** The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to regularly offer in addition to the obligatory Salahs twelve supererogatory Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) every day and night: four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, two after the Zhuhr Prayer, two before the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, two after the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, and two after the `Isha' (Night) Prayer. These are the twelve supererogatory Rak`ahs that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer every day. It was authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Anyone who offers twelve Rak`ahs in a day and night will have a house built for them in Paradise.\)](#) Then he (peace be upon him) pointed out these twelve supererogatory Rak`ahs as follows: [\(Four before the Zhuhr Prayer, two after the Zhuhr Prayer, two after the Maghrib Prayer, two after the `Isha' Prayer, and two before the Fajr Prayer.\)](#) These twelve

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Rak`ahs were performed by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) on a regular basis along with the Zhuhr, Maghrib, `Isha', and Fajr Prayers. It was reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) urged people to offer four Rak`ahs before the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer and said: [\(May Allah have mercy on a person who performs four Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer.\)](#) But these twelve Rak`ahs were regularly performed by the Prophet (peace be upon him) whether he was traveling or in residence. However, it is preferable to offer these twelve Rak`ahs at home, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The best Salah is that which is offered in one's home, except for the obligatory Salahs.\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also prescribed for people to offer Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) and Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), which he (peace be upon him) used to regularly offer at night, whether he (peace be upon him) was travelling or in residence. He (peace be upon him) would regularly offer Witr and the two supererogatory Rak`ahs before the Fajr Prayer while he was traveling or in residence.

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With regard to the supererogatory Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer, Maghrib Prayer, and `Isha' Prayer, he (peace be upon him) would not offer them while he was traveling; rather, he would regularly observe them when he was in residence. The Prophet (peace be upon him) also prescribed for people to offer Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) in two Rak`ahs or more. It was reported that he (peace be upon him) [\(recommended to Abu Hurayrah and Abu Al-Darda' that they offer Salat-ul-Duha, fast for three days every month, and offer the Witr before going to sleep.\)](#)

This may be and Allah knows best because they used to study Hadith at the beginning of the night, so he recommended that they offer Witr at the beginning of the night. However, if a person can wake up at the end of the night, it is better to offer the Witr at the end of the night, as the Prophet (peace be

upon him) used to do and recommended: (If a person is afraid that they may not get up in the last part of the night, they should observe Witr in the first part of it; and if a person is eager to get up in the last part of it, they should observe Witr at the end of the night, for Salah at the end of the night is witnessed (by the angels) and that is preferable.) (Related by Muslim) Accordingly, it is preferable to offer Witr at the end of the night for anyone who is able to do so, but if a person cannot get up at the end of the night, they can offer the Witr at the beginning of the night. Every Muslim should take care of the matters to which the Prophet (peace be upon him) urged the Ummah (nation based on one creed) and of which he (peace be upon him) took care.



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**11- One should choose what is best when performing a lengthy Prayer or many units of Prayer**

**Q: Is it better to pray Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) by performing many Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) or by prolonging the Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) as long as possible? What is Your Eminence's advice about this?**

**A:** In any case, a praying person should consider what is better for them; whether it is better to make the Rak`ah as long as possible so as to be able to say as many supplications as possible and to recite a lot of Qur'an while being able to contemplate it, or to make the Rak`ah shorter and perform many Rak`ahs if one sees that it is easier and more likely to make them more submissive to Allah (Exalted be He) in Prayer. Every one should do what is more comfortable for them and what makes them have more peace of mind and be more pleased with their actions. That is, if someone feels more comfortable with prolonging Prayer by reciting many supplications during Sujud (Prostration) and reciting a lot of Qur'an, so let them do this; and if someone feels more comfortable making it shorter and easier, there is no problem with this too.



## 12- The number of Rak`ahs of optional night Salah and whether it is a Jahri Salah

**Q: What is the number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of the optional night Salah (Prayer)? Is it a Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud) or a Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation)? Is it permissible to perform it in congregation? When should it be performed? Please note that I perform it after midnight and sometimes I perform it before this time. I perform four Rak`ahs and end my Salah with one Rak`ah as Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). Please explain this matter for my guidance, may Allah reward you with the best.**

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**A:** There is no definite number of Rak`ahs for optional night Salah. There is nothing wrong with one performing one hundred Rak`ahs or more and ending the Salah with a single Rak`ah as Witr. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) commended optional night Salah in His Glorious Book, saying: ﴿O you wrapped in garments (i.e. Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم!)﴾ (Stand (to pray) all night, except a little -) ﴿Half of it or a little less than that,﴾ ﴿Or a little more. And recite the Qur`ân (aloud) in a slow, (pleasant tone and) style.﴾ Describing His pious Servants, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿They used to sleep but little by night [invoking their Lord (Allâh) and praying, with fear and hope].﴾ ﴿And in the hours before dawn, they were (found) asking (Allâh) for forgiveness.﴾ About the Servants of the Most Merciful, Allah says: ﴿And those who spend the night in worship of their Lord, prostrate and standing.﴾ Yet, it is preferable for one to pattern after the Prophet (peace be upon him) in performing Witr as eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs, where one should offer Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each two Rak`ahs and end one's Salah with one Rak`ah. This is what is preferable. Yet, there is nothing wrong with one performing Witr as twenty, forty or more Rak`ahs and ending one's Salah with one Rak`ah. In a Hadith Sahih (authentic Hadith), the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Night Salah is two (Rak`ahs followed) by two, and when one of you fears that dawn is about to break, pray one Rak`ah as Witr to make what you have prayed odd-numbered.﴾ This proves that

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the optional night Salah has no limit. This is why the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿The (optional) night Salah is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on,﴾ without putting a fixed limit, such as ten or more or less. He (peace be upon him) just said: ﴿...and when one of you fears that dawn is about to break, pray one Rak`ah as Witr to make what you have prayed odd-numbered.﴾ This is what is permissible in this regard. Its time begins from after `Isha' (Night) Prayer until dawn. During all this time one can perform Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) and Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis). Yet, the best of this time is the last third of night. There is nothing wrong with one performing Witr early at night or at midnight or late at night, since all such practices were done by the Prophet (peace be upon him) who performed Witr in

the early, middle and last part of the night, as reported by `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her). Yet, his usual habit became to perform Witr late at night. There is nothing wrong with performing Witr in congregation with one's family or visitors, provided that this is not taken as a habit. For example, if some visitors come to one's house and they all pray in congregation; this is permissible. Once Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) visited Abu Al-Darda', where they performed optional night Salah in congregation. The Prophet (peace be upon him)

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once visited Anas, and he (peace be upon him) led them in performing Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) in congregation. What is meant is that there is nothing wrong with sometimes performing Nafilah (supererogatory) Salah in congregation, provided that this is not taken as a habit. The least number of Witr Prayer is just one Rak`ah, and there is no limit for its maximum. Yet, it is preferable to perform it as eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs, since this was the practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Optional night Salah can be either Sirri or Jahri. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: "All this was done by the Prophet (peace be upon him), i.e., sometimes he recited out loud and other times he recited subvocally." Thus a Mu'min (believer) should choose what can influence their heart better and help it attain Khushu` (the heart being submissively attuned to the act of worship); if audible recitation is more effective, they may recite out loud; if quiet recitation renders their heart softer and more attuned, they may recite subvocally.



**Q: What are the number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) for Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer)?**

**A:** The optimum number of Rak`ahs for Tahajjud is eleven or thirteen with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs, as was the Prophet's (peace be upon him) usual custom. However, if a person prays more, up to twenty Rak`ahs,

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there is nothing wrong with this, even if a person prays only one Rak`ah after the `Isha' (Night) Prayer or during the last part of the night. However, it is better to pray either eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs, and then end with one Rak`ah as Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) as the Prophet (peace be upon him) often did. He (peace be upon him) sometimes performed Witr with three, five, seven, or nine Rak`ahs. However, praying eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs in Tahajjud is the best option, which the Prophet (peace be upon him) did most of the time. If a person performs twenty or thirty Rak`ahs and then three or one as Witr, there is nothing wrong with this as there is no definite number of Rak`ahs prescribed for Tahajjud. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The night Salah \(Prayer\) is two by two, then when you fear that dawn is about to break, pray one Rak`ah and make the Salah that you have offered odd-numbered.\)](#) He (peace be upon him) did not specify a number for it.



**Q: What are the number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) for Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) and Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer)? And when should they be performed?**

**A:** This depends on every person's ability. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pray eleven Rak`ahs with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs. He used to prolong his recitation,

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Ruku` (bowing), and Sujud (prostration), but begin with two Rak`ahs offered lightly. This is the best. However, there is nothing wrong with a person praying three, five, or more Rak`ahs, as every person should pray according to their ability. Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah). The Prophet (peace be upon him) was reported to have said: [\(The night Salah \(Prayer\) is two by two, then when you fear that dawn is about to break, pray one Rak`ah and make the Salah that you have offered odd-numbered.\)](#) Praising His believing Servants, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [\(And those who spend the night in worship of their Lord, prostrate and standing.\)](#) And: [\(They used to sleep but little by night \[invoking their Lord \(Allâh\) and praying, with fear and hope\].\)](#) [\(And in the hours before dawn, they were \(found\) asking \(Allâh\) for forgiveness.\)](#) There is no limit to the number of Rak`ahs for Tahajjud. If a person prays two Rak`ahs followed by a third Rak`ah as Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units); four Rak`ahs with two Taslims (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) followed by a fifth Rak`ah as Witr; six Rak`ahs with three Taslims followed by a seventh Rak`ah as Witr; or eight Rak`ahs with four Taslims followed by a ninth Rak`ah as Witr, there is nothing wrong with any of these options, Alhamdu lillah. However, it is best to pray ten Rak`ahs with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs and one as Witr. However, there is nothing wrong if a person prays more or less than eleven Rak`ahs. The main concern is that a person should perform their Salah with tranquility, reciting the Qur'an with Tartil (slow recitation of the Qur'an) and contemplation.

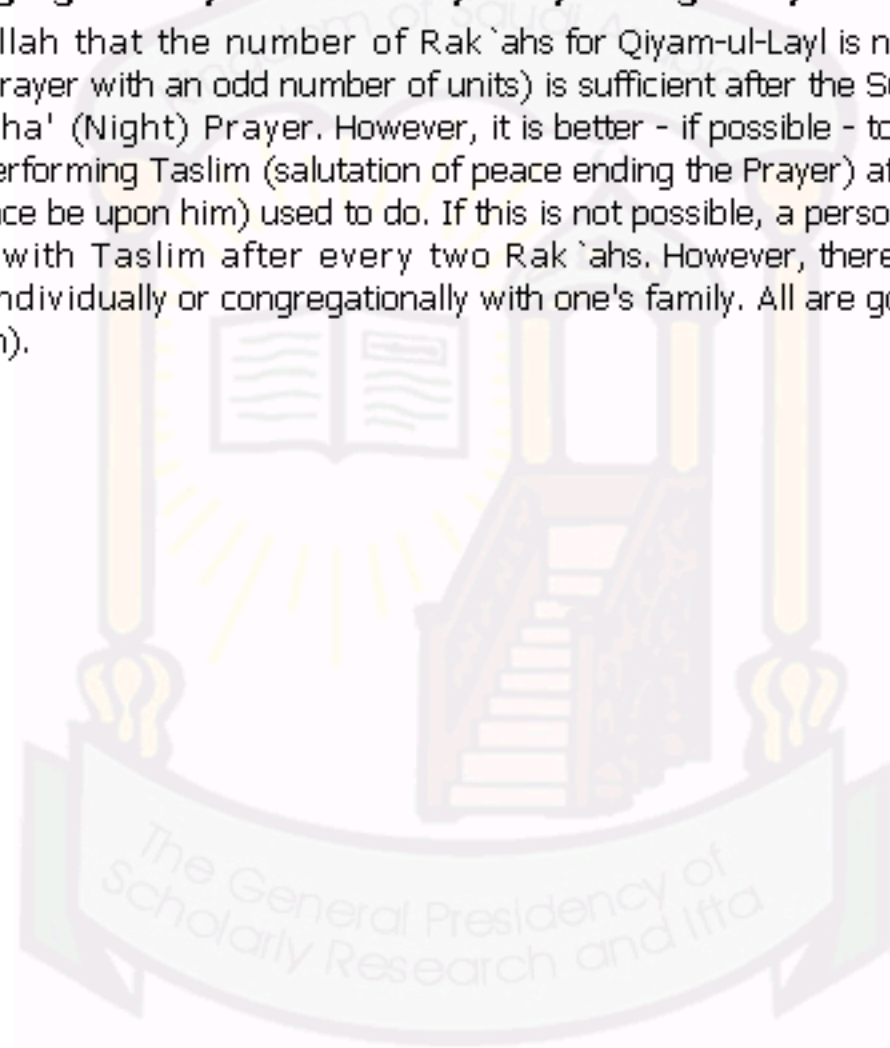
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**Q: What are the number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) for Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night)? Is it sufficient to recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) in each Rak`ah or should another Surah of the Qur'an also be recited? Also, should Qiyam-ul-Layl be performed congregationally or individually? May Allah grant you with the best.**

**A:** Praise be to Allah that the number of Rak`ahs for Qiyam-ul-Layl is not limited. One Rak`ah offered as a Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) is sufficient after the Sunnah (supererogatory Prayer) of the `Isha' (Night) Prayer. However, it is better - if possible - to pray Witr in eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs, performing Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do. If this is not possible, a person may pray three, five, or more Rak`ahs with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs. However, there is nothing wrong with performing Witr individually or congregationally with one's family. All are good, Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah).





### 13- Ruling on prolonging Sujud during Tahajjud in a tiring way

**Q: A sister asks: While praying Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer), I prolong Sujud (prostration), and I feel pain in my hands and chest. Can I put a pillow under my chest and elbows?**

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**A:** This has no basis in Shari`ah (Islamic law) as far as I know. Burdening oneself (in Prayer) is not prescribed. You should not make Sujud so long that you become tired. Using such things while praying has no basis in Shari`ah. The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is not to burden oneself. However, you should prostrate according to your own ability and not burden yourself.



#### 14- Ruling on performing Wudu' for Tahajjud Prayer

**Q: Someone asks: Is it obligatory to perform Wudu' (ablution) before praying Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer)?**

**A:** If someone is not ritually pure, they must perform Wudu'. If someone does Hadath (ritual impurity that invalidates ablution), such as discharging wind, urine or stool, after performing `Isha' (Night) Prayer, they must not pray until they perform Wudu'. On the other hand, if someone has been ritually pure since they performed `Isha' Prayer and has not done any Hadath after it, and they want to pray Tahajjud, they may pray without performing Wudu'. But if they sleep or do Hadath, they must perform Wudu' for Tahajjud, as is the case with any other Prayer. If someone urinates, they must cleanse their private parts and then do the usual Wudu' for Salah (Prayer); if they only discharged wind, it is sufficient for them to take Wudu' only - that is, to wash the hands, do Madmadah (rinsing the mouth), Istinshaq (inhaling and exhaling water nasally), wash the face and hands to the elbows, wipe over the head and ears, and wash the feet. If, on the other hand, they urinate or defecate, they must do Istinja' (cleansing the private parts with water after urination or defecation) first and then do the usual Wudu' necessary for Salah.



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### 15- Ruling on performing Qiyam-ul-Layl in congregation

**Q: Is it permissible to perform Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) in congregation? And, what is the ruling on regularly doing this? May Allah grant you success.**

**A:** There is no problem with performing Qiyam-ul-Layl in congregation, but it is not prescribed to pray it in congregation every night except in the case of praying Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan). During the rest of the year, however, there is no problem if it is sometimes accidentally performed in congregation, but without making this a habit. A person may, for example, pray it with their family, or they may visit some people and pray it with them; but making this a habit and a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) has no basis in Shari`ah (Islamic law).



## 16- Time of Qiyam-ul-Layl

**Q: Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah), I regularly observe Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night). I hope Your Eminence will inform me of the exact time it should be performed and the optimum number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer)? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Qiyam-ul-Layl is a stressed Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet), which the righteous people used to perform regularly.

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It is one of the acts of worship that the Prophet (peace be upon him) performed on a regular basis. Praising and commending the servant of Al-Rahman (the Compassionate), Allah says (Glorified be He): **﴿And those who spend the night in worship of their Lord, prostrate and standing.﴾** Also, describing the pious, Allah (Glorified be He) says: **﴿They used to sleep but little by night [invoking their Lord (Allâh) and praying, with fear and hope].﴾** **﴿And in the hours before dawn, they were (found) asking (Allâh) for forgiveness.﴾** Allah addresses the Prophet (peace be upon him) saying: **﴿O you wrapped in garments (i.e. Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)!﴾** **﴿Stand (to pray) all night, except a little -﴾** **﴿Half of it or a little less than that,﴾** **﴿Or a little more. And recite the Qur`ân (aloud) in a slow, (pleasant tone and) style.﴾** Qiyam-ul-Layl is Sunnah, which is better prayed during the last part of the night than the first part. If you wish to pray it during the last part of the night but fear you will not get up at this time, you may pray the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) at the beginning of the night. The Witr is a stressed Sunnah and can be performed with one Rak`ah. However, it is better to pray Witr with three, five, or more Rak`ahs, reciting Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs. This is the Sunnah: the best number for Witr is eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs followed by one Rak`ah as Witr, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do. However, there is nothing wrong with offering Witr with twenty Rak`ahs as this is also in conformity with the Sunnah.

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**Q: A questioner asks about Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer). At what time of the night should it be performed? Should the praying person recite Surahs (Qur'anic chapters) of any specific length? Kindly guide us, may Allah reward you with the best.**

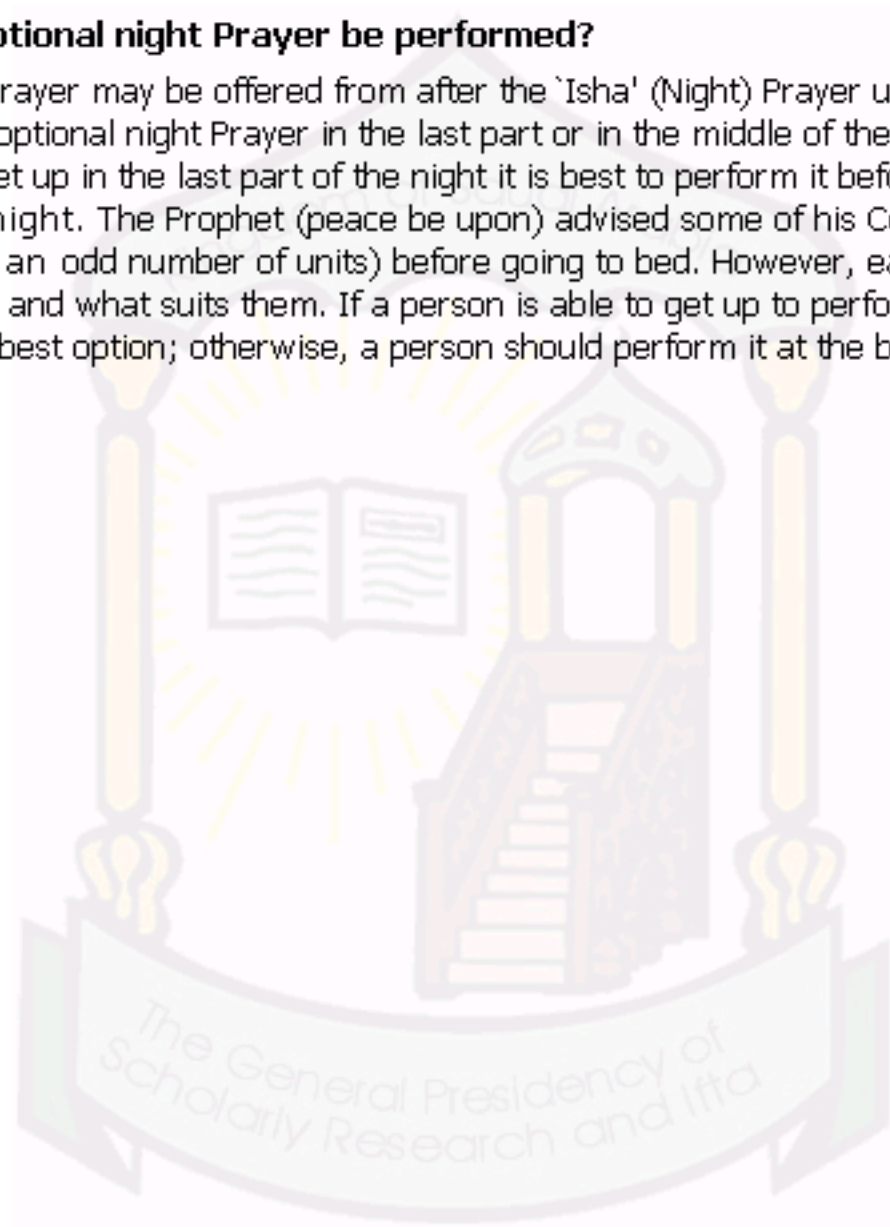
**A:** Tahajjud is Sunnah. Describing the Servant of Al-Rahman (the Compassionate) Allah (Glorified be He) says: **﴿And those who spend the night in worship of their Lord, prostrate and standing.﴾** Addressing His Prophet, Allah says: **﴿O you wrapped in garments (i.e. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ)﴾** **﴿Stand (to pray) all night, except a little -﴾** In a nutshell, Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) is Sunnah. It was narrated in the Sahih (authentic) Hadith: **﴿The best Salah (Prayer) after the obligatory ones is Salat-ul-Layl (optional night Prayer).﴾** You have the choice to perform it at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of the night. However, it is best to perform it at the end of the night, if possible. But if you fear you will not get up at the end of the night, it is Sunnah to perform Qiyam-ul-Layl at the beginning of the night, as mentioned in the previous question.

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**Q: When should optional night Prayer be performed?**

**A:** Optional night Prayer may be offered from after the `Isha' (Night) Prayer until the break of dawn. It is better to offer optional night Prayer in the last part or in the middle of the night. However, if you fear you will not get up in the last part of the night it is best to perform it before going to bed at the beginning of the night. The Prophet (peace be upon) advised some of his Companions to offer the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) before going to bed. However, each person knows best their circumstances and what suits them. If a person is able to get up to perform it in the last part of the night, this is the best option; otherwise, a person should perform it at the beginning of the night.





**Q: Your Eminent Shaykh, how is Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) performed? I hope you will tell me in detail how to pray it? When is the Du`a' (supplication) and Tasbih (glorification of Allah) recited?**

**A:** Qiyam-ul-Layl is stressed Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the righteous people used to observe. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) addresses the Prophet (peace be upon him) saying: ﴿O you wrapped in garments (i.e. Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)﴾ ﴿Stand (to pray) all night, except a little -﴾ Also, Allah (Glorified be He) addresses the Prophet (peace be upon him) saying:

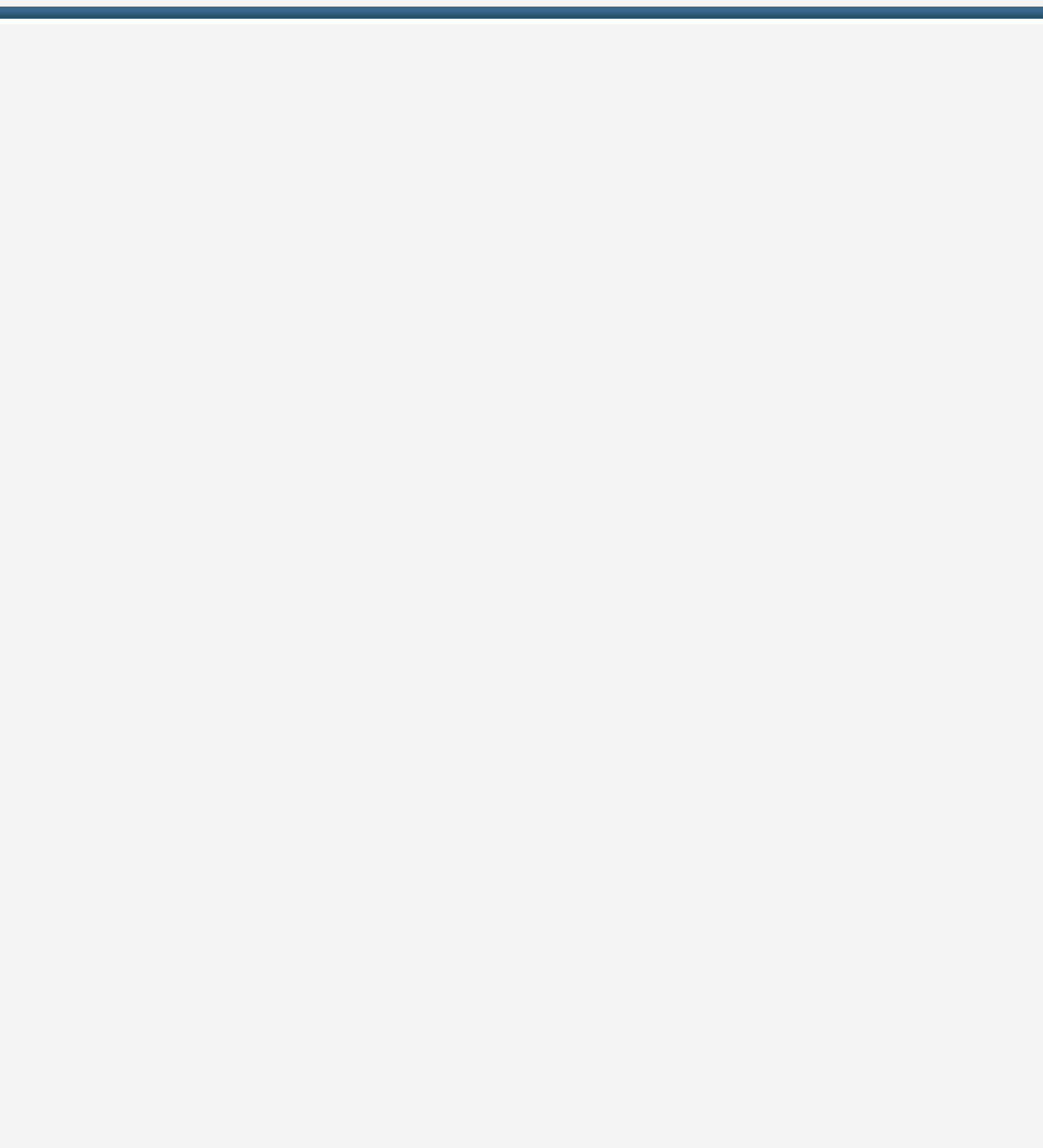
**(Part No. 10; Page No. 63)**

﴿And in some parts of the night (also) offer the Salât (prayer) with it (i.e. recite the Qur'ân in the prayer), as an additional prayer (Tahajjud optional prayer - Nawâfil) for you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم).﴾ Then praising the believers and Servant of Al-Rahman (the Compassionate), He (Glorified be He) says: ﴿And those who spend the night in worship of their Lord, prostrate and standing.﴾ Then, describing the pious, He (Glorified be He) says: ﴿They used to sleep but little by night [invoking their Lord (Allâh) and praying, with fear and hope].﴾ ﴿And in the hours before dawn, they were (found) asking (Allâh) for forgiveness.﴾ Qiyam-ul-Layl is a stressed Sunnah, whether it is offered at the beginning, in the middle, or in the last part of the night according to one's convenience. The Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) is Sunnah and must be at least one Rak`ah (unit of Prayer). However, if a person gets up to pray Qiyam-ul-Layl, and perform three, five, seven, eleven, or thirteen Rak`ahs and recites some parts of the Qur'an, all this is good. On different occasions, the Prophet (peace be upon him) recommended that the Witr be offered in three, five, seven, nine, eleven, or thirteen Rak`ahs with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs. However, there is nothing wrong if a person performs three or five consecutive Rak`ahs as Witr with one Taslim and Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer) at the end of the third or fifth Rak`ah, as the Prophet sometimes did that. However, it is better to make Taslim after every two Rak`ahs. Offering eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs of Witr is the best, which is what the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do.

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There is nothing wrong if a person performs twenty-one, twenty-seven, or thirty-one Rak`ahs of Witr. The Prophet (peace be upon him) left the matter open to choice with regard to the night Prayer. However, the Sunnah is to make Taslim after every two Rak`ahs, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿The night Salah is two by two, then when you fear that dawn is about to break, pray one Rak`ah and make the Salah that you have offered odd-numbered.﴾ The Sunnah is to perform it two by two and if a person fears being unable to get up, one prays one Rak`ah as Witr. `A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: ﴿The Prophet (peace be upon him) often used to offer eleven Rak`ahs at night.﴾ He usually did this with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs.







## 17- Ruling on regularly observing Qiyam-ul-Layl

### Q: Is it obligatory to pray Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) every night?

**A:** Praying Qiyam-ul-Layl is a stressed Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet), which the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿And in some parts of the night (also) offer the Salât (prayer) with it (i.e. recite the Qur'ân in the prayer), as an additional prayer (Tahajjud optional prayer - Nawâfil) for you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم). It may be that your Lord will raise you to Maqâm Mahmûd (a station of praise and glory, i.e. the honour of intercession on the Day of Resurrection.)﴾ Describing His righteous Servants, He (Exalted be He) also says:

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﴿They used to sleep but little by night [invoking their Lord (Allâh) and praying, with fear and hope].﴾  
﴿And in the hours before dawn, they were (found) asking (Allâh) for forgiveness.﴾ Describing the Servants of the Most Merciful, Allah (Exalted be He) also says: ﴿And those who spend the night in worship of their Lord, prostrate and standing.﴾ Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer); therefore, is a Sunnah and a great deed that draws a person nearer to Allah. However, it should be done according to one's capacity, whether at the beginning, middle, or end of the night, with a minimum of one Rak`ah (unit of Prayer), which is performed as Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). It is also desirable to offer more Rak`ahs: three, five, seven, or nine, according to one's capacity. If a person finds it difficult to pray Qiyam-ul-Layl at the end of the night, they can perform it before sleeping, ﴿because the Prophet (peace be upon him) advised Abu Hurayrah and Abu Al-Darda' (may Allah be pleased with them) to pray Witr before they sleep.﴾ It is better; however, to pray during the end of the night if possible, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿If anyone is afraid that he may not get up by the end of the night, he should observe Witr in the first part of it; and if anyone is eager to get up by the end of the night, he should observe Witr at the end of the night, for Salah at the end of the night is witnessed (by the angels) and that is preferable.﴾ The Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is to pray Qiyam-ul-Layl in twos, and then to offer a single Rak`ah for Witr. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿The night Salah is two by two, then when you fear that dawn is about to break, pray one Rak`ah and make the Salah that you have offered odd-numbered.﴾

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﴾ There is nothing wrong with not offering Qiyam-ul-Layl, because it is a Sunnah. There is no sin on the person who abandons it; it is only a Sunnah to perform it regularly. Allah (Exalted be He) has made only the Five Daily Prayers obligatory upon us: the Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon), Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers, in addition to the Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer. These are the obligatory Prayers; and any additional Prayer such as Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), Qiyam-ul-Layl, Al-Rawatib (supererogatory Prayers that were stressed and regularly

performed by the Prophet), or Witr Prayer are considered Nafilah. But it is prescribed for all believers to perform Al-Rawatib, and hasten to do all good deeds, especially Tahajjud at night, Witr, all stressed Prayers, and Al-Rawatib, such as the Sunnah of the Zhuhr Prayer which is four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr and two after it, and it is better if the worshipper prays four Rak`ahs after it. It is also Mustahab (desirable) to pray four, two by two, Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer, two Rak`ahs after the Maghrib Prayer, two after the `Isha' Prayer, and two before the Fajr Prayer. All these are considered Rawatib. It is also preferable to pray two Rak`ahs before the Maghrib Prayer, two before the `Isha' Prayer, and also between the Adhan (call to Prayer) and Iqamah (call to start the Prayer); these are all desirable supererogatory Prayers that believers should be keen to perform frequently, wishing to gain reward and favor from Allah (Exalted and Glorified be He).



**18- Ruling on praying Qiyam-ul-Layl at the beginning of the night when fearing to miss it due to sleeping**

**Q: I pray Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) early, after the `Isha' (Night) Prayer or**

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**at 11:00 p.m. at most, fearing that I might sleep and not be able to pray it by the end of the night. Is my Salah (Prayer) valid?**

**A:** Yes, it is better to perform Qiyam-ul-Layl at the beginning of the night if you fear that you will not be able to wake up by the end of the night to pray it, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(If anyone is afraid that he may not get up by the end of the night, he should observe Witr \(Prayer with an odd number of units\) in the first part of it; and if anyone is eager to get up by the end of the night, he should observe Witr at the end of the night, for Salah at the end of the night is witnessed \(by the angels\) and that is preferable.\)](#) [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) also advised Abu Hurayrah and Abu Al-Darda' \(may Allah be pleased them\) to perform Witr at the beginning of the night\)](#) because they could not perform it at the end of the night, either because they were busy studying Hadith, or for other reasons. Then, if you fear that you will not be able to wake up at the end of the night, the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) for you is to pray Witr at the beginning of the night, and it is the most preferable, but if you are eager to pray at the end of the night and it becomes possible for you to do this, Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) is better at the end of the night.



**Q: A questioner from Jordan asks: "I love to pray Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night), but sometimes I fall asleep, or I wake up feeling lazy as a result of being drowsy. What is your advice to me so that I can**

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**get up feeling energetic and having the desire to pray and invoke Allah (Exalted be He)?"**

**A:** We advise you to pray before sleeping, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) advised some of his Companions to perform Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) before sleeping. Therefore, if a person fears that they might not be able to wake up, it is better for them to pray what is possible for them before sleeping: three, five, or more Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), offering Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs, and then perform Witr by performing one Rak`ah, all before sleeping. But if you feel sure that you can get up by the end of the night, it is better to pray then. We also advise you to go to bed early in order to be able to wake up to pray at the end of the night, because staying awake till late at night makes it difficult for you to get up and pray at the end of the night. Thus, we advise you to sleep early and to fix the alarm clock on the suitable time in which you can get up, In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills). If this is not possible for you; however, you can pray at the beginning of the night, before sleeping, and all praise is due to Allah for this. If you miss praying at the beginning of the night as a result of sleeping or an illness, you can pray in the morning the usual Rak`ahs that you missed to offer at night, and just add one Rak`ah to make the number of Rak`ahs even. That is, if you usually pray five Rak`ahs, you must pray six, doing Taslim after every two Rak`ahs; and if you usually pray seven Rak`ahs, and you could not pray them because of sleeping or any other reason, pray eight Rak`ahs in the morning doing Taslim after every two Rak`ahs, and so on. The Prophet (peace be upon him), when something such as sleeping or an illness hindered him from praying Witr,

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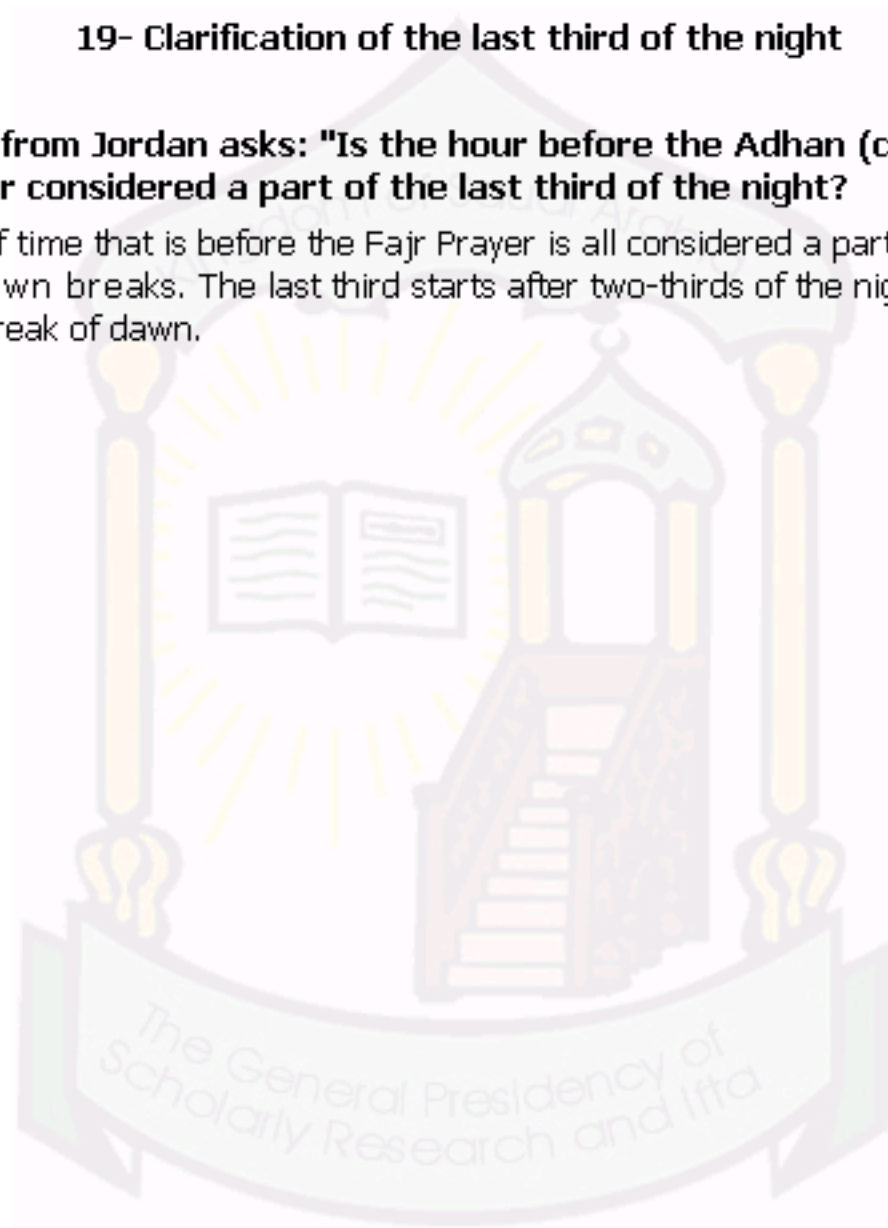
used to pray the usual number of Rak`ahs the following morning, adding a Rak`ah to make the number even, as `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated. The Prophet (peace be upon him) also used to pray eleven Rak`ahs at night most of the time, and if he was hindered by sleep or an illness, he would pray twelve Rak`ahs the following morning, doing Taslim six times. Such is the prescribed Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet). May Allah grant us all success.



### 19- Clarification of the last third of the night

**Q: A questioner from Jordan asks: "Is the hour before the Adhan (call to Prayer) of the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer considered a part of the last third of the night?"**

**A:** Yes, the period of time that is before the Fajr Prayer is all considered a part of the last third of the night, until the dawn breaks. The last third starts after two-thirds of the night have passed, and it continues until the break of dawn.





## 20- Ruling on delaying Qiyam-ul-Layl until shortly before the Fajr Prayer

**Q: Your Eminence, what is the ruling on delaying Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) until half an hour before the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer?**

**A:** There is nothing wrong with this. But it is better to pray earlier so that you can have sufficient time to pray with tranquility what Allah (Exalted be He) makes possible for you, and to pray eleven Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do,

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doing Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs, and doing your best in reciting Qur'an, Ruku` (bowing), and Sujud (Prostration). This is better for you; because a short period of time may not allow you to carry out what you desire, such as performing the desired Salah (Prayer) and saying the desired Du`a' (supplication). However, there is nothing wrong if you delay praying until the end of the night and pray what Allah (Exalted be He) enables you to do. And all Praise is due to Allah.



**Q: When does the night start? Does it start after the Adhan (call to Prayer) of the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, or after the Adhan of the `Isha' (Night) Prayer? And does it continue until the Adhan of the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer?**

**A:** The night is between sunset and the break of dawn. This is night: the time in between sunset and Al-Fajr-ul-Sadiq (true dawn).







## 21- Clarification of the beginning and end of the time of Tahajjud

**Q: When does the time of Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) begin and when does it end? May Allah reward you.**

**A:** The time of Tahajjud begins after `Isha' (Night) Prayer and ends at the rise of dawn. Once the `Isha' Prayer ends, the time of Tahajjud starts and lasts until the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. Therefore, praying Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) is allowed to be performed at the beginning, middle or end of the night. Allah (Exalted be He)

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says: ﴿And in some parts of the night (also) offer the Salât (prayer) with it (i.e. recite the Qur'ân in the prayer), as an additional prayer (Tahajjud optional prayer - Nawâfil) for you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)﴾ And He also says: ﴿O you wrapped in garments (i.e. Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)!﴾ ﴿Stand (to pray) all night, except a little -﴾ It is Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) to offer Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) with one Rak`ah (i.e. Witr) at least after finishing the `Isha' Prayer until the breaking of Fajr. Yet one can offer Qiyam-ul-Layl as three, five, or more Rak`ahs, where one should offer Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) at the end of each two Rak`ahs. One should end the Salah (Prayer) with one Rak`ah as Witr, following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him).



## 22- Ruling on offering Witr right after `Isha' Prayer

**Q: A female questioner asks: "Praise be to Allah, I offer Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night), but I pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) right after the Sunnah (supererogatory) Salah offered after the `Isha' (Night) Prayer. This is because I fear that I may die or fall asleep before offering Qiyam-ul-Layl. Am I leading the correct way or not? What is your advice to me?"**

**A:** Qiyam-ul-Layl is one of the best acts of worship that draw one closer to Allah. It is one of the characteristics of Allah's Chosen Servants who are good and pious. Allah (Exalted be He) says in His Glorious Book: ﴿Verily, the Muttaqûn (the pious. See V.2:2) will be in the midst of Gardens and Springs (in the Paradise),﴾ ﴿Taking joy in the things which their Lord has given them. Verily, they were before this Muhsinûn (good-doers. See V.2:112).﴾ ﴿They used to sleep but little by night [invoking their Lord (Allâh) and praying, with fear and hope].﴾ ﴿And in the hours before dawn, they were (found) asking (Allâh) for forgiveness.﴾ Allah (Exalted be He) also says in reference to

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His Close and Pious Servants: ﴿And those who spend the night in worship of their Lord, prostrate and standing.﴾ So, you (questioner) are on the right track. We advise you to stick to these good deeds, seek Allah's Acceptance, and observe Istiqamah (integrity). However, it is much better for you to delay Witr till late at night provided that you are quite sure that you will wake up at night for offering Qiyam-ul-Layl. You should think good of your Lord and keep optimistic waiting for good as you are keen on doing this good deed regularly. Concerning delaying Witr until the last part of the night, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, in a Hadith Sahih (authentic Hadith): ﴿If anyone is afraid that he may not get up in the latter part of night, he should observe Witr in the first part of it; and if anyone is eager to get up in the last part of it, he should observe Witr at the end of night, for Prayer at the end of night is witnessed (by the angels) and that is preferable.﴾ In this Hadith the Prophet (peace be upon him) made it clear that prayer at the end of the night is witnessed by the angels and that this is better than offering it at the beginning of night. So long as you are eager to get up late at night and you are accustomed to pray at that time, you are recommended to delay Witr till the last part of the night. If you are taken over by sleep, you can pray on the following day an even number of Rak`ahs equal to the missing ones, except for Witr. This was the way followed by the Prophet (peace be upon him). ﴿When the Prophet (peace be upon him) was unable to offer Qiyam-ul-Layl due to sleep or pain, he would pray twelve Rak`ahs on the following day. He often used to offer Qiyam-ul-Layl as eleven Rak`ahs, but when sleep or disease exhausted him, he would add one more Rak`ah by the day,

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i.e. he would offer twelve Rak`ahs.﴾ This was reported from `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) in the Sahih (Authentic) book of Muslim. A Mu'min (believer) must expect good from Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). Therefore, you should do your best in observing good deeds and

expect Allah's reward. Your Qiyam-ul-Layl is recommended to be offered in the last part of the night along with the Witr Prayer, following the Sahih Hadith mentioned above and the following Sahih one that reads: [\(Our Lord \(Exalted be He\) descends every night to the world sky when the last third portion of night begins. He says: Is there any supplicant to answer him? Is there any seeker for My Favor to give him? Is there any seeker for forgiveness to forgive him?\)](#) This is Hadith Mutawatir (a Hadith reported by a significant number of narrators throughout the chain of narration, whose agreement upon a lie is impossible). It assigns great merit to the last part of night. It maintains that `Ibadah (worship) in that part of night is of great reward, that Du`a' (supplication) is more likely to be answered, and that repentance and asking Allah's Forgiveness are more likely to be accepted at that time. The descending mentioned in the Hadith is in a way that suits Allah (Exalted be He). It is by no means similar to that of any of His Creatures, for Allah is not similar to any creature in any of His Attributes. Descending is to be understood along the same line as Istiwa' (Allah's rising over the Throne in a manner that befits Him), Kalam (Allah's Speech), Ghadab (His Anger), Rida (His Pleasure) and the other Attributes of Allah, in which He does not resemble any of His Creatures. Just as Al-Salaf (righteous predecessors) said about Allah's Istiwa' that it is in a manner that befits Him, this also applies to His Descending and His Other Attributes. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says:

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[\(The Most Gracious \(Allâh\) rose over \(Istawâ\) the \(Mighty\) Throne \(in a manner that suits His Majesty\).\)](#) Malik, the Imam of Madina, (may Allah be merciful to him) was asked: O Abu `Abdullah! [\(The Most Gracious \(Allâh\) rose over \(Istawâ\) the \(Mighty\) Throne \(in a manner that suits His Majesty\).\)](#) How did Allah rise over the Throne? He replied: Istiwa' is well known, the manner it was done is unknown, and believing in it is Wajib (obligatory). It was also reported from Um Salamah, the mother of the believers, and from Rabi`ah, the teacher of Malik, that they agreed on the fact that Istiwa' is well known and its manner is beyond reason. In the same way, Allah's Descending (to the world sky) is well known, and the manner He descends is unknown. He (Exalted be He) descends the way He wants and in a manner that suits His Majesty and does not resemble any of His Creatures. The same rule applies to Allah's Speech, Anger and Pleasure. He speaks when He wants in a way that befits Him, and He Becomes Angry with those who disobey or disbelieve in Him in a manner that befits Him as well. The same is said about His Pleasure and the rest of His Divine Attributes. We must have firm belief in such Attributes as they are revealed and be sure

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that they are true and suitable to His Majesty and that they are not similar to that of His Creatures. Indeed, no one knows their manner except Allah (Exalted be He).



### 23- Ruling on having the intention to offer Qiyam-ul-Layl but not fulfilling that intention

**Q: Your Eminence Shaykh, if a person had the intention to offer Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) but does not offer it, are they given the reward for the act of worship they had intended to do?**

**A:** Yes, they are given the reward. The Messenger (peace be upon him) said: [\(When a slave of Allah suffers from illness or sets on a journey, they are credited with the equal of whatever good works they used to do when they were healthy or at home.\)](#) By the same token, if a person is taken over by sleep so that they cannot offer Qiyam-ul-Layl, they will not be deprived of the reward. However, they should pray by day what they have missed by night. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) was unable to offer Qiyam-ul-Layl due to sleep or illness, he would pray on the following day an equal number of Rak`ahs. If a person is prevented by sleep or illness from offering Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) or reciting their Hizb (a 60th portion of the Qur'an), they can do it by day before the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer. This is what is preferable and for which one is rewarded fully. On the Battle of Tabuk, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(There are some people \(left behind\) in Al-Madinah who would accompany you in every work you may be doing, including walking and traveling](#)

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[over lands.](#)) In another wording of the Hadith, it reads: [\(They share you \(the reward of\) every deed you are doing.](#) They [the Companions] asked: Do they share us (the reward of) our deeds while they are in Al-Madinah? The Prophet replied: "Yes, for they have been prevented by illness.") In a third wording of the Hadith, it reads: [\(They were prevented by an excuse.\)](#) The point here is that, if a person is prevented by an excuse from observing a good deed they are accustomed to and have the intention to do it; they are given its reward.



**Q: Thanks to Allah, I have become keen on offering Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional prayer at night), but one night I could not get up until hearing the Adhan (call to Prayer) for Fajr (Dawn) and I only prayed Fajr Prayer. Should I make up for the missing optional night prayer?**

**A:** You are not obliged to make up for the missing optional night prayer, but it is preferable to do. [\(When the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) missed optional night prayer or Wird \(portion of Qur'an recited with consistency\), he would make up for it by day.\)](#) It is a commendable Nafilah (supererogatory act of worship). If you are used to praying ten Rak`ahs at night along with Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), (eleven Rak`ahs), it is preferable, when you miss them by night, to pray twelve Rak`ahs in day with Taslim (salutation of peace ending prayer) at the end of each two Rak`ahs, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) did.

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If you usually pray seven Rak`ahs at night, it is preferable when missed by night, to pray eight Rak`ahs in the day with four Taslims. If the usual number of Rak`ahs (in Qiyam-ul-Layl) is three, it is made up for by day as four Rak`ahs with two Taslims. This is the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet). `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(When the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) was unable to offer Qiyam-ul-Layl due to illness or sleep, he would offer twelve Rak`ahs by day.\)](#) He (peace be upon him) used to pray eleven Rak`ahs at night, offering Taslim at the end of each two Rak`ahs and ending Qiyam-ul-Layl with one Rak`ah as Witr. When he was prevented by sleep or illness, he would make up for them by day as twelve Rak`ahs, offering Taslim at the end of each two Rak`ahs.



## 24- Ruling on praying four Rak`ahs with only one Taslim

**Q: Is it permissible to perform four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) with one Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer)?**

**A:** This is not permissible in the night Salah (Prayer), for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [«The \(optional\) night Salah is performed as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.»](#) The wording of the Hadith implies a command meaning perform Salah two-by-two. As for performing four Rak`ahs with one Taslim during daytime, Muslim jurists differ in this regard. Some consider it permissible, while others see it is not permissible.

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It is preferable to pray two-by-two even during the daytime. However, if a person performs four Rak`ahs with one Taslim, their Salah is considered valid but contrary to the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet). The Sunnah is to pray two-by-two even during the daytime. In another narration of the Hadith reported on the authority of Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father), the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [«The \(optional\) night and day Salah is performed as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.»](#) (Related by Imam Ahmad and Ahl-ul-Sunan (authors of Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes) through authentic Sanad [chain of narrators]) Therefore, a believer should perform optional Salah two-by-two, even during the daytime. If one performs five or seven consecutive Rak`ahs as Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), there is nothing wrong with this, for this is excluded from the Prophet's saying: [«The \(optional\) night Salah is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.»](#) Similarly, it is permissible to perform nine consecutive Rak`ahs, recite first Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of Prayer) in the eighth Rak`ah, and then stand up for the last ninth Rak`ah. As for praying consecutive even number of Rak`ahs (e.g. four, six, eight, etc.) at night, this is not permissible as it is contrary to the Sunnah.

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [«The \(optional\) night Salah is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.»](#) This is an authentic Hadith reported in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim), and there is no difference among scholars concerning its authenticity. Accordingly, it is not permissible to perform optional prayer at night as four, six, or eight Rak`ahs with only one Taslim, as it should be performed two-by-two. During the daytime, a person also has to pray two-by-two.



## 25- The preferable time for performing Qiyam-ul-Layl

**Q: Our brother from Jordan asks: Your Eminence Shaykh, is the Salah (Prayer) performed after the first Adhan (call to Prayer) of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer considered as Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night)? Is there a first and a second Adhan for Fajr Prayer? Is it right that the time for Qiyam-ul-Layl begins from after performing `Isha' (Night) Prayer until the Adhan of Fajr Prayer? Or does it begin at midnight? Please benefit us, may Allah reward you.**

**A:** Qiyam-ul-Layl begins from after performing `Isha' Prayer until dawn. This is the time for performing Qiyam-ul-Layl. It is preferable to perform it late at night, i.e., during the second half or the last third of the night. It is reported in a Sahih (authentic) Hadith that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The Sawm \(Fast\) which is dearest to Allah is that of Prophet Dawud. He used to fast every other day. And the Salah which is dearest to Allah is that of Prophet Dawud \(peace be upon him\) for he slept half of the night](#)

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[and woke up for Salah for the third of it and \(then\) slept the sixth part of it.](#)) This means that Prophet Dawud (peace be upon him) used to perform Salah during the fourth and fifth sixths of the night. He used to sleep half the night, wake up for Salah for one third of it, i.e., the fourth and fifth sixths of the night. If one wakes up for Salah during the last third, this entails a great reward, as it is reported in a Sahih Hadith that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Our Lord \(Blessed and Exalted be He\) descends every night to the nearest \(lowest\) heaven, when a third of the night remains, and says: Is there anyone to invoke Me, so that I may respond to their invocation? Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant them their request? Is there anyone seeking My Forgiveness, so that I may forgive them?\)](#) This Descent is in a way that befits Allah, without any resemblance to that of His Creatures. It is a Descent that is compatible with the Majesty of Allah, whose manner is known to none but Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). The same applies to Istiwa' (Allah's rising over the Throne in a manner that befits Him), as Allah does not resemble any of His Creatures in any of His Attributes. This is why scholars state: The manner of Istiwa' cannot be explained. A Mu'min (believer) should believe in the Attributes and Names of Allah in the manner that befits Him (Glorified and Exalted be He), without Tahrif (distortion of the meaning), Ta`til (denial of Allah's Attributes), Takyif (describing how an Attribute is), or Tamthil (likening Allah's Attributes to those of His Creation). Thus Imam Malik and other scholars of the Salaf (righteous predecessors), like Al-Shafi`y, Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Al-Thawry, Al-Awza`y and others, state: "We believe that our Lord is over His Heavens and His Throne. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) rose over it in a manner beyond our knowledge." Back to the issue at hand, a person may wake up either early at night, at midnight or late at night, according to the capacity of each person, for performing Qiyam-ul-Layl,

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supplicating to Allah, and resorting to Him and seeking His Help. Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) should be offered at the end of each two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), based on the saying

of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [«The \(optional\) night Salah is two \(Rak`ahs followed\) by two, and when one of you fears that dawn is about to break, pray one Rak`ah as Witr to make what \(the Rak`ahs\) you have prayed odd-numbered.»](#) The best number of Rak`ahs to be observed for optional night Salah is eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs, since this was the number of Rak`ahs most often observed by the Prophet (peace be upon him), where he used to offer Taslim at the end of each two Rak`ahs and conclude with one Rak`ah as Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) before the break of dawn. Yet, there is nothing wrong with performing more or less number of Rak`ahs. For example, one can perform three, five or seven Rak`ahs. However, it is Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) to offer Taslim at the end of each two Rak`ahs and then perform one Rak`ah as Witr to make their Salah of an odd number of Rak`ahs. Also, it is permissible to offer three or five consecutive Rak`ahs with one Taslim, and sit to recite Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer) in the last Rak`ah. Yet, it is better to offer Taslim at the end of each two Rak`ahs, whether praying early at night, at midnight or late at night. If one is busy with studying early at night, one should perform Witr before sleeping, lest one may miss it. Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) used to do so. The Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered him to perform Witr early at night, since he used to study knowledge at that time. What is meant is that if one fears not being able to wake up for Salah late at night, they should perform it early at night in compliance with the advice of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

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[«Anyone who fears that they may not get up at the end of the night, let them offer Witr at the beginning of the night; and anyone who is eager to get up at the end of the night, let them offer Witr at the end of the night, for Salah at the end of the night is witnessed \(by the angels\) and that is better.»](#) (Related by Muslim in his Sahih) Thus, early at night, midnight and late at night are all good times for Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer). Yet, the best time is late at night, if possible.





**Q: A female questioner asks: Your Eminence Shaykh, when is the beginning of Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional prayer at night)? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Offering Qiyam-ul-Layl is Mashru` (Islamically permissible) all through the night. However, it is preferred to be prayed in the last third of the night and best among all are the fourth and fifth sixths of the night. Prophet Dawud (David, peace be upon him) used to sleep half of the night and pray for a third of it. The Messenger (peace be upon him) said: ["The most beloved prayer to Allah is that of Prophet Dawud \(David\), who used to sleep half of the night, pray a third of it, and sleep a sixth of it."](#) It is preferable to pray in the fourth and fifth sixths of the night. The sixth sixth is part of the last third wherein all Prayers are good since it is the time of Allah's Descending (to the world sky). Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: ["Our Lord \(Exalted be He\) descends every](#)

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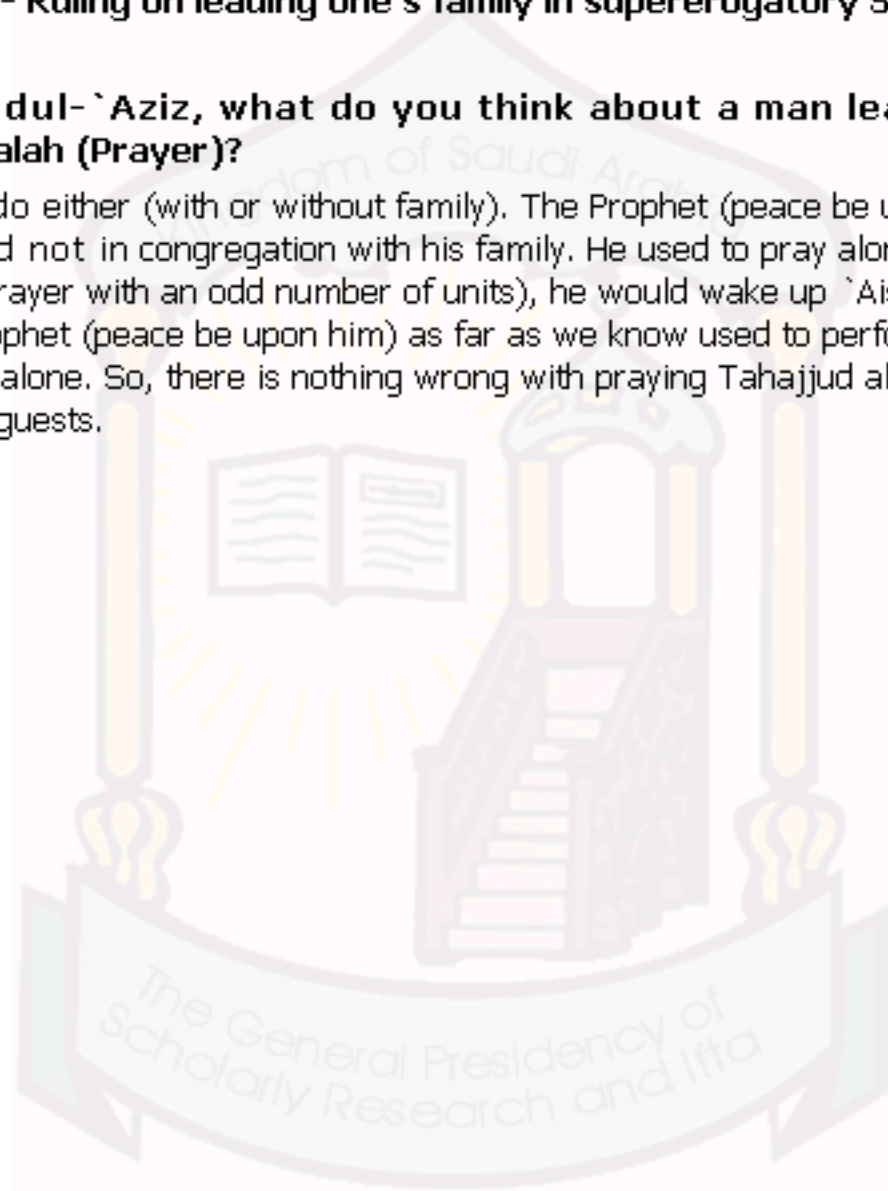
[night to the world sky when the last third portion of the night begins. He says: Is there any supplicant to answer him? Is there any seeker for My Favor to give him? Is there any seeker for forgiveness to forgive him?"](#) The whole second half of the night is good. It is a time that Du`a's (supplications) are answered and of great reward.



## 26- Ruling on leading one's family in supererogatory Salah

**Q: Shaykh `Abdul-`Aziz, what do you think about a man leading his family in supererogatory Salah (Prayer)?**

**A:** A person can do either (with or without family). The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pray alone at home and not in congregation with his family. He used to pray alone at night and when it was time for Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), he would wake up `Aishah to pray Witr. This means that the Prophet (peace be upon him) as far as we know used to perform Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) alone. So, there is nothing wrong with praying Tahajjud alone or in congregation with one's family or guests.





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### 27- Ruling on not performing Qiyam-ul-Layl and Salat-ul-Duha

**Q: A questioner asks: Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah), I perform the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers regularly on time, but I do not perform Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) or Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) though I am able to. Is there any sin on me for this?**

**A:** It is one of the great blessings of Allah to perform the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers regularly on time, which is also one of the most important obligations. Allah (Exalted be He) says: **Guard strictly (five obligatory) As-Salawât (the prayers) especially the middle Salât (i.e. the best prayer – 'Asr).** And: **And perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and give Zakât and bow down (or submit yourselves with obedience to Allâh) along with Ar-Raki'ûn.** Many Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) urges performing Salah (Prayer) regularly on time and with Khushu` (the heart being submissively attuned to the act of worship). So, you have to thank Allah for this and ask Him for steadfastness. It is a must for every believer to perform the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers on their specified time. Muslim men should perform Salah in congregation in the Masjid (mosque) and it is not permissible to be careless or inclined to perform it at home. As for women, they should perform it on time as well

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with Khushu`, quietness, solemnity, and without rushing. Allah (Exalted be He) says: **Successful indeed are the believers.** **Those who offer their Salât (prayers) with all solemnity and full submissiveness.** And: **and perform As-Salât (Iqamât-as-Salât). Verily, As-Salât (the prayer) prevents from Al-Fahshâ' (i.e. great sins of every kind, unlawful sexual intercourse) and Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism, and every kind of evil wicked deed)** It is a must for every believer to pay great attention to Salah and strictly adhere to perform it on its specified time with Khushu`, solemnity, presence of mind, and without rushing while standing before Allah (Exalted be He). Men should add to this by attending it in congregation with their fellow Muslims in the Masjid. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **If a person hears the call to Salah and does not offer it in the mosque with no excuse to prevent him, his Salah (which he offered at home) will not be accepted. The Companions asked: 'What excuse?' He (peace be upon him) replied: 'Fear [of an enemy or a wild animal] or sickness.'** In Sahih Al-Bukhari, it is reported that Ibn Um Maktum who was blind came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and asked: **O Allah's Prophet, I have no one to accompany me in my way to the Masjid, so, is there any Rukhsah (concession) for me to pray at home? The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 'Do you hear**

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**the call to Salah?' He replied: 'Yes.' The Prophet said: 'So respond to the call.'** This was a blind man who had no one to accompany him on his way to the Masjid. However, the Prophet (peace be upon

him) said to him, "So respond..." meaning by performing Salah in congregation in the Masjid.

As for Salat-ul-Duha and Tahajjud, they are Mustahab (desirable). If a person is capable of performing Tahajjud at night, this is considered a great act of worship and a stressed Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet). A person can perform even one Rak`ah, which is the minimum number of units in Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), or three or more Rak`ahs, which is better. Salat-ul-Duha is Sunnah, even if only two Rak`ahs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) commended some of his Companions to offer two Rak`ahs for Salat-ul-Duha. However, both Tahajjud and Salat-ul-Duha are Mustahab, not obligatory, prayers.



## 28- Ruling on reciting out loud in supererogatory night Salah

**Q: What is the ruling on reciting out loud in supererogatory night Salah (Prayer)? Also, what is the ruling if a person recites out loud in a Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) out of forgetfulness?**

**A:** It is Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) to recite the Qur'an out loud in Salah offered at night, be that Salah obligatory or supererogatory.

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In the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer and `Isha' (Night) Prayers, recitation is done aloud in the first two Rak`ahs of each, and subvocal in the third Rak`ah of the Maghrib Prayer and the last two Rak`ahs of the `Isha' Prayer. In supererogatory Salah, the Sunnah is to recite out loud in a way that does not cause any disturbance or hardship to others. If there are people praying, sleeping, or reciting the Qur'an nearby, the praying person should recite in a voice that would not disturb or interrupt them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was reported to have witnessed a group of people raising their voices while praying in the Masjid (mosque). He said: **Each one of you is talking to his Lord, so do not disturb one another.** All in all, recitation should not be too loud in a way that disturbs others praying or sleeping. This also applies to recitation of the Qur'an in the Masjid outside Salah, where a person should make sure not to disturb others, and recite in a way that does not cause other sleeping or reciting persons any inconvenience. Some people recite so loudly in the Masjid on Fridays and other days in a way that disturbs others around them. This should not be done, for it is at least Makruh (reprehensible). A person reciting the Qur'an should make sure not to disturb others who may be praying or reciting the Qur'an, whether in Qiyam-ul-Layl (standing for optional Prayer at night) at home or in the Masjid. This is the Sunnah.

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**Q: Is it conditional that recitation in supererogatory Salah (Prayer) be subvocal, bearing in mind that I offer supererogatory night Salah in a loud voice and supererogatory Salah during daytime subvocally?**

**A:** It is not necessary that supererogatory Salah be subvocal. It is permissible to offer supererogatory Salah loudly or subvocally alike. Indeed, subvocal recitation is more likely to increase devotion, but it is by no means impermissible to recite out loud as in Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet), such as the supererogatory Salahs accompanying Fajr (Dawn), Zhuhr (Noon), Maghrib (Sunset) or `Isha' (Night) Prayers. There is nothing wrong with offering Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory prayer before noon) in the Masjid (mosque). There is also nothing wrong with praying it at home while being visible to one's family or guests. Nevertheless, praying in a place invisible to the people is more likely to increase devotion. There is no problem if one prays loudly before the people so long as this is done with faithfulness, free from Riya' (showing-off).

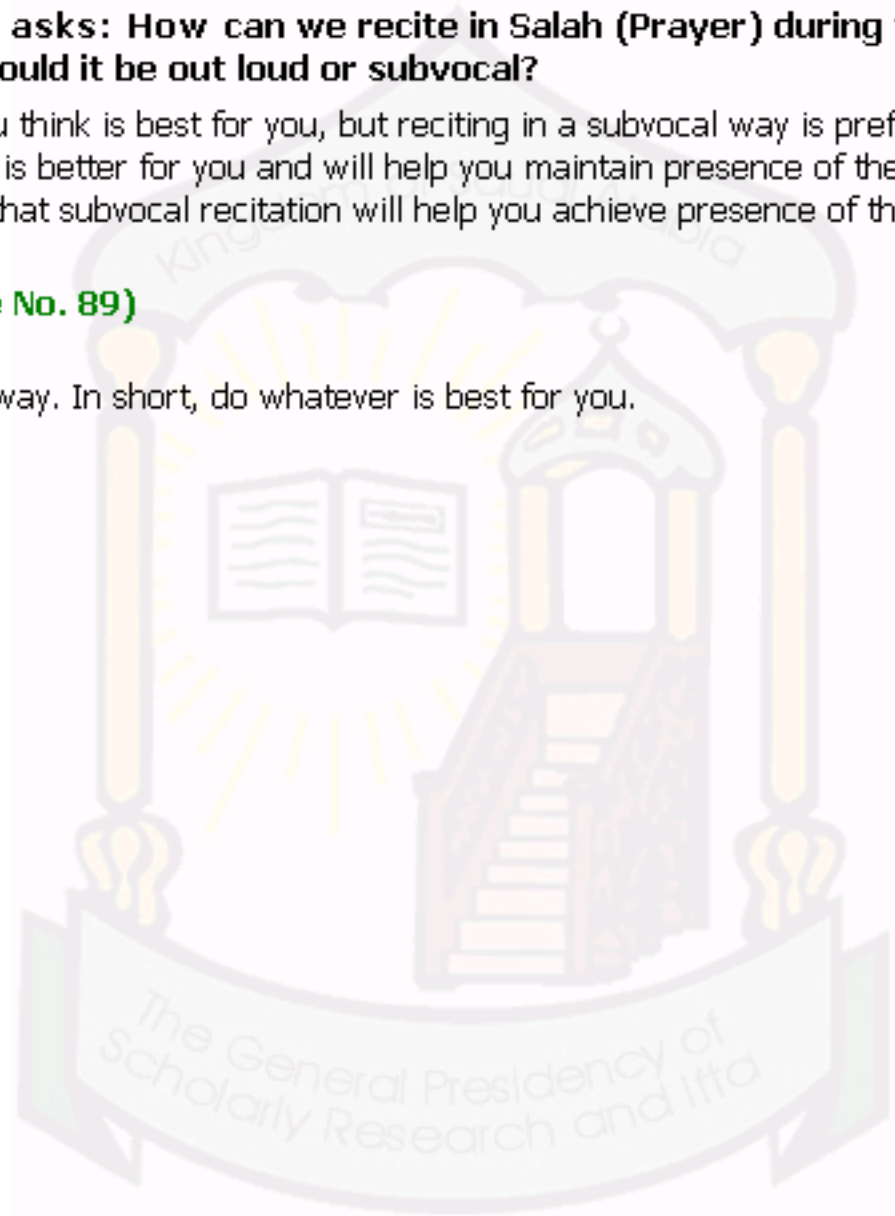


**Q: A questioner asks: How can we recite in Salah (Prayer) during the late hour of the night at home? Should it be out loud or subvocal?**

**A:** Do whatever you think is best for you, but reciting in a subvocal way is preferable. If you feel that recitation out loud is better for you and will help you maintain presence of the heart, then recite out loud. But if you feel that subvocal recitation will help you achieve presence of the heart,

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recite in a subvocal way. In short, do whatever is best for you.





**Q: Should the recitation of the Qur'an in the Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) be subvocal or aloud?**

**A:** It is recommended to recite out loud; however, if someone offers it with subvocal recitation, there is nothing wrong with this, but it is better to recite aloud in a way that does not disturb anyone. A praying person should not harm the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) or other worshipers by his recitation. A worshiper should recite the Qur'an with a moderately loud voice that does not annoy anyone. Nevertheless, there is nothing wrong in subvocal recitation in Prayer. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated [\(that the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) offered Tahajjud with subvocal and loud recitation.\)](#)







**Q: Which is better: To offer Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) aloud or with subvocal recitation?**

**A:** It is best to recite the Qur'an in Qiyam-ul-Layl aloud; however, if you recite in a subvocal voice, there is nothing wrong in doing that. Thus, offering it aloud is the preferable manner. It is reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite the Qur'an in Qiyam-ul-Layl aloud, and may have performed it in a subvocal voice, as reported by `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her). It is Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) in performing Qiyam-ul-Layl whether it is offered at home, on a journey or in the Masjid (mosque),

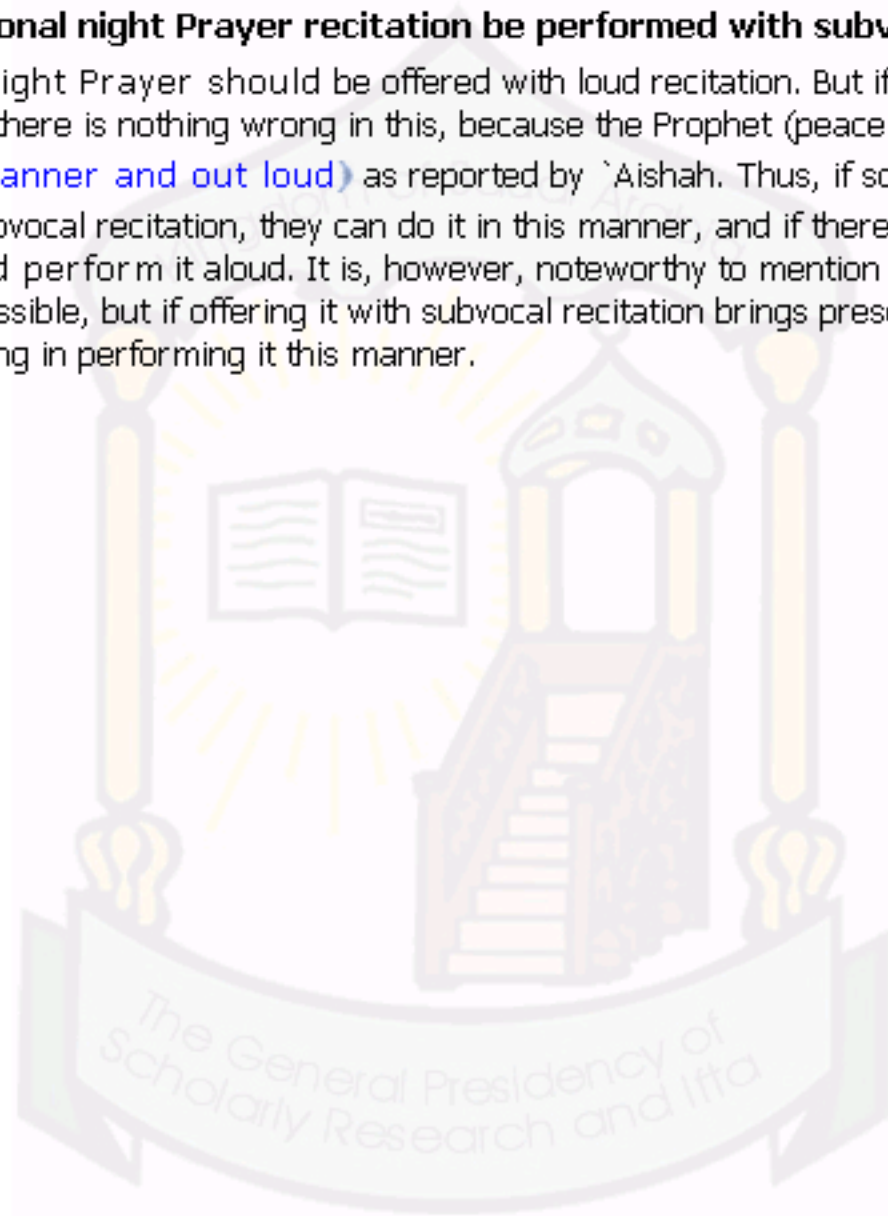
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in Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) or Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) in Ramadan, to recite out loud. This applies to men and women alike, at home to in the Masjid. However, if there are Ajanib (men other than husbands or unmarried relatives) at a woman's home, it is better for her to offer such Prayer with subvocal recitation, because her voice might tempt some people. Similarly, when a woman recites Talbiyah (devotional expressions chanted at certain times during Hajj and `Umrah) and there are Ajanib around her, then it is better for her to do so in a subvocal voice. As for the obligatory Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud), she should offer them at home and should recite the Qur'an aloud. But if she prays behind an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), she should listen attentively to his recitation.



**Q: Should the optional night Prayer recitation be performed with subvocal or loud voice?**

**A:** The optional night Prayer should be offered with loud recitation. But if someone offers it in a subvocal recitation, there is nothing wrong in this, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) [\(offered it in a subvocal manner and out loud\)](#) as reported by `Aishah. Thus, if someone finds benefit in offering it with subvocal recitation, they can do it in this manner, and if there is benefit in offering it aloud, they should perform it aloud. It is, however, noteworthy to mention that offering it aloud is preferable if it is possible, but if offering it with subvocal recitation brings presence of the heart, then there is nothing wrong in performing it this manner.





**Q: If someone is accustomed to performing the supererogatory Prayer, does it become of an obligatory status?**

**A:** No, it does not become an obligation. The supererogatory Prayer is always supererogatory, and it will never become of an obligatory status. However, if someone assumes Ihram (ritual state for Hajj or `Umrah) to perform the rites of a voluntary Hajj (pilgrimage) or `Umrah (lesser pilgrimage), then they are obligated to complete them, based on Allah's (Exalted be He) Saying:

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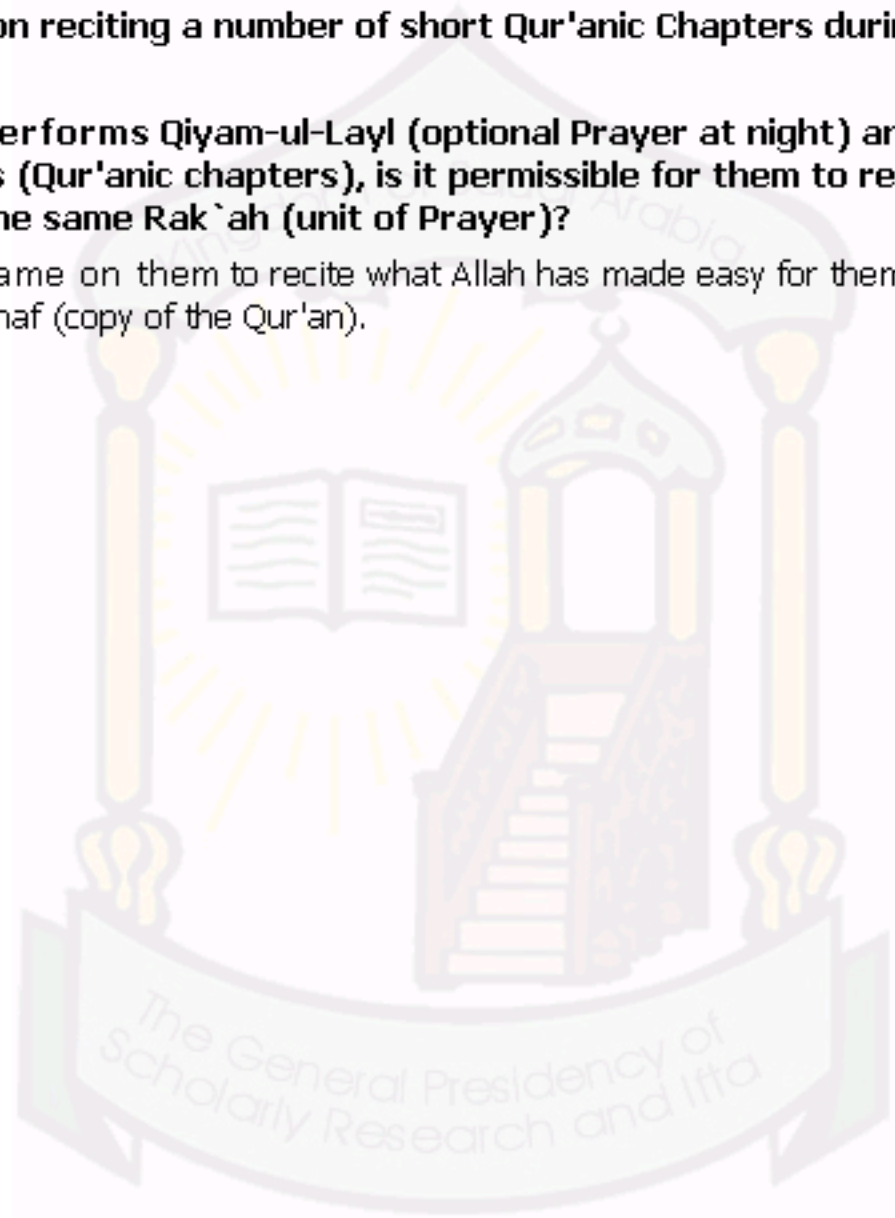
﴿And perform properly (i.e. all the ceremonies according to the ways of Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), the Hajj and `Umrah (i.e. the pilgrimage to Makkah) for Allāh.﴾ This is considered a special case for Hajj and `Umrah; if someone enters into the state of Ihram to perform them, they become an obligation and must be completed. As for other voluntary acts of worship, such as Prayer, fasting, charity and other devotional acts, they remain voluntary. Thus, if someone starts a supererogatory Prayer or fasting, it is permissible to stop it; however, it is best to complete such acts. Furthermore, if someone gives money in charity, it is permissible to take the money back before giving it to the poor. The point is that all supererogatory acts of worship keep their supererogatory status until the performer completes them, with the exception of the voluntary Hajj and `Umrah. Thus, if someone starts performing Hajj or `Umrah, they become an obligation until they are completed.



**29- The ruling on reciting a number of short Qur'anic Chapters during Qiyam-ul-Layl**

**Q: If someone performs Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) and memorizes only a few short Surahs (Qur'anic chapters), is it permissible for them to recite these chapters consecutively in the same Rak`ah (unit of Prayer)?**

**A:** There is no blame on them to recite what Allah has made easy for them. They can also recite directly from a Mus-haf (copy of the Qur'an).





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**30- Ruling on holding a Mus-haf during Salah by someone who has only memorized a few Qur'anic chapters**

**Q: Is it permissible for someone who has only memorized a few Surahs (Qur'anic chapters) to hold a Mus-haf (copy of the Qur'an) to recite from it during Salah (Prayer)?**

**A:** It is permissible to recite from a Mus-haf during Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) at night or during Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan). However, during the obligatory Prayer a praying person is to recite whatever Allah facilitates for them to memorize and therefore there is no need to read from a Mus-haf. The recitation of Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) is obligatory in Salah and the remaining of recitation is Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet). Therefore, a praying person can recite Al-Fatihah - and this is sufficient - then they can recite whatever they memorize of Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) or short Surahs (Qur'anic chapters). And this is sufficient, praise be to Allah.



**Q: Is it enough to read only Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) in Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) and the other supererogatory Prayers, or is it mandatory to read another Surah (Qur'anic chapter) along with it?**

**A:** It is enough to read Al-Fatihah, because it is a Rukn (integral pillar) of Prayer. But if the praying person recites another Surah along with it, it is better. Rather, it is recommended to read another Surah (Qur'anic chapter) along with Al-Fatihah, since the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to read another Surah with it. Nevertheless, he (peace be upon him) stated: [\(The Prayer of whoever does not recite Al-Fatihah is invalid.\)](#) Thus reading Al-Fatihah is a Rukn, and whatever

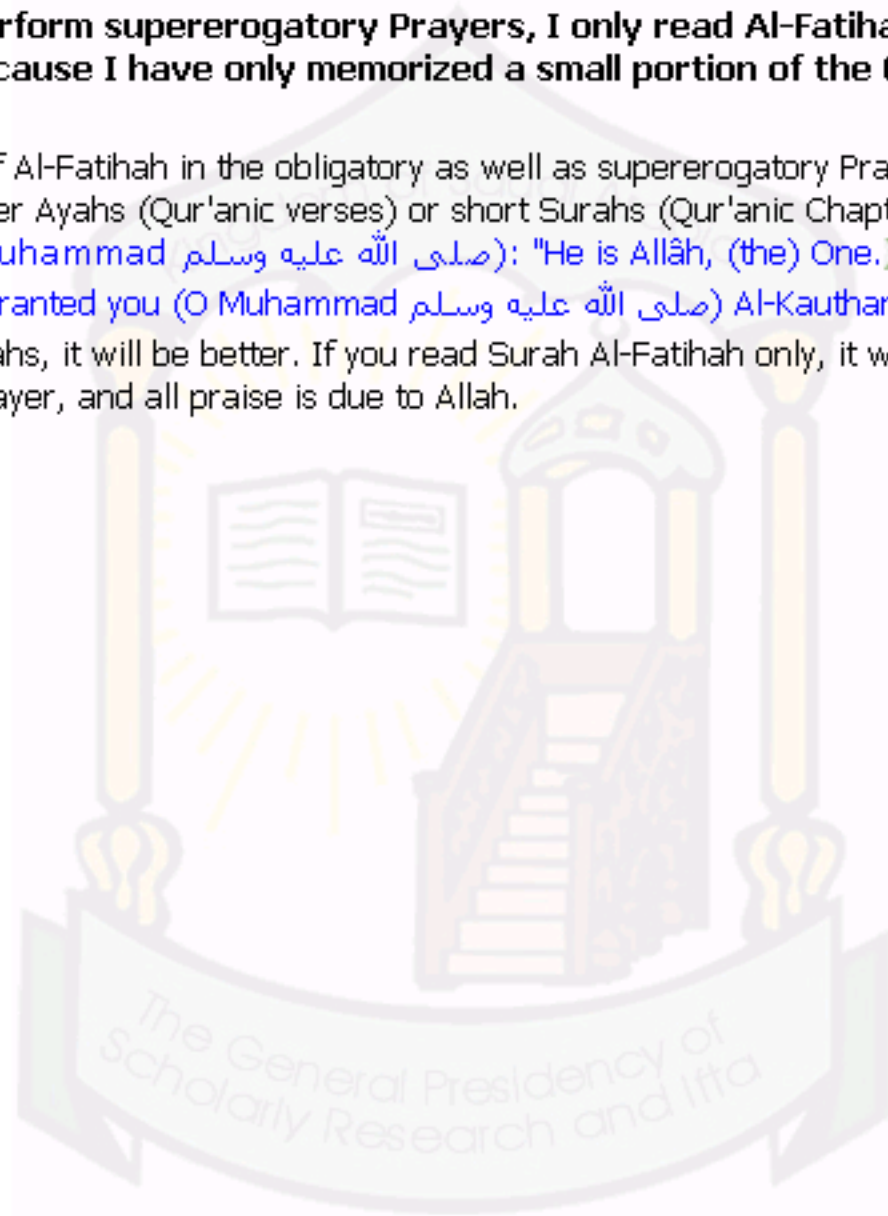
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is recited along with it is Mustahab (desirable).



**Q: Whenever I perform supererogatory Prayers, I only read Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) because I have only memorized a small portion of the Qur'an. Is what I am doing right?**

**A:** the recitation of Al-Fatihah in the obligatory as well as supererogatory Prayers is sufficient, but if you recite some other Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) or short Surahs (Qur'anic Chapters) such as Surah Al-Ikhlâs: ﴿Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.﴾ or Surah Al-Kawthar: ﴿Verily, We have granted you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) Al-Kauthar (a river in Paradise).﴾ and other such Surahs, it will be better. If you read Surah Al-Fatihah only, it will be sufficient, even if it is an obligatory Prayer, and all praise is due to Allah.





**Q: Is it permissible to hold a Mus-haf (copy of the Qur'an) to read from it during Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night)?**

**A:** There is nothing wrong in reading from a Mus-haf in Qiyam-ul-Layl, during Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) or other Prayers. It is permissible to do that if you need to do so. It is reported that the Mawla (freed slave) of `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) used to lead her in Prayer during Ramadan, reciting from a Mus-haf.







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### 31 - Specifying Surahs of Ayat-ul-Sujud in supererogatory Prayers

**Q: The audience asks: Is it preferable to read Surahs (Qur'anic chapters) that include Ayat-ul-Sujud (Qur'anic verses of Prostration) in the supererogatory Prayers in the daytime or in the night? May Allah reward you well.**

**A:** It is preferable to read from the Qur'an in these Prayers without concentrating on reciting the Surahs that include Ayat-ul-Sujud. You should read what you can from the Qur'an as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do. You should read what you from the Qur'an in Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon), Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) Prayers whether you are an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) or a Ma'mum (a person being led by an Imam in Prayer) in accordance with the Imam's situation. In Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation), you should read Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and what you would like to read from the Qur'an in the first and second Rak`ahs (units of Salah) of Zhuhr and `Asr Prayers. In Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud), you should only read Al-Fatihah in the first two Rak`ahs and then listen to your Imam, and in the third and fourth Rak`ahs of the `Isha' Prayer, in the third and fourth Rak`ahs of Zhuhr Prayer, in the third and fourth Rak`ahs of `Asr Prayer and in the third Rak`ah of Maghrib Prayer, you should only read Al-Fatihah. In the supererogatory Salah, you should read what you can from the Qur'an. You should not specify Ayat-ul-Sujud, but read what you can. However, it is preferable to read the Qur'an in order from the beginning until you finish it, and whenever you finish the Qur'an, you should start reciting it over again. You should read what you can from the Qur'an in your Salah and outside it: whenever you finish the Qur'an, you should start it over again. This is the preferable way of reading the Qur'an.



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### 32- Issue on Merits of Qiyam-ul-Layl

**Q: I saw my father offering eight Rak'ahs (units of Prayer) at midnight. I asked him about the merit of Qiyam-ul-Layl (standing for optional Prayer at night). He told me that the earth does not consume the body of a person who offers Qiyam-ul-Layl (i.e. their bodies will not decompose after death). Is this true, i.e. that the dead body, of a person who would perform Qiyam-ul-Layl while most people are sleeping, will not remain intact? Does the soul rest in the body after death or ascend to its Creator?**

**A:** Qiyam-ul-Layl is a greatly-recommended act of worship and a stressed Sunnah. Describing his devoted servants, Allah (Exalted be He) said: ﴿And those who spend the night in worship of their Lord, prostrate and standing.﴾ Describing the pious worshippers, Allah said: ﴿They used to sleep but little by night [invoking their Lord (Allâh) and praying, with fear and hope].﴾ ﴿And in the hours before dawn, they were (found) asking (Allâh) for forgiveness.﴾ Moreover, Allah said to His Prophet (peace be upon him): ﴿O you wrapped in garments (i.e. Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)!﴾ ﴿Stand (to pray) all night, except a little -﴾ ﴿Half of it or a little less than that,﴾ ﴿Or a little more. And recite the Qur'ân (aloud) in a slow, (pleasant tone and) style.﴾ He (Glorified be He) also said: ﴿Their sides forsake their beds, to invoke their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend (in charity in Allâh's Cause) out of what We have bestowed on them.﴾

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This is in addition to many other Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) that stress the excellence of performing Qiyam-ul-Layl. Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to perform Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) often and urged the Muslims to do so, saying: ﴿O People! Spread Salam (Islamic greeting of peace: peace be upon you), give food, join the ties of kinship and pray (at night) while people are sound asleep (i.e. negligent) you will enter Paradise in peace.﴾ No doubt, offering Tahajjud is a great Qurbah (a good deed by which Allah's Pleasure is sought) and act of worship. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer eleven Rak'ahs at night ending each pair of Rak'ahs by Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) and offering a concluding single Rak'ah as Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). Sometimes, he (peace be upon him) would offer Witr as nine, seven, or five Rak'ahs or more or less. But in general, he (peace be upon him) usually offered eleven and sometimes thirteen Rak'ahs, in which he used to prolong recitation, Ruku' (bowing) and Sujud (prostration). As for the claim that the earth does not consume the body of the person who offers Qiyam-ul-Layl, as far as we know it is groundless as there is no Shar'y (Islamic legal) evidence to substantiate such a claim. As to the soul of a believer, it ascends to Paradise in the form of a bird and eats from its fruits.

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In this regard, it is authentically reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: ﴿The

soul of the believer is a bird which hangs from the trees of Paradise.) As for the souls of martyrs, they are inside green birds that roam freely in Paradise then return to lanterns which hang beneath 'Arsh (Allah's Throne). Thus, the souls of believers will be honored but the souls of martyrs are held in a special position. However, Allah will send souls back to their bodies once He so wills as when He returns them to be questioned by angles in the grave about their Lord, religion and prophet. Thereafter, the dead person to whom the soul is sent back as such will be able to hear the question, and answer, in the case of a righteous person, or stammer and find no answer, in the case of a Kafir (disbeliever), or a hypocrite (we ask Allah for safety). As for Kafirs, their souls will be in Hellfire (we ask Allah for saving us). Regarding the people of Pharaoh, Allah said: [\(The Fire, they are exposed to it, morning and afternoon. And on the Day when the Hour will be established \(it will be said to the angels\): "Cause Fir'aun's \(Pharaoh\) people to enter the severest torment!"\)](#) Scholars held different opinions with regard to the dwelling place of the soul of dead Kafirs in this world. Some are of the opinion that it is the Fire also

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while others view they will rest in graves, in addition to other different opinions. Resting in whatever place, they will be tortured, will be exposed to the Fire, and are destined for the Fire in the Hereafter (we ask Allah for safety).



### 33- The virtue of performing Sujud in abundance

**Q: Please clarify the ruling on the Prayer of Sujud (prostration) during the night.**

**A:** This question is general. It may mean the ruling on Salah (Prayer) at night where Sujud is made in abundance and recitations are not long. It may mean something else in the mind of the inquirer which I did not understand. If he meant the former, the permissibility of making Sujud in abundance has been reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) to be among the things that leads to Paradise. It has also been reported that with each Sujud that a servant of Allah performs, Allah raises him one degree. In a Hadith narrated by Rabi`ah ibn Ka`b Al-Aslami he said: [\(I said, 'O Messenger of Allah!' The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) replied, 'Ask!' He was serving the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) so he said; 'I ask to be your companion in Paradise.' The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) replied, 'Help me by performing Sujud in abundance](#)) i.e. offering Prayer in abundance. This is because offering Prayer in abundance

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entails performing Sujud in abundance. Sujud involves Khushu` (the heart being submissively attuned to the act of worship) to Allah, glorification of Allah and is among the things that raises in degree and erases sins, causes a Muslim to enter Paradise and being saved from Hellfire; and brings about the intercession of the Prophet (peace be upon him) if the worshiper maintains the Oneness of Allah and is a Muslim. It has been authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(As far as for Ruku` \(bowing\) is concerned, extol in it the Great and Glorious Lord, and while prostrating yourselves be earnest in supplication, for it is fitting that your supplications should be answered.\)](#) This means that Muslims should seek to have their supplications answered. (Narrated by Muslim) in his Sahih [Authentic Hadith book]). The Prophet (peace be upon him) also stated: [\(The nearest a person comes to his Lord, is when he is prostrating himself, so make supplication in abundance \(while in this state\).\)](#) This demonstrates the importance of Sujud and that a servant of Allah is closer to his Lord when he is prostrating. This is because Sujud is a state of submission and humility to Allah (Exalted be He). In this position, worshipers place their faces, which are the noblest of all their external organs, on the ground in submission to their Lord, with tranquility and presence of the heart, seeking reward from Allah and fearing His punishment. In this position, humility is manifest and a worshiper becomes in the closest position to the Lord. For this reason

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the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(The nearest a servant comes to his Lord is when he is prostrating himself, so make supplication in abundance \(while in this state\).\)](#) This is evidence that it is required to supplicate to Allah during Sujud and that the prostrating person should seek to their supplications answered. The Prophet (peace be upon him) is reported to have said in a Hadith narrated by Thawban: [\(Prostrate in abundance before Allah, for you will not perform one prostration except that He will raise you a degree because of it, and remove a sin from you, because of it.\)](#) A Muslim must therefore offer Salah in abundance during the day and night such as Salat-ul-Duha

(supererogatory Prayer before noon) and Zhuhr (Noon) Prayers, and during the night between Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha (Night) Prayers, and in the middle of the night and at its end. All of the above are excellent times where a worshiper should pray in abundance, especially during the night. This is because it is better to pray at night than in the morning. At night a worshiper comes close to tranquility and presence of the heart as attested to by the words of Allah: [﴿Verily, the rising by night \(for Tahajjud prayer\) is very hard and most potent and good for governing oneself, and most suitable for \(understanding\) the Word \(of Allah\).﴾](#) Prayer at night has a special status, bringing a worshiper closer to the presence of heart and mind and humility, especially in the middle of the night and toward its end. Therefore, it is preferable to offer Salah in abundance day and night and conclude it with Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) upon finishing all the Prayers prescribed by Allah. The optimal number is eleven

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or twenty-three Rak`ahs (units of Prayer). This was the practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him). There is nothing wrong if someone prays less than this number of Rak`ahs in Witr, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to vary the number of Rak`ahs in Witr Prayer. Sometimes he would offer five, seven, nine or thirteen Rak`ahs, and mostly eleven Rak`ahs. The matter is open to choice. There is no problem if someone prays twenty, thirty, forty or even a hundred Rak`ahs at night and then concludes them with Witr. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was asked about Prayers offered at night and he said: [﴿They are offered in pairs.﴾](#) He did not set a limit for the number of Rak`ahs. For instance he did not say that they should be ten or twenty Rak`ahs; he left the matter open. Due to this, a worshiper is to offer as many Rak`ahs as possible without causing hardship upon themselves. Prayer should be performed with tranquility, without haste and without inflicting hardship upon the worshiper. Prayers should be concluded with Witr for the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [﴿The \(optional\) Prayer during the night should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs, but if one of you fears morning is near, he should pray one Rak`ah, which will make his Prayer an odd number for him.﴾](#) Therefore, one can pray what Allah has facilitated for them and then sleep, but should not stay up late so as to be able to perform their duties in the morning as well as the Prayers during the day. At night one is to pray what Allah has decreed for them either at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of the night. The last part of the night

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is preferable for Salah, if it is possible. One may then perform one Rak`ah as Witr Prayer, and this is the best.



### 34- Ruling on committing oneself to perform a certain number of Rak`ahs for Qiyam-ul-Layl

**Q: I am used to performing forty-nine Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) every Friday as optional night Salah (Prayer). In Ramadan I perform ninety-nine Rak`ahs. What is the ruling on this Salah (Prayer)? Should I continue in this way, or do you direct me to another course? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) was not confined to a certain number of Rak`ahs by the lawgiver (peace be upon him). Rather, the Prophet (peace be upon him) left it optional. Whatever is stated by the Messenger (peace be upon him) is the Shari`ah (Islamic law) that must be respected, since he does not speak of his own desire. Rather, it is only a Revelation revealed. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: **﴿By the star when it goes down (or vanishes).﴾** **﴿Your companion (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) has neither gone astray nor has erred.﴾** **﴿Nor does he speak of (his own) desire.﴾** **﴿It is only a Revelation revealed.﴾** The word "companion" here refers to our Prophet (peace be upon him). It is authentically reported in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **﴿The (optional) night Salah should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs, and when one of you fears that dawn is about to break, pray one Rak`ah as Witr to make what (the Rak`ahs) you have prayed odd-numbered.﴾**

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Thus, the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not determine a fixed number. Rather, he (peace be upon him) said: **﴿The (optional) night Salah should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs.﴾** Accordingly, it is permissible to perform ten, one hundred or more or less Rak`ahs, and then conclude the optional night Salah with one single Rak`ah before dawn. Yet, it is better for to stick to eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs, patterning after the Prophet (peace be upon him), since it is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) at most times performed Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) as eleven Rak`ahs, and sometimes as thirteen Rak`ahs, and other times less than that. Thus, it is preferable for a Mu'min (believer) to pattern after the Prophet (peace be upon him) and pay attention to prolong Ruku` (bowing), Sujud (prostration) and recitation, for this is better. It is also permissible to perform as many as twenty Rak`ahs, as the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) did during the caliphate of `Umar; and then offer Witr as three continuous Rak`ahs, which totals twenty-three, or offer Witr as forty-nine, forty-three, forty-one, ninety-nine, one hundred and one Rak`ahs or more or less. All this is permissible. Each person should perform optional night Salah according to their capacity. A person who thinks that optional night Salah has a fixed number of Rak`ahs is mistaken, whether in Ramadan or other than Ramadan. It is not permissible for anyone to determine [in religion] what is not legislated by Allah and His Messenger, since all acts of worship are Tawqifiyy (bound by a religious text and not amenable to personal opinion). It is impermissible to determine a fixed number of Rak`ahs to be performed during night or day without a Shar`y (Islamic legal) proof.

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When the people of the Book said: **﴿None shall enter Paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian,﴾**

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) replied to that, saying: [\(Say \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\), "Produce your proof if you are truthful."\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Anyone who introduces anything into this matter of ours \(Islam\) that is not part of it will have it rejected.\)](#) (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: [\(Anyone who does an action which is not in accordance with this matter of ours \(Islam\) will have it rejected.\)](#) Thus, the claim of any person that optional night Salah should not exceed eleven, thirteen or more or less Rak`ahs is substantiated with no evidence. Rather, the person who claims that is mistaken and it is impermissible to imitate or follow them. Every Mu'min should pray as many Rak`ahs as they can: one, three, five, seven, nine, eleven, thirteen, or any other number of Rak`ahs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) Salah](#)

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[by night should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs.\)](#) Ahl-ul-Sunan (authors of Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes) recorded another narration through a good Isnad (chain of narrators) that reads: [\(The \(optional\) Salah by night and day should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs.\)](#) Such were the instructions of the Sahabah (may Allah be pleased with them) who are the most knowledgeable people after the prophets. They performed optional night Salah as twenty-three or more Rak`ahs. This matter is open to choice, since it was not exactly determined by the Prophet (peace be upon him). This is the correct view in this regard. It is better for you inquirer to perform optional night Salah as thirteen or eleven Rak`ahs while observing tranquility in Ruku` and Sujud and recite the Qur'an with measured recitation in order for you to contemplate it. This is the best number of Rak`ahs to be observed regarding the optional Salah at night. Yet, there is nothing wrong with praying more or less number of Rak`ahs, Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah).



### 35- Ruling on dedicating a particular night or day for a certain act of worship

**Q: The Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade dedicating a particular night or day for a certain act of worship. We, the youth, want to gather on the eve of Friday or one night during the week and spend the night in Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night). The aim is not because we think it is a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet), but to encourage the youth to offer Qiyam-ul-Layl. What is the ruling on this?**

**A:** There is nothing wrong in this, but do not specify a certain night. You may choose Friday one time and Thursday the next; whenever it is possible for you. But as for specifying a certain night,

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it is impermissible because it is Bid`ah (innovation in religion); especially if observed on Friday. The Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade dedicating Friday night for Prayer and forbade specifying its day for fasting. However, if Friday coincides with a day when one usually visits fellow Muslims or when they visit him and they all pray together on that day, there is nothing wrong in this, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) did when he visited `Itban (may Allah be pleased with him). He prayed two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) and when he visited Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) he prayed two Rak`ahs with him. Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) did the same when he visited Abu Al-Darda' (may Allah be pleased with him) and offered Prayers with him during the night. There is nothing wrong with this. Dedicating a certain night for gathering and offering Prayer has no basis in Shari`ah (Islamic law), but there is nothing wrong if you pray together when you meet if you do not schedule the same day for meeting to pray. There is no problem if someone visits a fellow Muslim or meets them somewhere without making this a habit and then one of them leads the others in Prayer.





### 36 - Du`a' said by a worshiper at night

#### **Q: What is the Du`a' (supplication) that a praying person can say at night?**

**A:** It is recommended for a praying person at night to say any good Du`a'. One of the best Du`a' is to say: O Allah, You are Forgiver and You love forgiveness, so forgive me. It is reported that `Aishah (may Allah be pleased

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with her) said: ﴿"O Messenger of Allah, if I find Laylat-ul-Qadr (the Night of Decree), what should I say therein?" He said: "Say: O Allah, You are Forgiver and You love forgiveness, so forgive me."﴾ Of the good Du`a' in this regard is to ask Allah (Exalted be He) for His Pleasure and for Paradise and to seek His refuge from His Wrath and from Hellfire. Another good invocation in this regard is to say: O Allah, I ask You for Paradise and for that which draws me closer to it of sayings and actions, and I seek refuge with You from Hellfire and from that which draws me closer to it of sayings and actions. In addition to that, one can ask the Lord for all goodness. Thus, it is open to choice, all praise is to Allah. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴿Who will invoke Me, so that I will accept his invocation?﴾ In His Glorious Book, Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴿Invoke Me, [i.e. believe in My Oneness (Islâmic Monotheism) and ask Me for anything] I will respond to your (invocation).﴾ Therefore, a believer should select good and comprehensive invocations and say them during the night, day, at the end of Prayer, during Sujud (prostration), at the time of breaking the fast and while eating Suhur (pre-dawn meal before the Fast). During these times, one should ask Allah from the good of this life and the good of the Hereafter and should use the invocations reported in the supplications of the Prophet (peace be upon him). One can use these invocations reported in the books of Hadith and Adhkar (invocations and Remembrances said at certain times on a regular basis) and supplications. It is noteworthy that we have compiled a book in which we summarized a number of Adhkar and good invocations which the Prophet (peace be upon him) used in his supplications. This book is entitled Tuhfat-ul-Akhyar

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Fima Yata`allaqu Bil-Ad`iyati Wal-Adhkar and is being distributed in Dar Al-Ifta (The House of Fatwa). We ask Allah to make Muslims benefit from this book.



### 37- Ruling on reading Qur'an and performing supererogatory Prayers regularly

**Q: An inquirer asks: Which is better; to offer Nafilah (supererogatory) Prayers or to continuously read the Holy Qur'an on a daily basis: one Juz' (a 30th of the Qur'an) every day? We request you to provide us with a useful answer.**

**A:** The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do both of them; reading the Holy Qur'an and performing the supererogatory Prayers. Therefore, it is recommended for a Muslim, man or woman, to increase their recitation of the Qur'an and to offer the supererogatory Prayers, such as Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) and Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) and should read as much as is easy for them; one Juz', or less or more, all praise is due to Allah. One should not confine themselves to Prayers only or to reading the Qur'an only, but should do both types of good deeds. One should exert efforts in reading the Qur'an during the night time and during the day time, one Juz' or less or more and should perform what Allah has ordained of Salat-ul-Duha, Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib and Tahajjud during the night time so as to obtain the two types of goodness. It is noted that the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the Companions used to exert their efforts in doing both; reading the Qur'an and performing supererogatory Prayers.



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### 38 - Ruling on substituting Qiyam-ul-Layl with Halaqahs

**Q: A brother asks: Are Halaqahs (learning circles) after `Isha' (Night) Prayer considered as Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night)?**

**A:** Halaqahs after `Isha' Prayer are a means of drawing oneself nearer and be obedient to Allah, but they do not substitute Qiyam-ul-Layl. Nevertheless, Halaqahs are better than Qiyam-ul-Layl, because seeking knowledge is better than Qiyam-ul-Layl. Seeking knowledge is better Qiyam-ul-Layl, as seeking knowledge is better than Qiyam-ul-Layl while remaining ignorant. Halaqahs are of a great status and their benefits are many to the point that other supererogatory acts cannot be equal to them in reward. However, if it is possible for the person to do both acts by attending Halaqahs or as much as he could of them and to pray during the night time as much as he could, even if he offers three Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) or five Rak`ahs, it will be better. This is because in this case the person combines two beneficial acts, as was practiced by the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the Companions (may Allah be pleased with all of them).



### 39 - Arousal of interest in Qiyam-ul-Layl

**Q: Dear Shaykh `Abdul-`Aziz (Ibn Baz), desirous things are many in our religion. It would be nice if you mention some of them, particularly with regard to Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night).**

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**A:** Qiyam-ul-Layl is a great worship. It is one of the traditions of the Prophets (peace be upon all of them), one of the practices of the righteous and it is to be performed in pairs of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) as reported in a Prophetic Hadith. Qiyam-ul-Layl is expiation of bad deeds, a means of nearness to Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and one of the practices of the righteous before us. Therefore, a believer should be accustomed to performing it, following the example of the Prophets and the righteous. Allah (Glorified be He) says with regard to `Ibad Al-Rahman (the servants of the Most Gracious): *«And those who spend the night in worship of their Lord, prostrate and standing.»* He also says with regard to the righteous: *«They used to sleep but little by night [invoking their Lord (Allâh) and praying, with fear and hope].» «And in the hours before dawn, they were (found) asking (Allâh) for forgiveness.»* Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says with respect to the people of righteousness and goodness: *«Their sides forsake their beds, to invoke their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend (in charity in Allâh's Cause) out of what We have bestowed on them.» «No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do.»* Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and His Prophet (peace be upon him) aroused many interests regarding the night Prayer, and thus, a believer should perform it frequently, get used to performing it and should not neglect it whether on a journey or at home.



#### 40 - Means helping to perform Qiyam-ul-Layl

**Q: What are the means that help one perform Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night)?**

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**A:** There are many means which help one perform Qiyam-ul-Layl, including remembering the Hereafter, considering the great reward of Qiyam-ul-Layl and remembering that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) praised those who perform Qiyam-ul-Layl in His Saying about the righteous: *«They used to sleep but little by night [invoking their Lord (Allâh) and praying, with fear and hope.] «And in the hours before dawn, they were (found) asking (Allâh) for forgiveness.»* One of the means which help one perform Qiyam-ul-Layl is to remember the Servants of the Most Gracious (‘Ibad Al-Rahman) who are the Awliya' (pious people) of Allah. Allah says: *«And those who spend the night in worship of their Lord, prostrate and standing.»* If the believing men and women remember the actions of the righteous people, this will act as a means of motivating them to perform Qiyam-ul-Layl and grant them humbleness in their Prayer. One should also consider the honor preserved for them with Allah, the great reward of Qiyam-ul-Layl and the multiplicity of the good deeds.



**Q: A questioner from Sudan says: What are the means that help one perform Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night)? May Allah reward you well.**

**A:** There are many means that help you perform Qiyam-ul-Layl, including beseeching Allah, asking Him honestly and truthfully for help, sleeping early at night, and exerting efforts that help you wake up for that Prayer, either by seeking help of someone to wake you up by using an alarm clock. If you use

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these means, Allah will facilitate your affair. The most important of these means are: being truthful with Allah, being sincere, not staying up late during the night and having the determination to perform Qiyam-ul-Layl.



#### 41 - Some things causing one to neglect Qiyam-ul-Layl

**Q: There are many things that cause me neglect Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night), can you please guide me?**

**A:** It is Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) for believers not to stay up late at night, and one should sleep early. This is the Sunnah for believers, because the Messenger (peace be upon him) used to sleep early and prohibited staying up to chat. It is reported that Abu Barzah Al-Aslami (may Allah be pleased with him) said: [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) used to dislike sleeping before `Isha' \(Night\) Prayer and chatting after it\)](#) (i.e. after `Isha' Prayer). It is also reported from Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: [\(Nightly chatting was made prohibited.\)](#)

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Thus, nightly chatting causes one to sleep and neglect Qiyam-ul-Layl. However, if one has to talk at that time such as the Imam (ruler), the leader of the Muslims who rules the country and appoints the authorities to run the affairs of Muslims, then it is preferable for them to perform their Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) prayer in the first part of the night so as not to miss it. As for burning the midnight oil for sinful and useless talks in what Allah has prohibited of songs and music, or for backbiting and tale-bearing, this should not be done. It is not permissible to stay up listening to songs, music and their like. More heinous than this is to stay up to drink wine, gamble and similar sins. The point is that believers should be mindful of what distracts them from performing the obligatory prayer and it is recommended for them to become accustomed to sleeping early. This will enable a believer to wake up during the night and perform as much supererogatory prayer as possible; namely, Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer). One should not stay up late except for reasons of disposing of the interests of Muslims, entertaining a guest or something concerning the family. One should not stay up late for any reason that leads to the negligence of the obligatory prayer; namely Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. This is not permissible, even if one stays up late to read the Qur'an or to perform Tahajjud. It is not allowed for one to stay up late to extent of being unable to awaken for the Fajr Prayer. Rather, one should sleep early and perform as much prayer as is easy in the first part of the night or at the end of it until it is time to offer the Fajr Prayer. Moreover, one should seek help from one's family to awaken them up or should use an alarm clock,

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set at a time a bit before the Adhan (call to Prayer) of Fajr, or the time of Tahajjud about one hour or so before the Adhan according to one's condition in order to wake up for Tahajjud. On the other hand, if one performs Witr in the first part of the night and does not wake up until Fajr, then there is nothing wrong in this.



**Q: Some questions have been presented to the program regarding Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) dear Shaykh `Abdul-`Aziz. What is your opinion about the things which cause one to neglect Qiyam-ul-Layl, bearing in mind that they are many these days?**

**A:** Believers should exert their efforts to perform Qiyam-ul-Layl, and if someone fears they may not get up in the latter part of the night, they should observe Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) in the first part of it, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said in a Hadith narrated by Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) that: [\(Whoever fears that they may not get up in the latter part of the night, should offer Witr in the first part of it; and if one is eager to get up in the last part of it, they should offer Witr at the end of the night, for prayer at the end of the night is witnessed \(by the angels\) and this is preferable.\)](#) (Related by Imam Muslim in his Sahih on the authority of Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him)). This ruling is also supported by the practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him), as he performed Witr in the first part of the night, in the middle of night and at the end of the night; therefore, the matter is flexible. However, he (peace be upon him) advised Abu Al-Darda' and Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with them both) to perform Witr in the first part

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of the night. The reason for this - and Allah knows best - was that both of them used to study Hadith, and it might have been difficult for them to wake up to perform Witr at the end of the night, and thus the Prophet (peace be upon him) advised them to perform Witr before sleeping. So, believers should struggle to do this, and all praise is due to Allah. Although it is not an obligation to perform Qiyam-ul-Layl, it is a stressed Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet), and the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do it while traveling and at home. It is reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to perform the Witr Prayer during his journeys and while in his residence; and used also to perform Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) in both situations. Thus, whoever does this has done well and will have the great reward for it, and whoever does not perform it, there is no blame on them but they would neglect a great deed and a magnificent Sunnah.





**Q: Explain to us some of the things that cause one to neglect Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night).**

**A:** Among the things, which result in neglecting Qiyam-ul-Layl, is to stay up late at night; namely, spending the night in gossips and idle talk of no benefit to anyone, or in discussing worldly affairs, business and greed in eagerness to amass fortune. For instance, one works day and night to earn money, and then sleeps like a dead person and cannot wake up for worship and even neglect the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer - La hawla wala quwwata illa billah (there is neither might nor power except with Allah!). Therefore, it is recommended that believers should exert efforts to sleep early in order to be able to wake up at the end of the night or

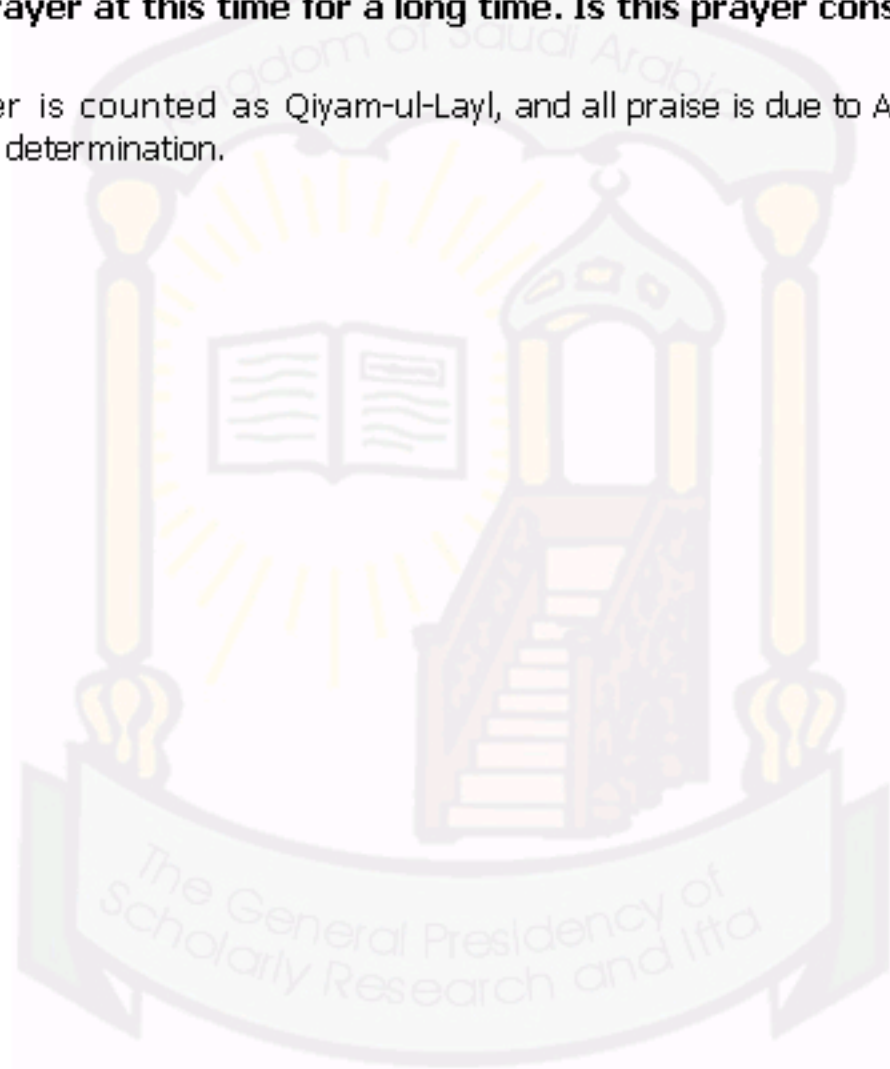
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pray during the night time as much as they can before sleeping and then sleep early in order to wake up for the Fajr Prayer, which should be offered in congregation. This is the best. But whoever remises and neglects Fajr Prayer will be falling into what the hypocrites did of missing goodness and incurring evil and regret. Allah (Exalted be He) states: [﴿Verily, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allâh, but it is He Who deceives them. And when they stand up for As-Salât \(the prayer\), they stand with laziness and to be seen of men, and they do not remember Allâh but little.﴾](#) Therefore, the believers should avoid resembling the hypocrites in every aspect.



**Q: I want to perform Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night), but I fear not being able to wake up, so I do not sleep until I perform it. Therefore, I perform Qiyam-ul-Layl immediately after the `Isha' (Night) Prayer. I should mention that I have been performing this prayer at this time for a long time. Is this prayer considered as Qiyam-ul-Layl?**

**A: Yes, this prayer is counted as Qiyam-ul-Layl, and all praise is due to Allah. This practice also reflects one's strong determination.**





#### 42 - Carelessness in applying Sunnah, both verbal and practical

**Q: Is negligence in applying acts of Sunnah, both verbal and practical, punishable, particularly Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) or the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) prayers, because I often**

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**abandon the night and Witr prayers? Am I blamed for this? What are the benefits of performing the supererogatory prayers?**

**A:** According to the correct opinion, there is no blame on you, because they are supererogatory prayers. However, you should continue performing them and you should not be careless about them. Similarly, all other acts of Sunnah, whether verbal or practical, are supererogatory. As for the obligatory prayers, they are five: Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon), Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers as well as Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer which replaces Zhuhr Prayer on Friday. As for Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) and Al-Rawatib (supererogatory prayers that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet [peace be upon him] before and after the obligatory prayers) are all supererogatory prayers. Supererogatory prayers carry a great status and a magnificent reward. They make up for what is lacking in the obligatory prayers and this is a great benefit. For one who offers supererogatory prayers there are great rewards and good deeds. In addition to this, the shortcomings that occur in the obligatory prayers are made up through supererogatory prayers.



**Q: A message from Syria from a brother who did not mention his name says: I perform Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) Prayers in the Masjid (mosque), but I do not pray the Sunnah (supererogatory prayer performed before or after the obligatory prayer) for either of them because of my studies. Am I allowed to do that?**

**A:** If someone performs the supererogatory prayer, that is better and they will get a reward for performing it, and they are not to blame if they do not perform it.





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### Witr prayer and its rulings

#### 43 - Witr and the minimum number of its Rak`ahs

**Q: A questioner says: Is Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) Salah obligatory? Did the Prophet (peace be upon him) command the people of the Qur'an to perform Witr prayer?**

**A:** Witr prayer is Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) according to the people of knowledge. It is the opinion of the majority scholars that Witr is Sunnah not obligatory. That is why `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him) said: [\(Witr is not an obligation like the obligatory prayer, but it is Sunnah which was established by the Messenger \(peace be upon him\).\)](#) One of the evidences supporting this opinion is the Prophet's (peace be upon him) saying when he was asked about the supererogatory prayers performed in addition to the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers and the questioner said

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to him: [\("Am I obliged to pray anything else besides this?" He \(the Prophet\) said: "No, except that which you pray voluntarily out of your own free will."\)](#) Therefore, Witr is a stressed Sunnah that can be performed after `Isha' (Night) Prayer until the beginning of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer's time. The minimum number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) for Witr is one Rak`ah and it is preferable to add more Rak`ahs by making it three or five Rak`ahs or more. It is noted that the best way of performing it is to make it eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs as was performed by the Prophet (peace be upon him). However, if the Witr prayer is performed with more Rak`ahs than these numbers, there is nothing wrong in this. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(O people of the Qur'an, perform Witr prayer, because Allah is Witr \(i.e. odd number: One\) and He likes Witr prayer.\)](#) This command from the Prophet (peace be upon him) is for assurance not for obligation, but according to the people of knowledge, it refers to the assurance of performing it.



**Q: A questioner from Al-Qasim, Buraydah, asks: Regarding the ruling on Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), is it Wajib (obligatory) or Mustahab (desirable)?**

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**A:** Witr prayer is Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet). According to the Jumhur (dominant majority of scholars), it is Mustahab not obligatory, because after the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers, he was asked by some: [\("Am I obliged to pray anything else besides this?" He \(the Holy Prophet\) said: "No, except that which you pray voluntarily out of your own free will."\)](#) Therefore, Witr and all supererogatory prayers including but not limited to Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) are desirable not obligatory prayers.



**Q: A female questioner says: Please provide me with a beneficial answer about Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). Is it one Rak`ah (unit of Salah) or three?**

**A:** The minimum number of Rak`ahs in the Witr prayer is one to be performed after the `Isha' (Night) Prayer or at the end of the night. One Rak`ah is the minimum number of Rak`ahs in this Prayer, however if someone performs three Rak`ahs or five Rak`ahs, it is preferable. Nevertheless, the minimum number of Rak`ahs in this Prayer is one Rak`ah that is to be performed after the `Isha' Prayer, in the middle of the night or at the end of the night. It is preferable to increase the number of Rak`ahs to three or five or more than this by offering it as pairs of Rak`ahs and performing Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs and then offering one Rak`ah separately. This is the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet), based on his (peace be upon him) saying: [\(The \(optional\) Prayer during the night should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs, but if one of you fears morning is near, he should pray one Rak`ah, which will make his Prayer an odd number for him.\)](#) It is reported that the Prophet (peace be

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upon him) used to pray eleven Rak`ahs. He used to perform Taslim after every pair of Rak`ahs and then offer one Rak`ah as Witr. He might have also offered the Witr as seven, nine, five or even three Rak`ahs. He might have also offered it more than this number by offering it as thirteen Rak`ahs. This should be the way of a Muslim that he prays as much as Allah makes easy for him: One should perform Taslim at the end of every pair of Rak`ahs and then offer one Rak`ah as Witr. If someone offers only one Rak`ah (as Witr), it will be sufficient for them, and all praise is due to Allah.



#### 44- How to perform Witr Prayer

**Q: Some sister from Jordan asks: How should we perform Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), may Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Witr is a Sunnah (supererogatory) Salah that was enacted by the Messenger (peace be upon him) both verbally and in practice. He (peace be upon him) used to pray Witr and ordered Muslims to follow his guidance. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) night Salah should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs, and when one of you fears that dawn is about to break, pray one Rak`ah as Witr to make what \(the Rak`ahs\) you have prayed odd-numbered.\)](#) (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: [\(Witr is true, so whoever wishes can pray five, and whoever wishes can pray three, and whoever wishes can pray one.](#)

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› He (peace be upon him) used to perform Witr Prayer every night, most times, as eleven Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), offering Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each pair of Rak`ahs and ending the Salah (Prayer) with one single Rak`ah. Sometimes, he (peace be upon him) performed Witr as thirteen, nine, or a less number of Rak`ahs. Thus, it is an act of Sunnah for the believing men and women to perform Tahajjud (optional night Prayer) and then perform Witr either early at night, at midnight, or late at night. Yet it is preferable to perform Witr late at night as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Anyone who fears that they may not get up at the end of the night, let them offer Witr at the beginning of the night; and anyone who is eager to get up at the end of the night, let them offer Witr at the end of the night, for Salah at the end of the night is witnessed \(by the angels\) and that is better.\)](#) (Related by Muslim in his Sahih) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: [\(Our Lord \(Blessed and Exalted be He\) descends every night to the nearest \(lowest\) heaven, when a third of the night remains, and says: Is there anyone to invoke Me, so that I may respond to their invocation? Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant them their request? Is there anyone seeking My Forgiveness, so that I may forgive them?\)](#) (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim) This descent is in a way that befits Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), which none knows its manner except Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). The same applies to His Ascending the Throne, Laughing, Contentment and Anger.

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All these are Attributes compatible with the Perfect Nature of Allah bearing no resemblance to any of His Creatures (Glorified and Exalted be He). We must accept them as they were mentioned by Allah and His Messenger, with neither Tahrif (distortion of the meaning), Ta`til (negation of the meaning or function of Allah's Attributes), Takyif (descriptive designation of Allah's Attributes), nor Tamthil (likening Allah's Attributes to those of His Creation). Allah (Glorified be He) says: [\(There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.\)](#) Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: [\("And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him."\)](#) Accordingly, His descending is not like that of ours, nor is His Anger, Laughing, Hearing, and the same is true for all His other Attributes. To Him



(Glorified and Exalted be He) belongs the Absolute Perfection in every Attribute. This is according to His Saying: [\(There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.\)](#) Back to the issue at hand, it is preferable to perform Witr late at night even if it is just one Rak`ah. Yet it is much more preferable to perform Witr as three, five, or more Rak`ahs, offering Taslim after each pair of Rak`ahs and then concluding with a single Rak`ah. It is permissible to perform Witr early at night before sleeping if one fears not being able to get up before dawn. One can also perform Witr at midnight. All this is good but the most preferable time is to perform Witr during the last third of the night.



**Q: How is the Witr Prayer (Prayer with an odd number of units) performed? How many Tashahhuds (testification recited in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer) is one to recite? Is there Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in the Witr Prayer? Kindly give us a beneficial answer, may Allah reward you with the best.**

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**A:** Witr Prayer is a stressed Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet), the least of which is one Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) to be performed after the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) of the `Isha' (Night) Prayer, but performing more Rak`ahs is better. It is reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to perform the Witr Prayer during the night and his (peace be upon him) Witr was performed in different ways. Sometimes, he (peace be upon him) performed three Rak`ahs of Witr, sometimes five Rak`ahs, sometimes seven Rak`ahs, sometimes eleven Rak`ahs and sometimes he (peace be upon him) performed thirteen Rak`ahs. This is what is reported as the regular practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him) with regard to the performance of this prayer; however, he (peace be upon him) did not specify a particular number of Rak`ahs for this prayer, and thus, whoever wishes to perform more Rak`ahs for the Witr than those reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him), there is no blame in doing so. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) prayer during the night should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs, but if one fears morning is near, they should pray one Rak`ah, which will make the prayer an odd number.\)](#) Thus, he (peace be upon him) did not specify a number of Rak`ahs for this prayer, and it is reported that `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) performed the Witr Prayer as twenty Rak`ahs and commanded Ubay (may Allah be pleased with him) to lead the people in the Witr Prayer in some months of Ramadan in this manner. In other months of Ramadan he commanded him to perform eleven Rak`ahs. Therefore, the matter is open to choice, because the companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) performed it in these two different ways. They performed it as twenty-three Rak`ahs, and they also performed it as eleven Rak`ahs. All these ways are good and acceptable and they are from the Sunnah, as there is no determination of the number of Rak`ahs in the Witr Prayer. However, if one performs the Witr Prayer as eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him), it is preferable; and if one reduces this number, there is no harm, and if one increases the number, there is no harm. It is preferable for the believing man and the believing woman in case of increasing the number of Rak`ahs to lessen their recitation of the Qur'an, shorten Ruku` (bowing) and Sujud (prostration) in order to make it easy on themselves and for

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others. On the other hand, if one reduces the number of Rak`ahs, then it is recommended to prolong the recitation, the Ruku`, and Sujud following the practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him). The matter is open to choice in this case, and all praise is due to Allah as it should not be made difficult. If one performs the Witr Prayer as three Rak`ahs with two Taslims (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) upon completing the second Rak`ah and then stands to perform the third Rak`ah separately, this is the least degree of perfection. And if one performs five Rak`ahs, seven Rak`ahs or more than

this number, this is fine; however, it is better for one to pronounce Taslim at the end of every two Rak`ahs. This is the preferable way of performing it, and then one should conclude with one Rak`ah in which one recites Qunut. It is preferable to recite Qunut after the Ruku` following the way the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught Al-Hasan ibn `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him and his father): [\(Allahumma ihdini fiman hadait, wa 'afini fiman 'afait ... \(O Allah, guide me with those whom You have guided, and protect me with those whom You have protected\)\)](#) till the end of this supplication. It is preferable to raise the hands during this invocation, because the Messenger (peace be upon him) raised his hands for the Qunut; whether it was Qunut during a calamity or Qunut of the Witr Prayer, and because raising the hands in the Qunut is one of the means which makes the invocation acceptable. However, if one does not raise their hands, there is no harm; and whoever does not offer Qunut, there is no harm as well. All these acts are recommended; nevertheless, if one offers Qunut, it is the preferable act to raise one's hands which is the best manner of the performing it, but if one does not

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there is no blame on them. The Witr Prayer is Sunnah and it is not an obligation. This is the correct opinion adopted by the majority of the people of knowledge, and if it is easy for one to perform it at the end of the night, then it is the preferable time. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(If one fears that they will not be able to wake up at the end of the night, then they should perform the Witr Prayer at the beginning of the night; and whoever hopes to wake up at the end of the night should perform the Witr prayer at the end of the night, because prayer at the end of the night is witnessed by the angels, and this is the preferable time of performing it.\)](#) (Related by Muslim in his Sahih) This is evidence that performing the Witr Prayer at the end of the night is better for those who can do so. As for the those who are unable to perform it at this time, then they should perform the Witr Prayer at the beginning of the night, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) advised Abu Hurayrah and Abu Al-Darda' (may Allah be pleased with them both) because they were studying Hadith and it was difficult for them to wake up at the end of the night. Therefore, it was more appropriate for them to perform the Witr Prayer at the beginning of the night. The point is that whoever is able to perform the Witr Prayer at the end of the night, then it is better, and whoever fears that they will not be able to wake up at the end of the night, then performing the Witr Prayer at the beginning of the night is best. As for the Prophet (peace be upon him), he used to perform the Witr Prayer at the beginning of the night and in the middle of the night, but thereafter, he (peace be upon him) regularly started performing Witr Prayer at the end of the night until he passed away.



**Q: What is the number of Tashahhuds (testification recited in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer) in the Witr Prayer (Prayer with an odd number of units) ?**

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**A:** As previously stated, it is Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) to recite Tashahhud at the end of every pair of Rak'ahs (units of Salah) in the Witr Prayer. This is the Sunnah. However, if one performs the Witr Prayer as three consecutive Rak'ahs without sitting for the Tashahhud except at the end of the three Rak'ahs, there is no harm. Also, if one performs five Rak'ahs without sitting for the Tashahhud except at the end of the fifth Rak'ah, there is no harm in performing it in this way. As for performing it as seven Rak'ahs, one has the choice to perform the seven Rak'ahs consecutively without sitting for Tashahhud except at the end of the seventh Rak'ah or to sit in the sixth Rak'ah to recite the first Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the sixth unit of the Witr Prayer) then stand to perform the seventh Rak'ah. The same ruling applies if one performs it nine as Rak'ahs where one sits in the eighth Rak'ah to recite the first Tashahhud and then stands to perform the ninth Rak'ah. [\(It is authentically reported from the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) that he sometimes performed the Witr Prayer as seven Rak'ahs consecutively and sometimes he sat in the sixth Rak'ah and recited the first Tashahhud\)](#) Thus, if one performs it this way, there is no harm. The same ruling applies if one performs it as nine Rak'ahs sitting in the eighth Rak'ah for the first Tashahhud and then standing to perform the ninth Rak'ah; it is from the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him). However, if one performs it two Rak'ahs by two Rak'ahs, then this is the perfect way of performing it and it is the way that was regularly followed by the Prophet (peace be upon him). He used to pronounce Salam (greeting of peace said to conclude the Prayer) at the end of every two Rak'ahs and then perform one Rak'ah separately.



#### 45 - The ruling on Witr, its time and number of Rak'ahs

**Q: What is the Witr Prayer (Prayer with an odd number of units)? When should it be performed? How many Rak'ahs (units of Salah) are in it? How should it be performed?**

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**A:** The Witr Prayer is a stressed Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) and it is a means of becoming closer to Allah, the time of which starts after the 'Isha' (Night) Prayer and ends at the beginning of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer time. The minimum number of Rak'ahs in this Prayer is one Rak'ah, and the best way of performing it is eleven Rak'ahs or thirteen Rak'ahs; this was the Prophet's (peace be upon him) practice. If one increases this number by performing fifteen Rak'ahs, twenty Rak'ahs etc., there is no harm in performing it this way. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) prayer during the night should consist of pairs of Rak'ahs, but if one fears morning is near, they should pray one Rak'ah which will make the prayer an odd number.\)](#) He (peace be upon him) did not specify the number of Rak'ahs of the Witr Prayer, and therefore, this is an indication that if one performs the Witr Prayer as five Rak'ahs, seven Rak'ahs, nine Rak'ahs, eleven Rak'ahs, thirteen Rak'ahs, fifteen Rak'ahs, seventeen Rak'ahs, nineteen Rak'ahs, twenty-one Rak'ahs, or twenty-three Rak'ahs, it is all good. On the other hand, if one performs more than these numbers or performs only one Rak'ah, it will suffice, because this is clear from the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him). The Shaf' (Prayer with an even number of units, particularly before the final unit of the odd-numbered Prayer) is sometimes performed separately from the Witr Prayer, which is the preferable way of performing it, and it is sometimes performed joined with it. Thus, the prayer will be five Rak'ahs together, seven Rak'ahs together or nine Rak'ahs together, and there is no harm in doing this, since the Prophet (peace be upon him) performed it this way. However, if one performs the Witr Prayer as seven consecutive Rak'ahs and sits in the sixth Rak'ah for the First Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the sixth unit of the Witr Prayer) and then stands to perform the seventh Rak'ah, or performs nine Rak'ahs, then it is Sunnah to sit in the eighth Rak'ah, recite the First Tashahhud and then stand to perform the ninth Rak'ah. Nevertheless, it is preferable to

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pronounce Salam (greeting of peace said to conclude the prayer) at the end of every two Rak'ahs. This is the preferable way of performing it, according to the Prophet's (peace be upon him) saying: [\(The \(optional\) night prayer is offered as two Rak'ahs followed by two Rak'ahs and so on.\)](#) However, if one performs the Witr as five consecutive Rak'ahs, or three Rak'ahs without sitting in the second Rak'ah, or five Rak'ahs together without sitting except in the fifth Rak'ah, it is the preferable way of performing it. As for performing it as seven Rak'ahs, one can sit in the sixth Rak'ah for the First Tashahhud and then stand to perform the seventh Rak'ah. Similarly, if one performs nine Rak'ahs, one can sit in the eighth Rak'ah to perform the First Tashahhud and then stand to perform the ninth Rak'ah. However, as previously mentioned, it is preferable to perform Salam at the end of every two Rak'ahs and then pray one Rak'ah separately; whether one performs seven Rak'ahs, five

Rak'ahs, three Rak'ahs, nine Rak'ahs, eleven Rak'ahs or thirteen Rak'ahs or more than this. All praise is due to Allah, the matter is open to choice regarding this Prayer, and there is no blame in performing it either way.



#### 46 - The best time for performing Witr Prayer

**Q: What is the best time for performing the Witr Prayer (Prayer with an odd number of units)? What is your advice for me in order to maintain it in the middle of the night, because I do not perform it now except after the `Isha' (Night) Prayer?**

**A:** It is preferable for a person who can perform the Witr Prayer at the end of the night to perform it at that time. This is the preferable time of performing it: namely, to

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perform the Witr Prayer and Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) at the end of the night, during the last third of the night. This is based on what was authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he said: [\(Our Lord \(Exalted be He\) descends every night to the world sky when the last third of the night begins. He says: Is there anyone to invoke Me, so that I may respond to his invocation? Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant him his request? Is there anyone seeking My forgiveness, so that I may forgive him?\)](#) The authenticity of this Hadith is agreed upon. This is a great Hadith indicating that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) descends to the world sky in all places according to their related times every night during the last third of the night. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [\(Is there anyone to invoke Me, so that I may respond to his invocation? Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant him his request? Is there anyone seeking My forgiveness, so that I may forgive him?\)](#) Therefore, if the believers, men and women, are able to be among the worshipers at that time and among the supplicants, then this is preferable. It is noted that the descent of the Lord (Glorified and Exalted be He) is not similar to that of any created beings. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) descends to the world sky in a way that suits His Majesty and the manner of descent is only known by Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). Moreover, this descent does not require the vacancy of the Throne by Him, since He (Glorified and Exalted be He) is over the Throne and over all His creatures and He descends in a way that fits His Majesty that does not contradict with His Highness and Exaltedness (Glorified and Exalted be He). Thus, this descent suites Allah's Majesty (Glorified and Exalted be He) and He is the One Who knows its manner and, therefore, we should believe in that and accept it as true. We should say: No one knows the manner of this descent except Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). By the same token, we do not know the manner of other Allah's Attributes,

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but we should believe in them as they have been revealed to us. No one knows the manner of these Attributes except Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), such as Allah's Istiwa' (Allah's rising over the Throne in a manner that befits Him) over the Throne, Descent, and Coming on the Day of Judgment to judge among His servants. The same type of belief applies to Allah's Mercy and Wrath: how He bestows His Mercy, how He gets angry, how He hears, how He sees, how He uses His Hand and Feet. All these are Attributes of Allah, the manner of which we do not know, and no one knows their manners except Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). That is why when Imam Malik ibn Anas (may Allah be merciful with him), the Imam of Madinah at his time during the second century A.H., was

asked by someone: "O Abu `Abdullah (Allah says:) ﴿The Most Gracious (Allâh) rose over (Istawâ) the (Mighty) Throne (in a manner that suits His Majesty).﴾ How did He rise over His Throne?" He kept silent for a long time and sweated of veneration for this question - due to its seriousness. Then he responded: "Istiwa' (Rising over the Throne) is known, the manner is unknown, believing in it is an obligation, and inquiring about it is a heretical innovation. I surely believe that you are a bad man." Then he ordered the man be dismissed. The point is that Imam Malik said: "Istiwa' is known" in its meaning; but its manner is unknown to people, and this is the belief of all of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (adherents to the Sunnah and the Muslim mainstream) as stated by Malik (may Allah be merciful with him) and it is the belief of other Imams Abu Hanifah, Al-Shafi`y, Al-Awza`y, Al-Thawry, Ibn `Uyaynah, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Ishaq ibn Rahawayh and other Muslim Imams. It is also reported from Um Salamah, the Mother of the Believers (may Allah be pleased with her).

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This was also the explanation given by Rabi`ah ibn Abu `Abdul-Rahman, the Sheikh of Malik who stated something similar to this statement. It is also the opinion of all the Imams of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah who said that Istiwa' is known in its meaning, its manner is unknown to the people, believing in it is an obligation, and inquiring about it is a heretical innovation in religion. The same belief applies to other Attributes of Allah such as: Descent, Mercy, Wrath, Hearing, Seeing, the Hand, the Feet, the Fingers and other Attributes. With regard to all these Attributes, it should be said that they are known in their meaning and in their Arabic lexical concept, but the way they occur is not known except to Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He).

This Hadith is evidence that we should perform Tahajjud at the end of the night and supplicate at the end of the night. However, whoever is unable to wake up at the end of the night should perform the Witr Prayer in the beginning or in the middle of the night according to one's ability. This is based on what has been authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) who said: ﴿Whoever fears that they may not get up in the latter part of the night should observe Witr in the first part of it; and if anyone is eager to get up in the last part of it should observe Witr at the end of the night, for Prayer in the last part of the night is witnessed (by the angels) and this is preferable.﴾ Thus, the Prophet (peace be upon him) gave the details about this Prayer. Therefore, whoever is eager to wake up at the end of the night, this is preferable, and whoever fears that they may miss the Witr Prayer should perform it in the beginning of the night. It is noted that the Prophet (peace be upon him) performed the Witr Prayer at both times. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated: ﴿During all

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parts of the night the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) performed the Witr Prayer; in its beginning, in its middle and at its end, but toward the end (of his life) he used to perform the Witr Prayer at the last part of the night.﴾ This means that toward the end of the Prophet's life he used to perform the Witr Prayer in the last third of the night.





**Q: Please explain the number of Rak`ahs (units of Salah) in the Witr Prayer (Prayer with an odd number of units) performed immediately after `Isha' (Night) Prayer. Is it one Rak`ah along with the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) after the `Isha' Prayer, or is it three Rak`ahs other than the Sunnah Ratibah after the `Isha' Prayer?**

**A:** The minimum number of Rak`ahs in the Witr Prayer is one Rak`ah after performing the Sunnah Ratibah after `Isha' Prayer. The time of the Witr Prayer starts after performing the `Isha' Prayer and lasts until the beginning of the time of the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. Therefore, its time is between the `Isha' Prayer - even if it is combined with the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer during a journey or sickness - and lasts until the beginning of the Fajr Prayer's time. The minimum number of Rak`ahs in the Witr Prayer is one Rak`ah, as has been authentically established from the Prophet (peace be upon him) and there is no limit for its maximum number. Thus, if one performs the Witr Prayer as twenty-one Rak`ahs, or thirty-one Rak`ahs or more, it is fine, since there is no limit for the maximum number of Rak`ahs of the Witr Prayer. However, it is preferable to perform the number of Rak`ahs done by the Prophet (peace be upon him) in this Prayer; eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs. This is what has been authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him). Nevertheless, whoever performs a number of Rak`ahs more than what was performed by the Prophet (peace be upon him), i.e. twenty-three, forty-three, or a hundred and one Rak`ahs,

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there is nothing wrong in this, and all praise is due to Allah, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not define a certain number of Rak`ahs for this Prayer. Rather, he (peace be upon him) said: *(The (optional) prayer during the night should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs, but if one of you fears morning is near, he should pray one Rak`ah, which will make his Prayer an odd number for him.)* This is how this Hadith is reported in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim), and it is noted that the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not say ten or twenty, or more or less than this number, but he said: *(The (optional) Prayer during the night should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs.)* When he (peace be upon him) was asked about Salat-ul-Layl (optional prayer at night), he said: *(The (optional) Prayer during the night should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs, but if one of you fears morning is near, he should pray one Rak`ah, which will make his Prayer an odd number for him.)* Therefore, the believing men and women have the choice with regard to the number of Rak`ahs in the Witr Prayer. If one performs it as three, five, seven or more Rak`ahs than this number, it is fine and there is nothing wrong in this. If someone performs Witr Prayer as one Rak`ah at the beginning, middle or end of the night, this is acceptable. But it is preferable to increase the number of Rak`ahs in this Prayer by performing it as three, five, seven, nine, eleven, or thirteen Rak`ahs, and this is preferable. If someone increases the number of Rak`ahs and performs it as fifteen, or twenty Rak`ahs and adds one or more Rak`ah to it, then that is well and good. The point is that there is no limit for the maximum number of Rak`ahs in this Prayer, but if one restricts himself to what the Messenger (peace be upon him) used to do by performing it as eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs, then this is better for the believer to do with regard to Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer), following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Whoever wants to add to this number, there is nothing wrong in this. It is reported that the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them)

and Salaf (righteous predecessors) used to

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vary in the number of Rak`ahs while performing Tahajjud: some of them performed it as twenty-three Rak`ahs and others performed it more than this number. The matter is open to choice with regard to the number of Rak`ahs in this Prayer, and all praise is due to Allah.



#### 47- Ruling on performing Witr as three Rak`ahs with two Tashahhud like Maghrib Prayer

**Q: Does Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) consist of two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) or more and then one Rak`ah at the end? Was it reported from the Messenger (peace be upon him) that he performed Witr as three Rak`ahs with one Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer)? If this was authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him), did he sit for Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer) at the end of every two Rak`ahs or not? What is the description of this Salah (Prayer)? Should Du`a' (supplication) be offered before or after Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) or during Sujud (Prostration)? Is it permissible to supplicate to Allah with one's own words or should one quote the words of the Messenger (peace be upon him)?**

**A:** It was authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) performed Witr as three Rak`ahs, where he offered Taslim after two Rak`ahs and then performed one separate Rak`ah. This was the pattern most often followed by the Prophet (peace be upon him); praying a single Rak`ah as Witr, as a separate unit from the rest. He (peace be upon him) most times performed eleven Rak`ahs with Taslim after every two, and then performed one separate Rak`ah as Witr. Sometimes he (peace be upon him) performed Witr as three consecutive Rak`ahs without separating the two from the last final Rak`ah, where he would sit down for Tashahhud in the last Rak`ah. Yet, this was rarely done by the Prophet (peace be upon him) who would most often

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offer Taslim after every two Rak`ahs. Performing Witr in the same manner as Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer is Makruh (disliked). It was reported in some Hadiths that this is forbidden. Accordingly, Witr must not be performed in the same manner as Maghrib. Rather, it should be offered with Taslim after the two Rak`ahs followed by a single separate Rak`ah, or in the form of three consecutive Rak`ahs and to sit in the last Rak`ah for Tashahhud. Either of the two manners is permissible. Yet, it is preferable to offer Taslim after every two Rak`ahs and then perform one single Rak`ah separately, whether one performs three, five or more Rak`ahs. As for Du`a', one may supplicate Allah using whatever good supplication one likes, provided it involves nothing prohibited. Yet, it is preferable to supplicate to Allah with Du`a's reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) if one memorizes any of them. Also, a person may supplicate to Allah mentioning what they need. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said in the Sahih (authentic) Hadith: [\(Any servant who supplicates Allah with an invocation that does not involve any sin or severance of kinship ties, Allah will give him one of three things in response: either his supplication will be answered in this life, or it will be stored for him in the Hereafter, or an equivalent evil will be averted from him.\)](#) They (the Companions) said, 'Then we shall supplicate plenty.' He (peace be upon him) said, 'Allah is more plentiful (in responding).' Thus the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not limit Du`a' to his own words.

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Rather, he made it clear that any Du`a' that contains neither evil nor severance of the ties of kinship

is hoped to be answered. Yet, it is preferable to supplicate using the Prophet's Du`a', if this is possible. For example, during Sujud, one can supplicate: [\(O Allah! Forgive me all my sins, small and great, first and last, open and secret.\)](#) This Du`a' was said by the Prophet (peace be upon him). Another Du`a' said by the Prophet (peace be upon him) is: [\(O Controller of the hearts, make my heart steadfast in Your religion.\)](#) Also, there is nothing wrong with supplicating, saying: "O Allah, forgive me, my parents, and all the believers." One may also say: "O Allah, rectify my heart and deeds," or "O Allah, grant me lawful provision, righteous wife, and good children," or any similar good Du`a's, this is permissible. Du`a' can be made during Sujud, at the end of Salah, or at any time throughout the day. Yet, the best time for Du`a' is during Sujud, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The nearest a servant can be to his Lord is when he is prostrating,](#)

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[so supplicate to Allah a lot \(while in that posture.\)](#) He (peace be upon him) also said: [\(As for Ruku`, extol in it the greatness of the Lord, and as for Sujud, strive in making Du`a' for you will be more deserving of being responded to.\)](#) This means that Du`a' during Sujud deserves to be answered more. When teaching his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) Tashahhud, the Prophet (peace be upon him) guided them to offer Du`a', saying: [\(Then let him choose from supplication what he loves best and let him supplicate \(with it\).\)](#) In another narration, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Then let him choose from beseeching what he likes.\)](#) Thus the Prophet (peace be upon him) showed that one can supplicate to Allah with whatever good Du`a' one likes, without confining this to his (peace be upon him) own words. Rather, one can supplicate to Allah with whatever good Du`a' Allah makes it easy for them to say, provided it involves neither sin nor severing the ties of kinship, even if such Du`a' was not reported in the Sahih (authentic) Hadiths reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him), praise be to Allah. It is also permissible to supplicate to Allah at times other than Salah: before noon, at noon, or at night, and while sitting down, standing up, or walking; or during Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), or during Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) at night. What is meant is that Du`a' is necessary during Salah and outside it, praise be to Allah.



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#### 48 - The meaning of Shaf` and Witr

**Q: A female questioner says: What are the Shaf` and Witr Prayers? How many Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of Witr did the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pray?**

**A:** Shaf` is a Prayer with an even number of units, particularly before the final unit of the odd-numbered Prayer. Witr is Prayer with an odd number of units. The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to perform the Witr Prayer as one, three, five, seven, nine, eleven, or thirteen Rak`ahs or more. However, it is preferable to perform it as eleven Rak`ahs. This is the preferable way of performing it, because this was the frequent practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him). He (peace be upon him) often performed it as eleven Rak`ahs, and sometimes he performed it as thirteen Rak`ahs, sometimes nine Rak`ahs, sometimes seven Rak`ahs and he also performed it less than this number. Nevertheless, the Prophet (peace be upon him) often performed the Witr Prayer as eleven Rak`ahs in which he offered Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) at the end of every two Rak`ahs and then he performed one Rak`ah separately. He sometimes performed the Witr Prayer as thirteen Rak`ahs, sometimes nine Rak`ahs, sometimes seven Rak`ahs and sometimes less than this number. However, the Prophet's (peace be upon him) Witr was often eleven Rak`ahs in which he offered Taslim at the end of every two Rak`ahs and then he performed one Rak`ah separately. This is the preferable way of performing it, and if one performs the Witr Prayer as three, five, seven or nine Rak`ahs, it is all good. It is to be noted that the Witr Prayer is a supererogatory Prayer and it is not an obligation according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars. According to the Jumhur (dominant majority of scholars), the Witr Prayer is a recommended act and it is not an obligation. Therefore, Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) is at least one Rak`ah after the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) of the `Isha' (Night) Prayer. This is the minimum number of Rak`ahs for this Prayer, and if one performs Witr Prayer as three Rak`ahs, it will be better, however, five

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is better than three and seven is better than five, and so on and so forth. Nevertheless, if someone performs it as eleven Rak`ahs, this is the best way of performing it, and if one adds to that and performs it as thirteen, fifteen or seventeen Rak`ahs, there is nothing wrong in this. The matter is open to choice, due to the Prophet's (peace be upon him) saying when he was asked about Prayer at night time: [\(The \(optional\) night Prayer is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on,\)](#) and he did not specify a number of Rak`ahs for this Prayer. Then he (peace be upon him) said: [\(And if one of you fears that the time of the Fajr Prayer is approaching, then let him perform one Rak`ah which makes his Prayer odd number.\)](#) This is an indication that the Witr is a one-Rak`ah Prayer at the end of Prayer, whether it is performed at the beginning, middle or end of the night. One can perform the Witr Prayer as one Rak`ah and there is no limit for the number of Rak`ahs. Thus, if someone performs twenty Rak`ahs and then performs one Rak`ah for Witr as practiced in the way of performing the Tarawih Prayers (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) which was reported from `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), or performs thirteen or eleven Rak`ahs as

reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) with regard to the Witr in the night Prayer, or performs the Witr as nine, seven or five Rak`ahs, there is nothing wrong in this. However, the minimum number for the Witr Prayer is one Rak`ah at the beginning or end of the night.



**Q: A questioner says: If I perform the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) of `Isha' (Night) Prayer and then I perform the Shaf` (Prayer with an even number of units, particularly before the final unit of the odd-numbered Prayer) and I do not sit for the Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer), but I stand up to perform Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units): Is this allowed or not?**

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**A:** It seems that the questioner means that he performed Shaf` and Witr Prayers as three Rak`ahs together. If someone performs the Sunnah Ratibah for the `Isha' and then performs three Rak`ahs together without sitting after the second Rak`ah, there is nothing wrong in doing that. It is reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he performed it this way. It is noted that sometimes the Prophet (peace be upon him) performed Witr Prayer as three Rak`ahs and did not perform Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) except at the end of the three Rak`ahs. This is an act of Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) and there is no blame in doing that. However, it is reprehensible to sit after the second Rak`ah to recite Tashahhud and then stand up without performing Taslim, because way is similar to Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer. This is disliked. The praying person can perform Taslim after the second Rak`ah, which is better, and then offer one Rak`ah. This is the preferable way of performing it and it was the frequent act of the Prophet (peace be upon him). However, there is nothing wrong if one offers the three Rak`ahs together without performing Taslim after the second Rak`ah, since this way was also practiced by the Prophet (peace be upon him). Nevertheless, according to many Sahih (authentic) Hadiths, the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to perform Taslim after the second Rak`ah and then stand up to perform one Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) as Witr. This is the preferable way of performing it and it was the frequent act of the Prophet (peace be upon him). If someone intends to sit after the second Rak`ah, but forgets and stands up, then they should sit again and complete their Prayer and offer Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) and then perform one separate Rak`ah, because the Messenger (peace be upon

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him) said: [\(The \(optional\) night Prayer is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.\)](#) Thus, if someone does not intend to offer the Witr as three Rak`ahs together and stands up after the second Rak`ah, then they should sit again, perform the Tashahhud, complete it, make the invocation that is said after Tashahhud, perform two Sujuds (prostration) of Forgetfulness, perform Taslim and then stand up to perform one separate Rak`ah, which is the Witr. On the other hand, if one makes the intention to perform the three Rak`ahs together, there is nothing wrong on him, since it is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) [\(Performed three Rak`ahs together and five Rak`ahs together without sitting except at the end of them. It is also authentically reported that he \(peace be upon him\) performed seven Rak`ahs together in which he sat after the sixth Rak`ah, performed Tashahhud, but did not perform Taslim, and then performed the seventh Rak`ah after which he sat, performed the Tashahhud and then performed Taslim. It is also authentically reported that he \(peace be upon him\) performed nine Rak`ahs together, in which he sat after the eighth Rak`ah and performed Tashahhud and did not perform Taslim, but stood up and performed](#)

the ninth Rak`ah.) All these methods of performing the Witr Prayer have been reported as acts of the Prophet (peace be upon him). However, it is preferable and reported as the frequent practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that one should perform Taslim at the end of every two Rak`ahs, as he (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) night Prayer is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.\)](#) It is reported that `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(The Messenger \(peace be upon him\) used to offer eleven Rak`ahs during the night in which he used to perform Taslim after every two Rak`ahs, and then he performed Witr as one Rak`ah.](#)

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› This is the preferable way of performing this Prayer and it is the one reported as the frequent practice of the Messenger (peace be upon him). However, whoever performs it as three Rak`ahs and does not sit for Taslim except after the third one, or performs it as five Rak`ahs and does not sit for Taslim except after the fifth one, there is nothing wrong in this, because the Messenger (peace be upon him) sometimes did that. Similarly, if someone performs it as seven Rak`ahs and sits for Tashahhud after the sixth Rak`ah and does not perform Taslim, but stands up to perform the seventh Rak`ah; or performs it as nine Rak`ahs and sits for Tashahhud after the eighth Rak`ah and does not perform Taslim, but stands up to perform the ninth Rak`ah, then there is nothing wrong in this. All these ways of performing the Witr Prayer have been authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him), and thus are permissible.





**Q: Is it permissible to pray Shaf` (two units of Prayer, particularly before the final unit of the odd-number prayer) and Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) together as one Salah (Prayer) without Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) between them, like Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer for example?**

**A:** Praying Shaf` and Witr together like Maghrib Prayer is Makruh (reprehensible). This is because some Hadiths prohibited this. Rather, the worshipper should pray two units of Prayer, make Taslim, then pray one Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) as Witr. This is better regarding praying them with two Taslims; to pray two Rak`ahs or more, then one Rak`ah as Witr. There is also no problem if the worshipper prays three continuous Rak`ahs without sitting to recite Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer) except in the last Rak`ah,

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because the Prophet (peace be upon him) prayed three continuous Rak`ahs without sitting after the second Rak`ah as in the Maghrib Prayer. Thus, the worshipper can pray three continuous Rak`ahs and sit in the final Rak`ah only, then recite the Last Tashahhud, invoke Allah's Blessings and Peace upon the Prophet (peace be upon him), say any possible supplications and then make Taslim. There is no problem with this; but it is better to offer Taslim after the first two units and then stand up and pray one Rak`ah only. If the worshipper prays Witr as five, seven, or more Rak`ahs he must offer Taslim after each pair of Rak`ahs, then pray a single Rak`ah as Witr at the end. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do this most of the time. He used to make Taslim after each pair of Rak`ahs, then pray a single Rak`ah as Witr at the end. He (peace be upon him) used to pray eleven Rak`ahs most of the time and sometimes thirteen. He sometimes would pray three continuous Rak`ahs, or five continuous Rak`ahs, sitting after the final Rak`ah only. All of these ways are permissible.



**Q: When I perform the obligatory `Isha' (Night) the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) that is to be performed after it, should I pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) before praying Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) or after it?**

**A:** Witr must be the last Salah (Prayer) to be performed after Qiyam-ul-Layl, because the Prophet (peace be upon him)

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said: [﴿Let the last Salah you perform at night be of an odd number of units.﴾](#) He (peace be upon him) also said: [﴿The night Salah is two by two, then when you fear that dawn is about to break, pray one Rak`ah and make the Salah that you have offered odd-numbered.﴾](#) The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet), therefore, is to make Witr the last Salah to be offered. That is, the worshipper can pray Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) as they wish in the form of pairs of Rak`ahs, then end their Salah with one Rak`ah, which is the Witr. This is the Sunnah.



#### 49- How to offer Taslim in Witr Prayer

**Q: Should I pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) with one Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) only, or must I offer two Taslims at the end of it?**

**A:** You should offer two Taslims, as in the case with all other Prayers, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer two Taslims in the supererogatory and the obligatory Salah (Prayer). He used to pray two units of Prayer, then offer Taslim, then pray a single Rak`ah (unit of Prayer). This is the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) and the best thing to do. It is also permissible to pray three continuous Rak`ahs, offering two Taslims after the third one.





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**50- How to pray Witr in the morning if one misses it due to sleep (at night)**

**Q: How can Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) be prayed in the morning if someone sleeps at night and misses it?**

**A:** If someone does not pray Witr at night because he is overcome by sleep, he forgets it, or is ill; he may pray whatever is possible for him in the morning. It is better to pray the same number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) that he intended to pray at night, but not in an odd number. Rather, he should pray an even number of Rak`ahs. That is if one usually prays five Rak`ahs, he should pray six Rak`ahs in the morning, offering Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each pair of Rak`ahs. If one usually prays seven Rak`ahs, he should pray eight in the morning, offering Taslim after each pair. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) used to pray twelve Rak`ahs in the morning if he was occupied at night by sleeping or an illness and did not pray Witr.\)](#) He used to pray eleven Rak`ahs every night and if he was occupied by anything, such as sleeping, or an illness, he used to add one Rak`ah. That is, to pray twelve Rak`ahs in the following morning, offering Taslim after each pair of Rak`ahs.



**Q: Abu `Ammar asks: I pray eleven Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) every night: two after `Isha' (Night) Prayer, and two as the Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) done after Wudu' (ablution) for Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night), and three Rak`ahs as Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). Is my Salah (Prayer) valid?**

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**A:** Witr can be prayed with as many Rak`ahs as possible, even a single Rak`ah after `Isha' Prayer and its supererogatory Prayer. But it is good if the worshipper prays three, five, seven, nine, eleven, or thirteen Rak`ahs; and it is better to pray eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs, offering Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each pair of Rak`ahs. One can also pray Witr as three continuous Rak`ahs, or offer Taslim after each two Rak`ahs, or pray five continuous Rak`ahs. The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to pray five Rak`ahs continuously without offering Taslim except in the fifth Rak`ah, or else to offer Taslim after each pair of Rak`ahs. This is more preferable. It is also permissible to pray Witr as seven continuous Rak`ahs, or else to sit and recite the First Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of Prayer) in the sixth Rak`ah, then stand up and pray the last Rak`ah; or to pray nine Rak`ahs, sitting in the eighth Rak`ah and reciting the First Tashahhud, then standing up to pray the last Rak`ah. It is better, however, to offer Taslim after each pair of Rak`ahs, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The night Salah is two by two, then when you fear that dawn is about to break, pray one Rak`ah and make the Salah that you have offered odd-numbered.\)](#)



**51- Ruling on praying Qiyam-ul-Layl late at night when praying Witr at the beginning of the night**

**Q: This enquirer says: Please I want to know from Your Eminence if I can perform Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) in the beginning of the night, and then complete it at the end of the night?**

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**A:** This matter is open to choice; if you perform Witr in the beginning of the night, you can perform Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) at the end of the night according to your capacity, but not with an odd number of units, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **«No two Witr (should be offered) during one night.»** Thus you can pray two, four, six or more Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), offering Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each two Rak`ahs, and the first Witr that you prayed before sleeping is enough for you; but it is better to postpone praying Witr till the end of the night so that you pray the number of Rak`ahs that you are able to pray and then pray a single Rak`ah as Witr. This is better, because the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: **«The night Salah (Prayer) is two by two, then when you fear that dawn is about to break, pray one Rak`ah and make the Salah that you have offered odd-numbered.»** This is what is prescribed.



## 52- An issue concerning Witr

**Q: Is it true that praying Shaf` (Prayer with an odd number of units) every night results in gaining the Prophet's intercession?**

**A:** There is nothing reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) concerning this issue, as far as I know, but

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the believer may pray Shaf` during the day or at night. This is the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet), because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The night or day Salah \(Prayer\) is two by two.\)](#) There is no Salah consisting of an odd number of Rak`ahs except Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), which is prayed at night as a single Rak`ah (unit of Prayer), or some types of Salat-ul-Khawf (Prayer in times of fear). The Sunnah is that all Prayers should be performed with an even number of Rak`ahs, except the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, which consists of three Rak`ahs, which is an odd number, while the Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon), `Isha' (Night) and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers all consist of an even number of Rak`ahs. All supererogatory Prayers can also be called Shaf`, because they consist of pairs of Rak`ahs, except Witr, which consists of a single Rak`ah only, as well as some types of Salat-ul-Khawf, during which the Prophet (peace be upon him) prayed only one Rak`ah in times of war. Therefore, there is no basis in Shari`ah (Islamic law) for the Hadith which states that anyone who performs Shaf` gains the intercession of the Prophet (peace be upon him).



### 53- Ruling on praying Qiyam-ul-Layl after Witr

**Q:** I usually pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) before I sleep because I assume that I will not be able to wake up for Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night), but I almost always get up and pray Qiyam-ul-Layl, having prayed Witr before I sleep. Is this permissible? And can I pray Witr again with Qiyam-ul-Layl? How many Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) should Qiyam-ul-Layl be? Can I recite Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in a loud voice? May Allah reward you with the best!

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**A:** You can pray as you are able by the end of the night, and the Witr that you pray at the beginning is sufficient, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(No two Witr \(should be offered\) during one night.\)](#) Thus, the first Witr that you prayed is sufficient, and if you can get up for Qiyam-ul-Layl, you can pray two, four or more Rak`ahs, offering Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each two Rak`ahs. You can recite as much Qur`an as you wish and you can read it in a loud voice, and say as many supplications as you like during Sujud (Prostration). And all praise is due to Allah, as this is one of the graces that Allah (Exalted be He) has bestowed upon us!





**Q: Is it permissible to perform Nafilah (supererogatory) Salahs during the time between Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) after `Isha' (Night) Prayer and Fajr (Dawn) Prayer? I hear some say that it is impermissible to perform supererogatory Salah after Witr until dawn. Some say that sleeping separates between them. There is a Shaykh in our country who states that it is permissible to perform supererogatory Salah before Fajr Prayer during the period between the first and second Adhan (call to Prayer) for Fajr. Yet, others say that this is impermissible. Since I often wake up before Fajr Prayer and want to offer supererogatory Salah, I want to ask: Is this permissible or not?**

**A:** Yes, there is nothing wrong with performing supererogatory Salah after Witr. If one performs Witr early at night or at midnight, and Allah facilitates for one waking up late at night, it is permissible for one to perform supererogatory Salah

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as much as one wishes, i.e. two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) or more, with no need to perform another Witr. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(There cannot be two Witr in one night.\)](#) If a believing man or woman performs Witr early at night and wakes up late at night, it is permissible for them to perform supererogatory Salah as much as they wish. Yet, they should not perform another Witr. They can perform two, four or more Rak`ahs. This is good and there is nothing wrong with this. Yet, their Salah should be in the form of two pairs of Rak`ahs, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) night Salah is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.\)](#) It was authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) performed two Rak`ahs late at night after he had already performed Witr. This is in order to teach people that performing supererogatory Salah after Witr is permissible. Yet, it is preferable to end one's Salah with Witr. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Make Witr your last prayer at night.\)](#) Thus, it is preferable to conclude one's Salah with Witr but

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if there is enough time for one to perform two or more Rak`ahs, there is nothing wrong with this, praise be to Allah.



#### 54- Ruling on praying Witr as three Rak`ahs with two Taslims

**Q: Some people say: When one Prays the `Isha' (Night) Prayer, one must pray three Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) after it; a pair of Rak`ahs and then a single one. They call the first: Shaf` (two units of Prayer, particularly before the final unit of the odd-number prayer) and the other they call Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). Is this correct? What is your advice to me?**

**A:** This is Mustahab (desirable), not Wajib (obligatory) and it is called Witr. It is desirable for all believers, whether men or women, to pray Witr every night after the `Isha' Prayer and its time continues up until dawn. After performing the Sunnah (supererogatory) Prayer following the `Isha' Prayer, which consists of two Rak`ahs, a Muslim should pray Witr as two Rak`ahs. This is followed by a single Rak'ah, which are called Shaf` and Witr, if he wishes to pray Witr before sleeping. It is also sufficient to pray Witr as a single Rak`ah only after the Sunnah following the `Isha' Prayer. It is also good to pray Witr as five, seven or more Rak`ahs, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pray Witr with eleven Rak`ahs in most cases. Sometimes he would Pray Witr with thirteen Rak`ahs and sometimes less than that, making Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each two Rak`ahs. He would then pray a single Rak`ah as Witr, in which he used to recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) ,

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and: ﴿Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.﴾ The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: ﴿The (optional) Salah during the night should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs, but if one of you fears that dawn is approaching, he should pray one Rak`ah, which will make his Salah be of an odd number.﴾ This is the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) concerning Witr, it is not obligatory; it is desirable for all Muslims, men or women, after the `Isha' Prayer, up until dawn. It is better to pray by the end of the night if possible, but if someone fears not being able to pray by the end of the night, they should pray Witr after the `Isha' Prayer before they sleep. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said in the authentic Hadith related by Muslim in his Sahih (authentic) Hadith Book: ﴿If anyone is afraid that he may not get up by the end of the night, he should observe Witr at the beginning of it; and if anyone is eager to get up in the last part of it, he should observe Witr by the end of the night, for Prayer by the end of the night is witnessed and that is preferable.﴾

"Witnessed" means that it is witnessed by the angels of the night and the angles of the day. May Allah grant us success.



**Q: Please tell me the difference between Shaf` (two units of Prayer, particularly before the final unit of the odd-numbered Prayer) and Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) in Qiyam-ul-Layl. Is it obligatory to have an intention for each?**

**A:** Shaf` means praying two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), and Witr means praying one, three, five or seven Rak`ahs. All of these are called Witr; while Shaf` is praying pairs of Rak`ahs only.

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Praying four or six Rak`ahs are all called Shaf`, but the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to make Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each two Rak`ahs. It is not permissible to pray four, six, or eight Rak`ahs continuously with one Taslim. Rather, the worshipper should offer Taslim after each two Rak`ahs, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) night Salah \(Prayer\) is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.\)](#) However, the worshipper may pray three, or five Rak`ahs continuously. This is an exception. The Salahs during the day are also offered in the form of paired Rak`ahs. Another narration of the same Hadith is: [\(The \(optional\) Salah by night and day should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs.\)](#)



**Q: I pray two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) at night, and then I pray three Rak`ahs as Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), is this permissible?**

**A:** Witr can be at least one Rak`ah; thus praying one, three, or more Rak`ahs as Witr is permissible and is good. And one Rak`ah at least is sufficient. And all praise is due to Allah!





**Q: Can I pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) after the first Adhan (call to Prayer), respected Shaykh?**

**A:** Witr can be prayed at any time during the night from after `Isha' (Night) Prayer till dawn. It is permissible to pray Witr all through the night, after praying `Isha' and following Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis), until

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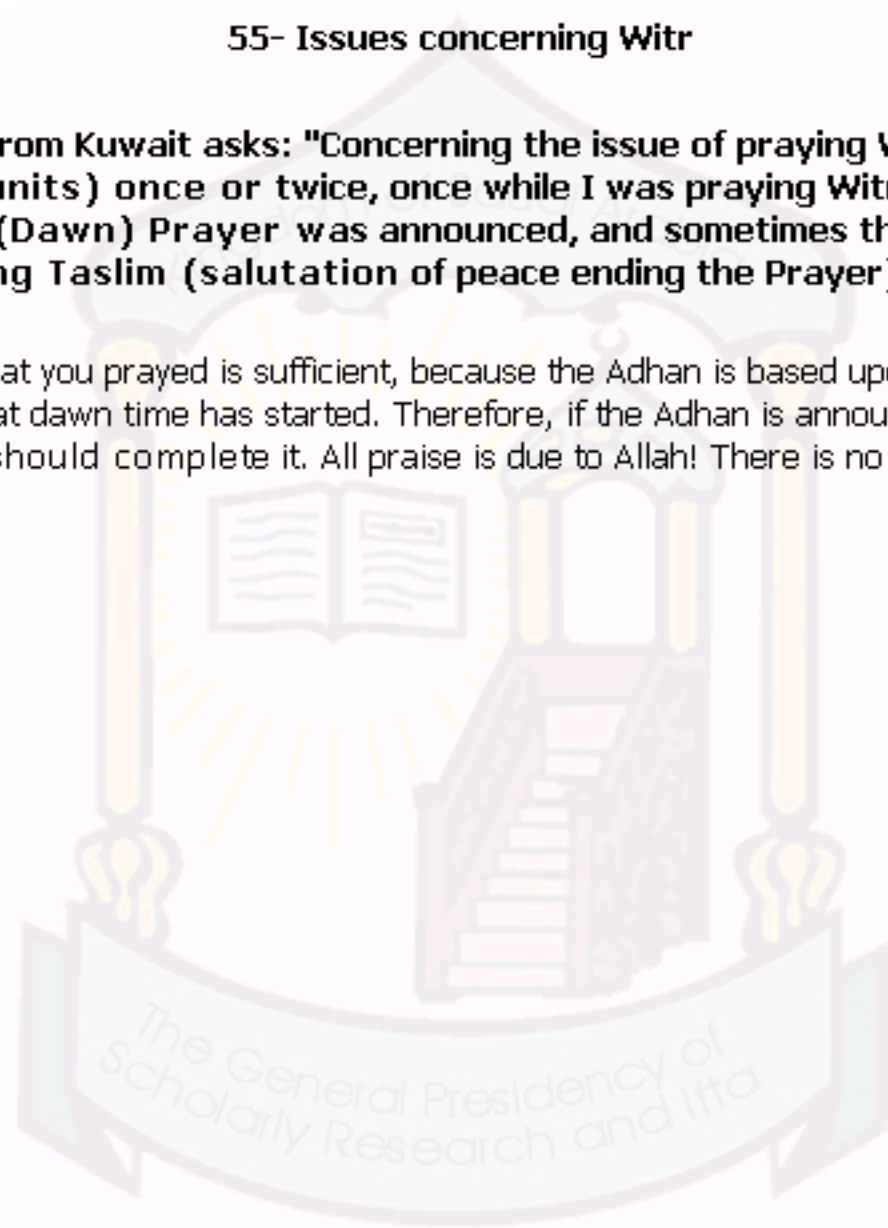
dawn. It is better to pray it at the end of the night if possible, but if you fear that you will not be able to wake up by the end of the night, it is better for you to perform it before you sleep.



### 55- Issues concerning Witr

**Q:** An enquirer from Kuwait asks: "Concerning the issue of praying Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) once or twice, once while I was praying Witr, the Adhan (call to Prayer) of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer was announced, and sometimes the Adhan just starts while I am making Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) from Witr. Should I repeat Witr?"

**A:** No, the Witr that you prayed is sufficient, because the Adhan is based upon assumption; that is, an assumption that dawn time has started. Therefore, if the Adhan is announced while someone is praying Witr, he should complete it. All praise is due to Allah! There is no problem with this. It is sufficient.

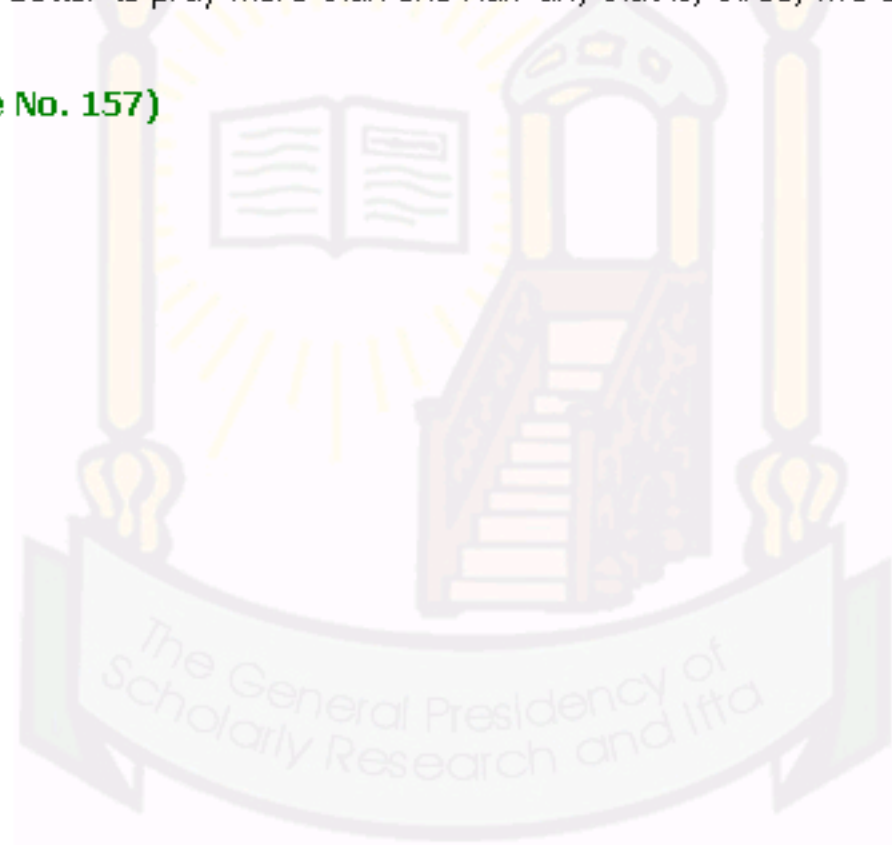




**Q: Is it permissible to pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) with one Rak`ah (unit of Prayer), or should it be prayed with an even number of Rak`ahs?**

**A:** : One Rak`ah suffices. It is permissible to pray Witr with a single Rak`ah at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of the night. And it is better to recite in it Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and then recite: (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.) It is permissible to recite Al-Fatihah only, or with: (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.) But it is better to recite it with: (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.) It is also better to pray more than one Rak`ah; that is, three, five or more.

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**Q: Does the Hadith that states that the Salah (Prayer) that is performed during the day or at night should be performed in pairs of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) mean I should pray the four Rak`ahs that are performed before Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer as two Rak`ahs, followed by two Rak`ahs?**

**A:** Yes, you should pray any Salah during the day or at night in pairs of Rak`ahs, including Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) and the other supererogatory Salah. This is the Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet). But it is also permissible to pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) with three continuous Rak`ahs, five continuous Rak`ahs, or seven continuous Rak`ahs. However, it is better to pray it in pairs, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) Salah during the night should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs, but if someone fears that dawn is approaching, they should pray one Rak`ah, which will make their Salah be of an odd number.\)](#) It was authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) [\(prayed Witr with five continuous Rak`ahs,\)](#) [\(and with three continuous Rak`ahs,\)](#) [\(and sometimes with seven continuous Rak`ahs.\)](#) Therefore, this is permissible. But it is better to pray it with pairs of Rak`ahs, and then a single Rak`ah to make the number of Rak`ahs odd.





**56- Ruling on praying eleven Rak`ahs every night regularly**

**Q: I pray eleven Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) every night reciting Qur'an in a loud voice and supplicating in**

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**the last Salah (Prayer), i.e. Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). I start my Salah at 10:00 pm. Is my Salah valid or not?**

**A:** What you are doing is the best thing. The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to pray Witr with eleven Rak`ahs; this is the best thing ever; eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs, because this is what the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do. Your action is a good Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) and a good Witr, and is a Sunnah if you keep doing it, and Allah will reward you for it if He wills. There is nothing wrong with this; but it is Mustahab (desirable), not obligatory. It is also permissible to pray Witr sometimes with five, seven, or three Rak`ahs.



### 57- Ruling on reciting Al-Mu`awwidhatayn after Surah Al-Ikhlâs in Witr

**Q: When I pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), I perform one Rak`ah (unit of Prayer), in which I recite Surahs (Qur'anic Chapters) Al-Ikhlâs, Al-Falaq, and Al-Nas. Is this valid?**

**A:** It is better to recite: [\(Say \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\): "He is Allâh, \(the\) One.\)](#) only. This is the best concerning

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the last Rak`ah which is the Witr. This is what we know about the Prophet (peace be upon him). He used to recite in Witr: [\(Say \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\): "He is Allâh, \(the\) One.\)](#) while adding Al-Mu`awwidhatayn (Surahs Al-Falaq and Al-Nas) to it was reported in a Da`if (weak) Hadith.



**Q: I pray eleven Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) after `Isha' (Night) Prayer, and then I pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). However, sometimes I am not able to do this because I work all day. I always pray in the last third of the night, but if I am overcome by sleep I pray in the morning. Is this valid? Please, advise me.**

**A:** This is a good action and it is the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) because the Prophet (peace be upon him) in most cases would pray Witr with eleven Rak`ahs, whether in the beginning of the night, in the middle, or by the end of it. In most cases, he used to pray at the end of the night. What you have done is the Sunnah and there is no problem if you sometimes sleep and miss it. So, if you miss it because of sleeping, because of being lazy, or if it is not possible for you to pray it,

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you can perform it in the morning. However, you should not perform it with an odd number of Rak`ahs, rather with an even number of Rak`ahs. You can pray for example; twelve Rak`ahs with six Taslims (salutations of peace ending the Prayer), instead of eleven Rak`ahs, if you are able. You may also pray less than this. For example: eight, six, or four Rak`ahs. It is better to pray with the same number of Rak`ahs that you are used to praying at night, adding one Rak`ah so as not to make the number of Rak`ahs performed in the morning an odd number. You should pray with an even number of Rak`ahs in the morning because [\(the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) used to pray twelve Rak`ahs in the morning if he missed the regular Salah \(Prayer\) that he used to pray every night as a result of sleeping or an illness.\)](#) This was narrated by `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her). The Sunnah, therefore, is that anyone who misses the Salah that he regularly performs every night as a result of sleeping, an illness or any other similar reason; he should pray it in the morning, however, with an even number of Rak`ahs, not an odd number. You have been guided to the Sunnah and all praise is due to Allah. It is also considered Sunnah to pray Witr with less Rak`ahs; with one, three, or five Rak`ahs. All praise is due to Allah. Witr can at least be performed with one Rak`ah and whether it is performed after `Isha' Prayer or in the end of the night, both agree with the Sunnah.



### 58- Ruling on repeating Witr twice in one night

**Q: If I pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), after `Isha' (Night) Prayer before I sleep, fearing that I will not be able to get up by the end of the night, and then I manage to get up and I want to pray by the end of the night,**

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**is it permissible to pray? And can I pray Witr again or not?**

**A:** It is good to pray Witr in the beginning of the night if one fears to miss it, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) advised Abu Al-Darda' and Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with them) to pray Witr in the beginning of the night; some scholars said: He advised them to do this because they were occupied in the beginning of the night with studying Hadith, which made it difficult for them to pray Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) by the end of the night. Therefore, if someone prays in the beginning of the night, and then Allah makes him able to get up and pray Qiyam-ul-Layl, he should pray as many Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) as possible, but not in an odd number, because the first Witr that he prayed suffices, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(No two Witr \(should be offered\) during one night\)](#) Thus he may pray by the end of the night two, four, six or more Rak`ahs without Witr, and there is no problem with this. It is only when one does not pray Witr in the beginning of the night that he is ordered to pray it as late as possible by the end of the night if he manages to get up for praying, because the latter part of the night is better. Then if Allah (Exalted be He) makes it easy for someone to pray Witr by the end of the night, it will be better for him. However, if he fears not to be able to get up, he should be resolute and pray Witr at the beginning of the night, then if Allah grants him the ability to get up by the end of the night,

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he may pray as he wishes but without praying Witr again, as it was reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him), because `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) [\(narrated that the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) prayed two Rak`ahs after Witr\)](#) so as to show people that praying after Witr is permissible and that there is nothing wrong with it.



### 59- Ruling on delaying Witr if a person knows that they will get up to pray by the end of the night

**Q: The questioner says: My mother prays `Isha' (Night) Prayer together with Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), and then she sleeps and gets up to pray before Fajr (Dawn) Prayer; but many people tell her she should not pray Witr as long as she is in the habit of praying before Fajr Prayer. What is Your Eminence's opinion about this?**

**A:** It is better for her to delay Witr till the latter part of the night if she is used to praying by the end of the night; she should delay it and perform it after praying the Salah (Prayer) that Allah makes possible for her. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Let the last Salah that you perform at night be Witr\)](#) This is better: the Salah being in the latter part of the night, and ending with Witr

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if possible. But if she fears that she might not be able to get up by the end of the night, and she prefers to be cautious about not missing it, she should pray Witr at the beginning of the night, and there is no blame on her, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) advised Abu Hurayrah and Abu Al-Darda' (may Allah be pleased with them) to pray Witr at the beginning of the night. Some scholars have said that this was because they were occupied with studying Hadith and they feared that they would not be able to get up by the end of the night. That is why he advised them to pray Witr at the beginning of the night. It was also authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he said: [\(If anyone is afraid that they may not get up by the end of the night, they should observe Witr in the first part of it; and if anyone is eager to get up by the end of the night, they should observe Witr at the end of the night, for Salah at the end of the night is witnessed \(by the angels\) and that is preferable.\)](#) (Related by Muslim in his Sahih) Therefore, if the woman can get up by the end of the night, it is better for her to perform Witr at this time, after praying what Allah has predestined for her, and then she prays Witr before the Fajr Prayer; but if she fears that she will not be able to get up, it is better for her to pray Witr at the beginning of the night. And then if she gets up by the end of the night, she may pray what Allah makes possible for her: two, four, or six Rak`ahs, without Witr, because the Witr that she performed earlier suffices for her; she should not repeat it, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(No two Witr \(should be offered\) during one night.\)](#) Thus, if a person has

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prayed Witr at the beginning of the night, and then manages to pray again by the end of the night, they should not repeat Witr; rather, the first Witr that they prayed is sufficient, and they may pray as many Rak`ahs as possible during the last part of the night: two, four or more Rak`ahs, without Witr.



**Q: After performing both `Isha' (Night) Prayer and Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) I slept. Is it permissible for me, when waking up after midnight, to perform Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night)?**

**A:** It is Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) for each Mu'min (believer) to seek the time that most suits each one for performing Qiyam-ul-Layl. If one cannot wake up late at night, one should perform it early at night. As for those who can wake up late at night, it is better for them to perform Qiyam-ul-Layl late at night, since this is the best time, where Allah descends to the nearest (lowest) heaven during this time, according to the Sahih (authentic) Hadith in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Our Lord \(Blessed and Exalted be He\) descends every night to the nearest \(lowest\) heaven, when a third of the night remains, and says: Is there anyone to invoke Me, so that I may respond to their invocation? Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant them their request? Is there anyone seeking My Forgiveness, so that I may forgive them?\)](#) This is a great time during which Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) descends to the nearest heaven in a way compatible with His Glory (Glorified and Exalted be He) and says: [\(Is there anyone to invoke Me, so that I may respond to their invocation? Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant them their request?](#)

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[Is there anyone seeking My Forgiveness, so that I may forgive them? Is there anyone to repent to Me, so that I may accept their repentance.\)](#) This is a great bounty from Allah; therefore, it is necessary to seek that time, i.e. the last third of the night, based on the Sahih Hadith stating Allah's Descent to the nearest heaven. This Descent is in a way that befits our Lord (Glorified and Exalted be He), without Takyif (descriptive designation of Allah's Attributes) or Tamthil (likening Allah's Attributes to those of His Creation). Rather, in this regard one should say that it is a Descent in a way compatible with His Majesty, bearing no resemblance to that of His Creatures; unique in itself like all the other Attributes of Allah. Similarly, we should say: Allah rose over the Throne in a way that befits His Majesty, unlike and incomparable to any of His Creatures (Glorified and Exalted be He). The same is to be said about Allah's Knowledge, Countenance, Hand and all the other Attributes. They are all true and affirmed as belonging to Allah in a way compatible with His Majesty and Glory based on authentic Islamic texts. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [\(There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.\)](#) Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) affirmed Hearing and Seeing for Himself and negated any resemblance to His Creation. This is the truth adopted by Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (adherents to the Sunnah and the Muslim mainstream). They confirm as true all the Attributes and Names stated in the Glorious Book and the purified Sunnah of Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) with neither Tamthil (likening Allah's Attributes to those of His Creation) nor Ta`til (negation of the meaning or function of Allah's Attributes). Thus, we should firmly confirm and believe in Allah's Names and Attributes, i.e., His Istiwa',

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Mercy, Wrath, and having a Face, Hand, Fingers, etc. We should believe in them as they are stated in the Noble Qur'an and the Sunnah, with neither Tamthil nor Ta`til. This is the doctrine of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah. The same applies to Allah's Descending late at night, which we should believe

in and affirm in the way compatible with the Glory of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). We should believe that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is over His Throne; and since His Attributes are not like those of His Creatures, there is no contradiction between His Descent to the nearest heaven and His Being over His Throne. The essence and manner of this Descent are known to none but Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). It is compatible with Allah's Perfection and is in itself a great bounty, as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [\(Is there anyone repenting so that their repentance may be accepted? Is there anyone begging anything so that their request may be granted? Is there anyone seeking forgiveness so that they may be forgiven?\)](#) This is a great blessing. Thus, it is necessary to supplicate to Allah a lot at late night time along with performing optional Salah and reciting the Noble Qur'an. This is the guidance of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Those who cannot wake up late at night and fear oversleeping should perform as many Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) as they can early at night. They can offer Witr as three, five, seven or more Rak`ahs. The least number of Rak`ahs for Witr is just one Rak`ah after the Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed after an obligatory Prayer) of `Isha' Prayer. If one performs Witr as three or more Rak`ahs, this is better.

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If, after that, one wakes up during the night or late at night and wishes to offer two, four or more Rak`ahs as optional night Salah, this is permissible, but without performing Witr again, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(There cannot be two Witr in one night.\)](#) Rather, when waking up at any time during the night one may perform any even number of Rak`ahs, i.e. two, four, six, eight, etc, without repeating Witr again, since the first one suffices. It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) [\(sometimes would perform two Rak`ahs after Witr while sitting down.\)](#) This - and Allah knows best - is in order to make it clear to people that Salah after Witr is permissible. Yet, it is preferable that Witr should be the last of one's Salah at night. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Make Witr your last prayer at night.\)](#) Accordingly, it is preferable to conclude night Salah with Witr. Yet, if it happens that one performs Witr and wakes up late at night feeling active, there is nothing wrong with performing as many Rak`ahs as one can, two, four, etc, Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah).



**Q: I usually pray the Rak`ahs (units of prayer) of Witr (prayer with an odd number of units) and go to sleep, and then I get up in the last third of the night and offer two supererogatory Rak`ahs. Is it permissible to do so,**

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**or do you recommend that I delay the Witr until the last part of the night?**

**A:** What you do is good, especially if you find difficulty in getting up for Prayer in the late part of the night. This is called offering Witr Prayer in the early part of the night. Then if you get up in the late part of the night you can offer two Rak`ahs or more. All this is good. It has been authentically narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whoever fears that they may not get up in the latter part of the night should observe Witr in the first part of it; and if anyone is eager to get up in the last part of it should observe Witr at the end of the night, for Prayer in the last part of the night is witnessed \(by the angels\) and this is preferable.\)](#) So whoever is able to offer Prayer in the late part of the night, it is preferable for him to delay Witr until then, as Prayer at that time is witnessed by Allah and His angels. However, whoever cannot get up in the late part of the night should offer Witr in the early part of the night, and they get up during the late part of the night they can pray as many Rak`ahs as they can without offering the Witr again, as the first one suffices. So one can offer two, four or more Rak`ahs with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each pair without repeating the Witr, as the first suffices. Praise be to Allah.





**Q: I always pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) during the early part of the night and then I wake up during the late part of the night and pray as many Rak`ahs as I can, two by two without offering Witr afterwards. Is what I do**

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**correct? What is the ruling on repeating Witr?**

**A:** Yes, your action is correct. If someone prays Witr during the early part of the night and then Allah favors them with waking up during the late part of the night, they can pray as many Rak`ahs as they can, two by two, yet the first Witr is sufficient for them. It is Makruh (reprehensible) to offer Witr twice in one night as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **«(There are) no two Witr (to be offered) in one night.»** The Prophet (peace be upon him) offered two Rak`ahs after Witr to teach people that it is permissible to do so, yet delaying Witr until the late part of the night is still preferable if possible. Therefore, the Witr is preferable to be offered during the late part of the night if possible. This is based on the Prophet's Hadith that reads: **«Make Witr your last Prayer at night.»** So if you can do so, it would be better. Otherwise, you can be on the safe side and offer Witr during the early part of the night. If Allah makes it easy for you to wake up during the late part of the night you can pray as many Rak`ahs as you can, two by two with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each two without offering Witr again.



**Q: A questioner from Buraydah asks: I pray two Rak`ahs (units of prayer) as Sunnah (supererogatory Prayer) before offering the obligatory Prayer, and then I pray four Rak`ahs of the obligatory Prayer, and then two Rak`ahs as Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed after an obligatory Prayer) and then I offer a supererogatory Prayer**

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**and finish with three Rak`ahs as Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units): Is it correct?**

**A:** It is Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) for a Muslim to pray two Rak`ahs between Adhan (call to Prayer) and Iqamah (call to start the Prayer). This is based on the Prophet's Hadith that reads: [\(There is a Salah \(Prayer\) between the two Adhans \(the Adhan and the Iqamah\), there is a Salah between the two Adhans, there is a Salah between the two Adhans for the one who wishes.\)](#) So it is Mustahab (desirable) to offer two Rak`ahs after the Adhan of Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers. After finishing the obligatory Prayer, one should pray the Sunnah Ba`diyyah and conclude with three, five or more Rak`ahs as Witr Prayer. Yet, it is preferable to delay offering Witr until the late part of the night if someone thinks that they will most likely be able to get up at that time, otherwise it is a Sunnah for a person to offer Witr in the early part of the night to be sure not to miss it. It may be one, three or more Rak`ahs. This act of Sunnah is based on the Prophet's Hadith that reads: [\(Whoever fears that they may not get up in the latter part of the night should observe Witr in the first part of it; and if anyone is eager to get up in the last part of it should observe Witr at the end of the night, for Prayer in the last part of the night is witnessed \(by the angels\) and this is preferable.\)](#) At first, the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer Witr in the early part of the night, then at midnight, and finally during the late part of the night.

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Offering Witr during the late part of the night is preferable for a person who can do it. However, if someone fears they might not get up during the late part of the night they can offer Witr during the early part of the night. As for the Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory prayer) of the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, it is four Rak`ahs with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each pair. It is also Mustahab (desirable) to pray four Rak`ahs after `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer with Taslim after each pair of Rak`ahs. Likewise, four Rak`ahs are Mustahab after Zhuhr Prayer; two of which are Sunnah Ratibah ((supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) and the other two are Mustahab. It is preferable to perform four Rak`ahs after Zhuhr Prayer as Ahl-us-Sunan (authors of Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes) related on the authority of Um Habibah (may Allah be pleased with her) that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: [\(Whoever observes the practice of performing four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer and four after it, Allah will shield him against the Fire \(of Hell\).\)](#) This magnificent Hadith is authentic. It indicates the virtue of offering this number of Rak`ahs before and after Zhuhr Prayer. As for the Sunnah Ratibah, it consists of four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr Prayer and two after it. However, it is Mustahab to add two Rak`ahs after the Sunnah Ba`diyyah to have four Rak`ahs offered after Zhuhr

Prayer. It is similarly Mustahab to offer four Rak`ahs before `Asr Prayer. As for Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers, it is Sunnah to offer two Rak`ahs before each of the two Prayers, which is prescribed by the Hadith that reads: [\(There is a Salah between the two Adhans \(Adhan \[call to Prayer\] and Iqamah \[call to start the Prayer\]\)\).](#) Yet,

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it is permissible to offer more than two Rak`ahs at that time. After Maghrib Prayer there is Sunnah Ba`diyyah consisting of two Rak`ahs with one Taslim, and likewise after `Isha' Prayer. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to observe these supererogatory Prayers. As for the Witr Prayer, it should be offered after `Isha' and its Sunnah Ratibah. If, for some reason, someone combines the Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers at the time of the former one they can offer Witr after the `Isha' Prayer exactly like the case with patients and travelers.



**Q: We know that the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) is the last to be offered in one's day. One day I was in the Masjid (mosque) and prayed the `Isha' (Night) Prayer and followed it with Shaf` (Prayer with an even number of units, particularly before the final unit of the odd-numbered Prayer) and Witr. While I was leaving the Masjid, a friend of mine met me and urged me to pray with him so that he would get the reward of offering prayer in congregation. What is the ruling on this?**

**A:** The Witr ends the night Prayers, but not the day Prayers. Rather, the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer ends the day Prayers, so it is like the Witr of the day. The Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) is concluded with one Rak`ah as Witr. This Rak`ah ends the late night Prayer. Yet after offering Witr, one can still offer more Rak`ahs of the night Prayer. For example, if someone performs Witr in the earlier part of the night then they are favored with waking up in the late part of the night, they can offer as many Rak`ahs as possible; two, four or more, two

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by two. But the first Witr suffices and they do not have to repeat it. This is based on the Prophet's Hadith that reads: [«\(There are\) no two Witr \(to be offered\) during one night.»](#) If someone comes across a friend of them (after offering Witr), they are permitted to pray together and there is nothing wrong in this. An example of this is when someone's friend asks to pray with him, or when there is a congregation one likes to pray with, or when there is plenty of time and one likes to fill it with Prayer; all these conditions are permissible. The point is that one can pray during the late part of the night after offering Witr, and in such a case he does not need to repeat Witr; as the first is enough. Praise be to Allah.



**Q: Is it correct that no Prayer should be offered after Witr?**

**A:** What you have mentioned is incorrect. You can offer supererogatory Salah (Prayer) after performing the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) as night is not a time during which Salah is forbidden. However, it is preferable to end the night Prayer with Witr. The Prophet (peace be upon him) would sometimes pray two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) after Witr to instruct people that it is permissible to do this. So, there is nothing wrong if you perform Witr in the early part of the night or at midnight and then wake up in the late part of the night and offer two, four or

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six Rak`ahs. However, it is preferable for whoever offers Prayer in the late part of the night to end Prayer with one Rak`ah as Witr. This is based on the Prophet's (peace be upon him) Hadith that reads: [\(Make Witr your last Prayer at night.\)](#) (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim).



**Q: A questioner from Al-Bahah says: I perform Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) before sleeping in case I do not wake up. I offer Witr following the instruction of the Prophet (peace be upon him) who said: ﴿Perform the Witr O people of the Qur'an.﴾ If I manage to wake up before the time of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, I pray four, six or whatever Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) I can. Yet, I do not offer Witr again as I offered it before I went to sleep. Is what I do correct?**

**A:** What you do is right. If someone fears not to be able to wake up in the late part of the night, they should offer Witr in the early part of the night. Then, if Allah (Exalted be He) makes it easy for them to wake up in the late part of night, they can offer the number of Rak`ahs they can; two, four, six or more with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Whoever fears that they may not get up in the latter part of the night should observe Witr in the first part of it;﴾

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and if anyone is eager to get up in the last part of it should observe Witr at the end of the night, for Prayer in the last part of the night is witnessed (by the angels) and this is preferable.﴾ The Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed Abu Hurayrah and Abu Ad-Darda' (may Allah be pleased with them both) to perform Witr before sleeping. Offering Witr before sleeping is sought to make sure not to miss it in case one fears not to be able to wake up in the late part of the night. But if someone is sure or thinks they shall most likely be able to wake up in the late part of the night, then it is better for them to offer Witr at that time. If someone offers Witr early in the night, and then Allah (Exalted be He) makes it easy for them to wake up in the late part of the night, they can pray whatever Rak`ahs they can, two by two, without repeating the Witr as the first is sufficient for them.



**Q: Is it permissible to offer the night Prayer after Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) for fear of sleeping without performing it?**

**A:** Performing Witr early in the night is sought with the purpose of making sure not to miss it. Thereupon, if someone wakes up late in the night they can pray whatever Rak`ahs they can; two, four, six or more, with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each two Rak`ahs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) night Prayer is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed Abu Hurayrah

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and Abu Al-Darda' (may Allah be pleased with them) to offer Witr before sleeping. The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: [\(Make Witr your last Prayer at night.\)](#) It has been related in some Hadiths that it is better for whoever can wake up in the late part of the night to delay Witr until then, but if someone fears not to be able to wake up in the late part of the night, they should offer Witr in the early part of the night to make sure not to miss it. This is based on the authentic Hadith related by Muslim in his Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith on the authority of Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whoever fears that they may not get up in the latter part of the night should observe Witr in the first part of it; and if anyone is eager to get up in the last part of it should observe Witr at the end of the night, for Prayer in the last part of the night is witnessed \(by the angels\) and this is preferable.\)](#) This Hadith clearly provides the criterion of preference; it maintains that offering Witr is preferable in the early part of the night for those who think they will not be able to wake up in the late part of the night. As for those who do most probably wake up late in the night and are accustomed to doing so, they are advised to delay Witr until then.



**Q: A questioner asks: I remember the meaning of a Hadith that reads: ﴿Make Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) your last Prayer at night.﴾ I always make my intention to wake up for the night Prayer, but I fear that I might oversleep, so I offer the Shaf` (Prayer with an even number of units, particularly before the final unit of the odd-numbered Prayer)**

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**and Witr before I go to sleep. Is it permissible for me to perform Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) after the Shaf` and Witr, or should I delay them to be offered with Qiyam-ul-Layl?**

**A:** If you fear you will not to be able to wake up in the late part of the night, then offer Shaf` and Witr in the early part of it. The Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed some of the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) to offer Witr early in the night before going to sleep as they were afraid that they would not be able to wake up in the late part of the night. Therefore if someone fears not to be able to wake up in the late part of the night, it is a Sunnah (action approved by the Prophet) that they perform Witr in the early part of it. But if someone is able to wake up in the late part, they can offer as many Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) as they can; two, four, six or more with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs. The Witr offered early is sufficient and there is no need to repeat it, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿(There are) no two Witr's (to be offered) during one night﴾ So, if someone is blessed with waking up at midnight or late at night, they can pray as many Rak`ahs as they can, and the Rak`ahs should be offered two by two and the Witr offered in advance is sufficient for that night. Praise be to Allah.





**Q: Is it permissible to offer Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional prayer at night) after performing the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) early at night? Actually, I read in some Islamic books that no Salah (Prayer) should be offered after Witr,**

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**and that Witr should be the last Prayer offered at night.**

**A:** It is permissible to pray after performing the Witr. The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to end one's Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) with Witr. So, if someone wakes up in the late part of the night and performs the Witr then finds that there is plenty of time (before Fajr [Dawn] Prayer), they can still offer as many Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) as they can, because Prayer and worship are permissible all throughout the night. It has been authentically related that the Prophet (peace be upon him) prayed two Rak`ahs after offering the Witr, giving a practical lesson on the permissibility of that practice.



**Q: Should Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) be performed immediately after `Isha' (Night) Prayer or after midnight? I am used to performing Witr at eleven o'clock after finishing my work, so can I perform Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) before dawn? I heard some people say that there should be no Salah (Prayer) after Witr. Yet I pray Witr at eleven o'clock before sleeping, because most days I only wake up at the time of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. Please benefit us, may Allah reward you with the best.**

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**A:** The time of Witr begins from `Isha' Prayer until Fajr Prayer. Its time extends from after `Isha' Prayer until the break of dawn. This is the time of performing Witr. The same can be said about the time of Tahajjud. If you can perform Witr during the middle of the second half of the night or the last part of the night, this is better, since Allah descends (in a way that befits His Glory) to the nearest (lowest) heaven at the last third, or the fourth and fifth portions, or the last sixth part of the night. This was the time that Prophet Dawud (David, peace be upon him) would pray at night. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The Salah which is dearest to Allah is that of Prophet Dawud \(David, peace be upon him\) for he slept half of the night and woke up for Salah for the third of it and \(then\) slept the sixth part of it.\)](#) Prophet Dawud (peace be upon him) used to sleep during the first half of the night, then wake up for Tahajjud during the fourth and fifth sixths, thus praying during half of both the middle and last thirds of the night. If one performs Tahajjud just during the last third of the night, this is a great time for Salah since it includes a half of the last third during which Prophet Dawud used to perform Tahajjud and the first half of the last third about which Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: [\(Every night, when a third of the night remains, our Lord \(the Blessed and Exalted\) descends to the nearest heaven, saying, 'Is there anyone calling on Me that I may answer him? Is there anyone asking anything of Me that I may give it to him? Is there anyone asking forgiveness of Me that I may forgive him?'\)](#) In conclusion, the best time for Tahajjud

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begins from the last half of the night until the end of the night, i.e., the fourth one-sixth of the night, and the fifth and sixth, which compose the last half of the night. Yet, if you perform Witr early at night before sleeping, and then, thanks to Allah, you wake up late at night, pray as much as you can, where you should offer Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) at the end of each two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) with no need to perform a Witr again, since the Witr you have already performed suffices. [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) would perform two Rak`ahs after Witr while sitting down.\)](#) This is in order to teach people that there is nothing wrong with praying after Witr. However, it is preferable to conclude night Salah with Witr and offer it late at night. If one performs Witr early at night or at midnight and then wakes up late at night, one may pray as many Rak`ahs as Allah makes it easy for them, with Taslim at the end of each two, and there is no need to perform a Witr again, since the Witr already performed suffices, praise be to Allah.



**Q: Concerning Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night): Is it correct that no Prayer should be performed immediately after Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) and that one should sleep first and then pray afterwards (when waking up)?**

**A:** There is nothing wrong with praying right after offering Witr. If someone offers Witr during the early part of the night or at midnight and then wakes up during the late part of the night, they can pray as many Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) as time allows,

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and the Witr offered earlier is sufficient and they do not need to repeat it. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **«(There are) no two Witr (to be offered) during one night.»** It has been authentically related that the Prophet (peace be upon him) **«offered two Rak`ahs after offering Witr.»** In doing so, the Prophet (peace be upon him) intended to instruct Muslims about the permissibility of this practice. The point is that if someone offers Witr during the early part of the night or at midnight and then he comes to wake up during the late part of it, he can offer as many Rak`ahs as they can without repeating Witr as the first is sufficient. Praise be to Allah.



**Q: A questioner from the Arab Republic of Egypt asks: "Before going to bed, I offer four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) as Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night), then two Rak`ahs and one separate Rak`ah. Is it not Mashru` (Islamically permissible) to do so, especially the last Rak`ah of Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units)? People in our country offer one Rak`ah as Witr. Guide us, Your Eminence Shaykh..**

**A:** The matter is open to choice; you can pray during any part of the night because the Prophet (peace be upon him) did so.

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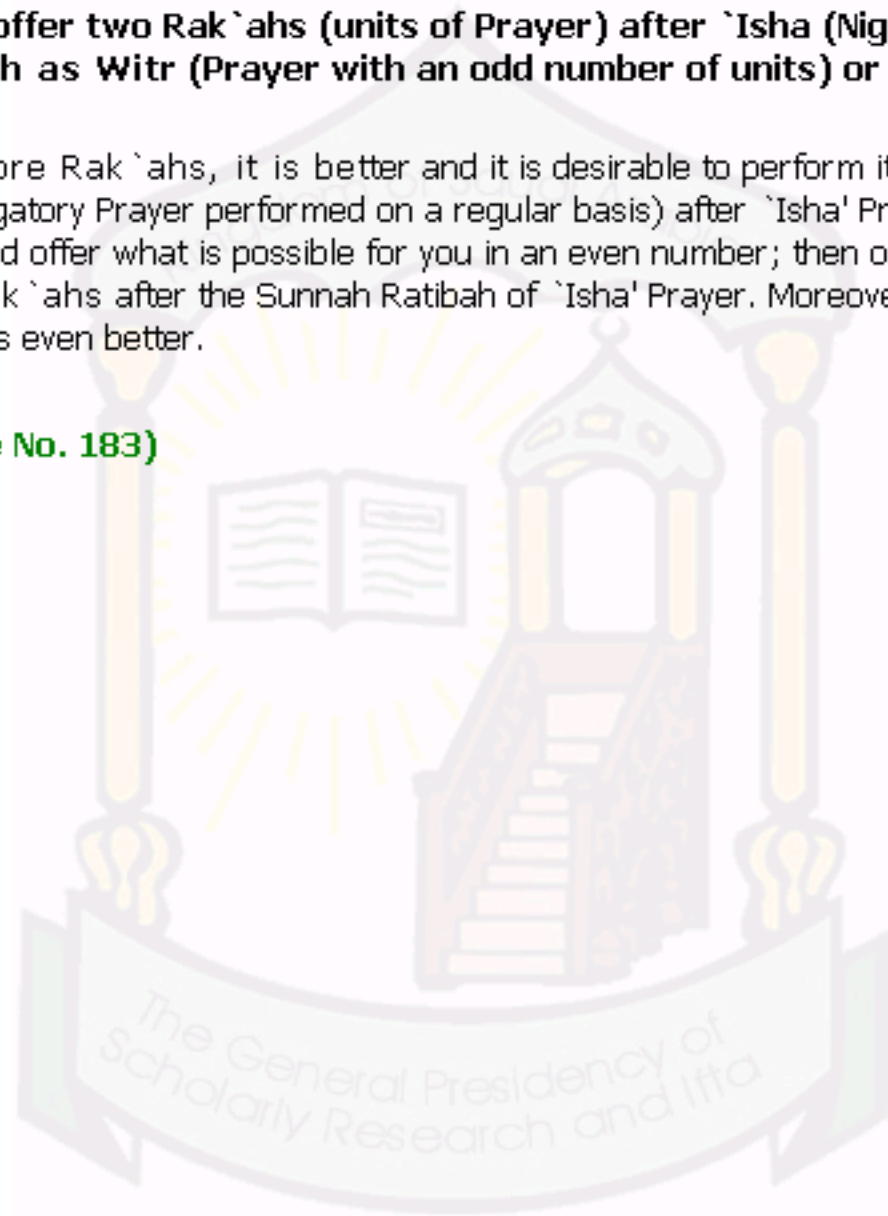
He (peace be upon him) offered Witr Prayer in the first, middle, and last part of the night; and finally he used to perform it before the daybreak. You may perform one, three, five, seven, nine, eleven, or thirteen Rak`ahs, offering Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(The \(optional\) night and day Salah consists of pairs of Rak`ahs.\)](#) So, it is preferable to offer the last Rak`ah separately and if you offer the last three Rak`ahs consecutively without sitting (for Tashahhud [testification recited in the sitting position in the second part of Prayer]) after the second Rak`ah, there is no harm. However, it is better to pray in twos and then offer one Rak`ah separately whether this is at the beginning, middle, or last of the night. Also, if you perform some of the Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) in the first part of night and the rest in the last part, it is acceptable and there is no harm. Praise be to Allah.



**Q: Is it better to offer two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) after `Isha (Night) Prayer and then offer one Rak`ah as Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) or should we offer five Rak`ahs?**

**A:** If you offer more Rak`ahs, it is better and it is desirable to perform it at home. The Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) after `Isha' Prayer should be offered in pairs. You should offer what is possible for you in an even number; then one, three, five or more odd number of Rak`ahs after the Sunnah Ratibah of `Isha' Prayer. Moreover, if you delay it to the last part of night, it is even better.

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**Q: A questioner asks: A friend told me that Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) after `Isha' (Night) Prayer is Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) and may be abandoned. I started doing so, please give me the Fatwa regarding this. May Allah reward you.**

**A:** Yes, it is Sunnah if you are afraid you will not wake up in the last part of the night. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) [\(recommended Abu Hurayrah and Abu Al-Darda' \(may Allah be pleased with them\) fasting three days of each month and offering Witr before going to bed.\)](#) It seems that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) was unable to offer Prayer in the last part of the night because he would study Hadith in the first part of the night and therefore the Prophet (peace be upon him) recommended him to perform Witr in the first part of the night. The same applied to Abu Al-Darda' (may Allah be pleased with him). But whoever is able to wake up in the last part of the night (to perform Witr), it will be better. This is based on an authentic Hadith narrated by Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whoever fears that they may not get up in the latter part of the night should observe Witr in the first part of it; and if one is eager to get up in the last part of it, they should observe Witr at the end of the night, for Prayer at the end of the night is witnessed \(by the angels\) and that is preferable.\)](#) (Related by Muslim). This indicates that if you can get up at the last part of the night to perform Witr, this is preferable.

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) performed Witr at the first part of the night, mid-night and the last part of the night. All this is permissible, praise be to Allah. But if it is possible to get up at the last part of the night, it will be better.



**Q: A questioner from Yemen asks: Is it valid to offer Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) with one Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer) or do I have to perform Tashahhud after the first two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) and offer the third Rak`ah after that?**

**A:** The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to conclude each pair of Rak`ahs of Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) night Prayer is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.\)](#) (Related by Al-Bukhari and Muslim in their Sahih [authentic] Books of Hadith) Therefore, if someone wishes to perform Witr Prayer, they may offer a single Rak`ah before Fajr (Dawn) Prayer and recite in it Surahs Al-Fatihah and Al-Ikhlâs: [\(Say \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\): "He is Allâh, \(the\) One.\)](#) This is the Sunnah. If someone wants to offer three Rak`ahs as Witr, they should offer them successively without sitting for Tashahhud during the second Rak`ah. This is also the Sunnah, in compliance with the Hadith: [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) forbade offering it \(Witr\) similar to Maghrib \(Sunset\) Prayer.\)](#) Accordingly, a Muslim may offer three Rak`ahs successively without sitting (for Tashahhud) in the second Rak`ah, but rather sit

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for Tashahhud in the last Rak`ah. However, concluding the first two Rak`ahs with Taslim then offering a single Rak`ah separately after that as Witr is the best and most perfect way of performing Witr, conforming with the regular practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him).



**Q: A questioner asks: Is there a Hadith stating that Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) may be offered like Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer? A:** No, there is not and doing so is Makruh (reprehensible). The Prophet (peace be upon him) [\(forbade offering it \(Witr\) similar to Maghrib Prayer.\)](#) The Witr can be offered three Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) successively or to perform two Rak`ahs ended by Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) and then a single Rak`ah. This is the best. However, performing it in the same manner of Maghrib Prayer is Makruh.







## 60- Ruling on reciting Surahs Al-A`la, Al-Kafirun and Al-Ikhlās in Witr

**Q: Is there a Hadith concerning reciting Surahs Al-A`la, Al-Kafirun and Al-Ikhlās in Shaf` (two units of Prayer, particularly before the final unit of the odd-number prayer) and the last Rak`ah (unit of the Prayer) of Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) during Ramadan? What is incumbent on the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) in Ramadan? Should he consistently recite these Surahs (Qur'anic chapters)?**

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**A:** Yes, this is the best because it was authentically reported that [\(the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) used to recite these three Surahs \(i.e. Al-A`la, Al-Kafirun and Al-Ikhlās\) in the last three \(Rak`ahs of Witr\).\)](#) Offering Witr in three Rak`ahs (unit of the Prayer), the Prophet (peace be upon him) would recite Surah Al-A`la in the first Rak`ah, Al-Kafirun in the second and Al-Ikhlās in the third. This is preferable. Yet if he recites other Surahs (Qur'anic chapters), there is nothing wrong with this because it is a matter open to choice. Almighty Allah says: [\(So, recite you of the Qur`ān as much as may be easy for you.\)](#) If a praying person performs Rak`ahs (of Witr) successively or pronounces Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each two Rak`ahs and then performs a single Rak`ah at the end, all of this is good even without reciting Surah Al-A`la. The point is that the praying person should perform Rak`ahs in pairs and then offer a single Rak`ah at the end. Moreover, it is better to recite Surah Al-Ikhlās in the last Rak`ah after Surah Al-Fatihah, following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him). There is nothing wrong with reciting other Surahs in accordance with the general purport of Allah's Statement: [\(So, recite you of the Qur`ān as much as may be easy for you.\)](#) Also, the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to the man who performed Salah (Prayer) incorrectly: [\(Then recite whatever you can of the Qur`an.\)](#) So, the matter is open to choice, praise be to Allah.

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**Q: A questioner asks: I heard that we should recite in the first Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) of Shaf` (two units of Prayer, particularly before the final unit of the odd-number prayer) Surah Al-A`la and recite Surah Al-Kafirun in the second Rak`ah. Is this correct?**

**A:** Yes, it is the best in the last three Rak`ahs (of Witr [Prayer with an odd number of units]) to recite Surah Al-A`la: (Glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most High,) in the first. Surah Al-Kafirun: (Say: (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to these Mushrikûn and Kâfirûn): "O Al-Kafirûn (disbelievers in Allâh, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar)!)" in the second, and Surah Al-Ikhlâs: (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.)" in the third. Also, it is preferable to end the first two Rak`ahs with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) and offer a single Rak`ah after that. But, it is permissible to offer the three Rak`ahs successively without sitting (for Tashahhud [testification recited in the sitting position in the second/last unit of Prayer]) except after the last Rak`ah. This conforms to the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) though it is better to end the first two with Taslim and offer a single Rak`ah thereafter.



**Q: A questioner from Sudan asks: Should we recite specific Surahs (Qur'anic chapters) in the last three Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) after Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) or is it obligatory to recite what is possible from the Qur'an?**

**A:** It is permissible to recite what is easy for one from the Qur'an but it is not obligatory. It is only obligatory to recite Surah Al-Fatihah while other additional Surahs are Mustahab (desirable). You may recite long or short Surahs, as you can, whether in Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) or in the supererogatory Prayers

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during the day. It is only incumbent to recite Surah Al-Fatihah: [\(All the praises and thanks be to Allâh, the Lord of the 'Alamîn \(mankind, jinn and all that exists\).\)](#) while additional Surahs are Mustahab, whether partially or completely.



**Q: A questioner from Huraymila', Sudan, asks: Is it valid to recite Al-Mu`awwidhatayn (Surahs Al-Falaq and Al-Nas) and Surah Al-Ikhlâs: ﴿Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.﴾ in Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units)? Should the recitation be subvocal or aloud?**

**A:** If a Muslim offers Witr as three Rak`ahs (units of the Prayer), it is Mustahab (desirable) to recite Surahs Al-A`la, Al-Kafirun: ﴿Say: (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to these Mushrikûn and Kâfirûn): "O Al-Kafirûn (disbelievers in Allâh, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar)﴾ and Al-Ikhlâs: ﴿Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.﴾ in the last Rak`ahs of Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer). So, a praying person should recite Surah Al-A`la in the first Rak`ah of Witr, Surah Al-Kafirun in the second, and Surah Al-Ikhlâs in the third Rak`ah. This is what was reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him). It is Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) to recite out loud but in a way that does not disturb those around us, whether worshipers, sleepers or reciters of the Qur'an. However, if there is nobody around, one may recite out loud.



**61- Ruling on Witr for whoever combines Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers at the time of the earlier one**

**Q: When we combine Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) Prayers (at the time of the earlier one), should we offer Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) immediately**

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**after them?**

**A:** Yes, if Muslims combines Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers (at the time of the earlier one) because of rain, mud, illness or traveling; they should offer Witr after them. Thus, they should offer the Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) of Maghrib, the Sunnah of `Isha, Witr and then Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) after that. In addition, if Muslims combine Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers at the time of the earlier one in Ramadan due to some hardships like rain or mud and want to offer Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) they can perform it after them, and praise be to Allah.



**Q: A questioner asks: I was on a journey and combined Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Nigh) Prayers at the time of the earlier one, and then offered Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) after them. The time of `Isha' was not due then, but I offered them between Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers. Is Witr Prayer valid at this time?**

**A:** Yes, it is valid. When a traveler or a sick person combines both Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) Prayers at the time of the earlier one, the time of Witr Prayer becomes due after offering `Isha, even if it is still the time of Maghrib. Accordingly, a Muslim in this case should offer Witr after offering Maghrib and `Isha' in the time of the earlier one,

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even if the time of Maghrib is not over.



## 62- Ruling on subvocal and loud recitation in Witr Prayer

**Q: Should the recitation in the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) Prayer be subvocal or aloud?**

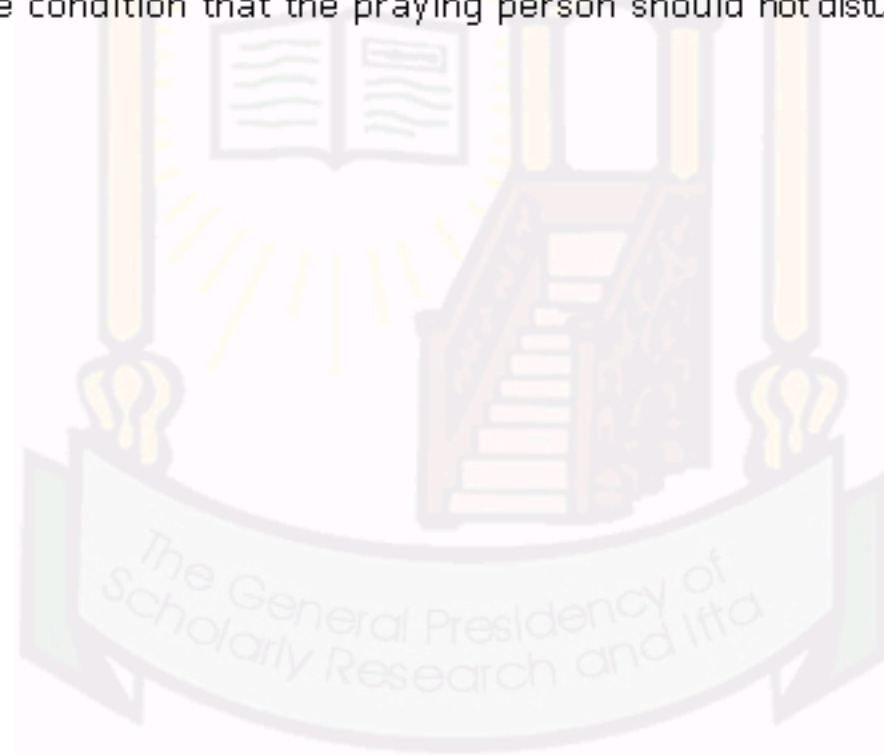
**A:** The recitation in the Witr Prayer should be aloud unless the praying person offers it during the day, in case they have missed it at night. In this case, the recitation should be in a subvocal way, because Prayer during the day should not be recited aloud except for Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer, Salat-ul-Kusuf (Prayer on a solar eclipse) and Salat-ul-Istisqa' (Prayer for rain). If someone makes up for Witr Prayer, they should not recite aloud, just as Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) and the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) of Zhuhr (Noon) and `Asr Prayers. Also, in case of missing Witr during the night, one should make up for it in an even number not in odd number for this is the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet), such as the case if someone offers five Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) as Witr but they are overcome by sleep and misses them. In this case, they should offer six Rak`ahs in place of the five, with three times of Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). And if someone usually offers seven Rak`ahs (as Witr), then it should be performed in four pairs and with four times of Taslim (in case they missed it at night and then make up for it during the day). This ruling applies to both men and women alike. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(Whenever the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) slept without offering Witr during night or was occupied due to some illness, he would offer twelve Rak`ahs during the day.\)](#) This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer Witr as eleven Rak`ahs.

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**Q: Is it permissible to recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and the next Surah (Qur'anic chapter) in Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) aloud?**

**A:** The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) in night Prayer is to recite aloud in Witr or any the other Prayer, and there is nothing wrong in subvocal recitation. If someone recites aloud in Witr or Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer), it is best to do so just as in the first and second Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of `Isha' (Night) and Maghrib (Sunset) Prayers. Doing so is prescribed because the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Companions would recite aloud. However, the loud recitation should not disturb others, especially if the praying person is near other worshipers or sleeping people. However, if the subvocal recitation is nearer to make the heart attuned to the act of worship, the praying person may recite in a subvocal way and vice versa. Both ways of recitation are permissible on the condition that the praying person should not disturb others with the loud recitation.







### 63- Ruling on offering Witr Prayer congregationally not in Ramadan

**Q: An Egyptian living in Hawtat Bani Tamim asks: What is the ruling on offering the optional Prayer of Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) in congregation in other than Ramadan?**

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**A:** There is nothing wrong in performing Witr in congregation outside of Ramadan, provided that it should not become a regular practice. Some worshipers may occasionally meet in a house or elsewhere and offer Witr Prayer in congregation; there is nothing wrong with this. However, it is not prescribed to do so every night except during Ramadan. If some people visit each other and offer Prayer in congregation, it is good In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills). It is reported that Salman once visited Abu Al-Darda' (may Allah be pleased with both of them) and offered the night Prayer with him in congregation. It is also narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) visited the grandmother of Anas and led Anas in Prayer in congregation. So, all of this is permissible if done on rare occasions and not as a regular practice. But, taking this as a monthly, weekly or daily practice is not permissible.



**Q: A questioner asks: Is it permissible to offer Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) in congregation?**

**A:** There is nothing wrong in doing so if this is not done as a regular practice. For example, if someone visit another one they can perform Witr in congregation. It is reported that Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) visited Abu Al-Darda' one night and they offered Prayer in congregation. The Prophet (peace be upon him) also visited Anas

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ibn Malik and his grandmother (may Allah be pleased with both of them) and they all offered Prayer in congregation. Therefore, if this is done occasionally, i.e. during visits or when some people meet and desire to offer two or more Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), there is nothing wrong in this. However, it is not prescribed to perform it on a regular basis of worship, except in Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) Prayer during Ramadan.



#### 64- Ruling on whether one who does not offer Witr is accredited for bearing witness

**Q: A questioner asks: "I heard the Imam of our village Masjid (mosque) saying that one who does not offer Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) is not accredited for bearing witness. Is this true?"**

**A:** This is not true because Witr is not Wajib (obligatory) but is a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet). Imam Ahmad (may Allah be merciful to him) is reported to have said to the same effect that one who is not persistent in offering Witr is not accredited for bearing witness. However, the authenticity of this report is an object of doubt. Supposing that Ahmad is authentically reported to have said so, it will not be permissible to act upon it, because Ahmad is just a scholar, not a prophet, whose sayings are subject to be right or wrong like any other person. Like any other scholar, if he judges a person not to be accredited for bearing witness, his judgment should be considered and be acted upon if it is right; otherwise it should be rejected. Actually, Witr is not Wajib; accordingly, if a man is renowned for being just and not being a Fasiq (someone flagrantly violating Islamic law) but does not offer Witr, he is not to be judged as Fasiq. This is because Witr is not Wajib; rather, it is a Sunnah according to the correct scholarly opinion. Therefore, such a man is accredited for bearing witness if he is renowned for

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his justice and truthfulness even if he is known not to offer the Witr Prayer.



### 65- A Witr-Related Issue

**Q: A questioner asks: Please tell us some details about Al-Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) and the number of its Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) but perhaps he means Witr.**

**A:** Salah (Prayer) offered at night is called Night Prayer or Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan). However, it is not called the Qunut Prayer because Qunut is a Du`a' (supplication) recited while standing after Ruku` (bowing) in the last Rak`ah (unit of Prayer), i.e. in the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) and thus may not be called the Qunut Prayer. Rather, one can say Night Prayer or Tarawih. Anyway, supererogatory night Prayer is not limited by a definite number of Rak`ahs. Accordingly, it is permissible to perform one, three, five or more Rak`ahs as Witr. However, the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to end each pair of Rak`ahs with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) and then offer a concluding single Rak`ah as Witr. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [«The \(optional\) night Salah is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.»](#) This means that such Salah should be offered in twos. [«However, if you feel that dawn is about to break, you should offer a concluding single Rak`ah as Witr.»](#)



**Q: A questioner asks: "How should someone make up for the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) he missed because he overslept? Actually, we are told that some scholars are of the opinion that missed Witr should be made up for."**

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**A:** The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to make up for missed Witr. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) was forced under circumstances of oversleeping or sickness not to offer Witr, he would make up for it the following morning. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(When the Prophet was forced under circumstances of oversleeping or sickness not to offer Witr, he would offer twelve Rak`ahs \(units of Prayer\) the following morning instead.\)](#) This is because his Witr was often eleven Rak`ahs and would make up for it as twelve Rak`ahs, with one extra Rak`ah, if he missed it under certain circumstances. Thus, the Sunnah is to make up for Witr in an even number of Rak`ahs by adding one extra Rak`ah following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Suppose that someone missed three supererogatory Rak`ahs that he usually offers at night, he should make up for them the following morning as four Rak`ahs ending each pair of Rak`ahs with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). By analogy, the person should make up for missed five Rak`ahs the following morning as six Rak`ahs entailing three times of Taslim and should make up for missed seven Rak`ahs the following morning as eight Rak`ahs entailing four times of Taslim and so on. However, if the person usually offers eleven Rak`ahs at night, following the practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him), he should make up for them the following morning as twelve Rak`ahs entailing six times of Taslim and if he usually offers thirteen Rak`ahs at night, he should make up for them the following morning as fourteen Rak`ahs entailing seven times of Taslim. In fact, this is the preferred practice, which is Nafilah (supererogatory); not Wajib (obligatory).



**Q: I intended to get up at midnight to offer Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). I then**

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**got up at midnight and offered supererogatory night Prayer before offering Witr, which caused me to run out of time and thus, I missed the Witr as the Adhan (call to Prayer) of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer was announced. Should I offer Witr before offering Fajr Prayer? Or, should I delay it till after offering the Fajr Prayer?**

**A:** If the Adhan for Fajr is announced before one can offer the Witr, it should be delayed till forenoon. A Few minutes after sunrise, one can offer as many Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) in twos as he likes. Suppose that one misses offering three supererogatory Rak`ahs that he usually offers at night, he should make up for them at forenoon as four Rak`ahs ending each pair of Rak`ahs with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). One should also make up for missed five Rak`ahs as six Rak`ahs entailing three times of Taslim and so on. Actually, this was the practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him). When he (peace be upon him) was forced under circumstances of oversleeping or sickness not to offer Witr consisting of eleven Rak`ahs in most cases, he would make up for it the following morning as twelve Rak`ahs as reported by `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her). Offering twelve Rak`ahs means that he (peace be upon him) would end each pair of Rak`ahs with Taslim, i.e. saying Taslim six times. This is what his followers should do following his example.



**Q: Should a person who missed the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) make up for it? If so, when should it be made up for? Should one say Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing) while making up for it?**

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**A:** ("When the Prophet (peace be upon him) was forced under circumstances of oversleeping or sickness not to offer Witr," said `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her), "he would offer twelve Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) the following morning instead.") In the case of making up, one should not say Qunut. Thus, if one is obliged under certain circumstances, such as oversleeping, not to offer Witr, one should make up for it the following morning; preferably before noon. However, there is nothing wrong with delaying it till after the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer. In making up, one should offer the Witr in twos, in even, rather than odd, number of Rak`ahs. To clarify, if one is used to offering Witr as five Rak`ahs, he should make up for them the following morning as six Rak`ahs, ending each pair of Rak`ahs with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). Likewise, if one is used to offering seven Rak`ahs as Witr, he should make up for them the following morning as eight Rak`ahs entailing four times of Taslim. By the same token, if one is used to offering eleven Rak`ahs as Witr, as was the practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him), he should make up for them as twelve Rak`ahs the following morning. In fact, the Prophet (peace be upon him) would offer eleven Rak`ahs as Witr in most cases. However, he would sometimes also offer thirteen, nine, or seven Rak`ahs as Witr. Anyway, he would often offer eleven Rak`ahs ending each pair of Rak`ahs with Taslim and offering a concluding single Rak`ah. When he (peace be upon him) missed them at night, he would offer twelve Rak`ahs the following morning with six times of Taslim. No doubt, this is the preferable practice. While making up, one should not say Qunut, for it should only be said in the concluding single Rak`ah of Witr.

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**Q: If the time of the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer came and I did not pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), when may I pray Witr?**

**A:** If the time of the Fajr Prayer came and the believer did not pray Witr, they may offer it during the daytime. It is better that they offer it before the noon. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pray during the daytime, if he missed Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) due to illness or sleep, as `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: [\(He would pray during the daytime twelve Rak`ahs \(units of Prayer\).\)](#) He often prayed eleven Rak`ahs at night, but if he did not pray at night due to illness or sleep, he prayed twelve Rak`ahs in the morning, i.e. he added one Rak`ah to make his Prayer with an even number of Rak'ahs, and recited Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs. If the person is used to praying five Rak`ahs at night, they may pray six Rak`ahs in the morning before or after the noon. However, if they pray these Rak`ahs before the noon, this will be better and more appropriate, as `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) related that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Should a person fall asleep and fail to recite their portion of the Qur'an, or a part of it, if they recite it between the Fajr Prayer and the Zhuhr \(Noon\) prayer, it will be recorded for them as though they had recited it during the night.\)](#) If they miss recitation of the Qur'an or Prayer,

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they may pray it or recite the Qur'an before the noon. Also, if they pray after the noon, they will be rewarded, In Sha' Allah (if Allah wills).





**A: A questioner asks: A person usually offers Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) at the latter part of the night, but during some days, he could not get up except at the time of Fajr (Dawn) Adhan (call to Prayer). Should he pray it after the Fajr Adhan, and what is the appropriate time for offering it? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** He may pray it in the morning, all praise be to Allah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) prayed it in the morning whenever he was ill or asleep at night. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) used to pray twelve Rak`ahs \(units of Prayer\) in the morning, if he was ill or asleep at night.\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pray eleven Rak`ahs as Witr at night. However, if he was asleep or ill at night, he prayed twelve Rak`ahs with six times of Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). It is better to pray them before noon, but there is nothing wrong if a person offers them after noon. This matter is not obligatory, but is an act of Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) and is Mustahab (desirable).



**Q: A questioner asks: "What is the ruling on the woman who does not offer Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) after `Isha' (Night) Prayer, hoping to pray it as a part of Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night), but sometimes she does not get up?"**

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**It is permissible to pray it along with the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, taking into consideration that she prays Witr followed by the supererogatory Salah (Prayer) and Fajr (Dawn) Prayer successively? Is this action correct?**

**A:** If they miss Qiyam-ul-Layl and dawn breaks, they may pray in the morning after sunrise. They may offer before the noon the missed Salah or Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah) usually performed at night. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) used to pray in the morning, if he missed the Salah he performed regularly at night due to sleep or illness.\)](#) If man and woman sleep, missing Qiyam-ul-Layl, it is permissible for them to offer their Salah in the morning before the noon. It is mentioned in the Hadith Sahih (a Hadith that has been transmitted by people known for their uprightness and exactitude; free from eccentricity and blemish) [\(Should a person fall asleep and fail to recite their portion of the Qur'an, or a part of it, if they recite it before the noon, it will be recorded for them as though they had recited it during the night,\)](#) as in the Hadith reported on the authority of `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him). If a person prays regularly at night three, five, or eleven Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), but they missed praying them due to illness or sleep, it will be better to offer them before the noon.



66- Ruling on forgetting Witr and remembering it the next day

**Q: I forget to pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) and remembered it the next day,**

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**may I pray or leave it?**

**A:** It is a Sunnah (supererogatory) Prayer, which was missed. If you remember it before the noon, you may pray it before or after the noon. If the day passes, it is a Sunnah Prayer whose time has gone. It is not obligatory to make up for it, if it is remembered after the passing of the day after the night in which this Salah is performed.



## 67- Ruling on sleeping without praying Witr and getting up after the Fajr Adhan

**Q: If I get up after the Adhan (call to Prayer) of the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, and I did not pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), should I pray the Sunnah (supererogatory) Prayer or Witr?**

**A:** If Witr is missed, you may pray in the morning whatever Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) you can offer. If you are used to praying three Rak`ahs as Witr, you may pray four with two Taslims (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) in the morning. If you are used to praying five Rak`ahs as Witr, you may pray six Rak`ahs with three Taslims in the morning. The Prophet (peace be upon him) would pray twelve Rak`ahs in the morning if he missed Witr at the night due to illness or sleep. As related by `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her): He used to pray eleven Rak`ahs as Witr, but if he missed them due to illness or sleep, he would pray

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twelve Rak`ahs in the morning. He added a Rak`ah, and recited six Taslims. This is the Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet). If he missed the Witr he used to pray regularly at night, he would pray it in the morning. If you get up after the break of dawn, you may offer the Sunnah of Fajr and Fajr Prayer. All praise be to Allah.



### 68- Ruling on forgetting Witr and remembering it after the Zhuhr Prayer

**Q: This message was received by a radio program from a listener saying: "How does a person make up for Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), if they sleep without praying it and remember it after the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer?"**

**A:** They may make up for it as Shaf` (Prayer with an even number of units). (If the Prophet missed the optional night Prayer due to illness or sleep, he made up for it as Shaf` in the morning,) as `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said. If a person usually prays at night three Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), they pray four Rak`ahs in the morning, reciting two Taslims (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). If they usually pray five Rak`ahs at night, they pray six Rak`ahs in the morning, reciting Taslim after each two Rak`ahs. If they usually pray at night eleven Rak`ahs, like the Prophet (peace be upon him), they pray twelve Rak`ahs in the morning, reciting six Taslims, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) did. It is better to pray these Rak`ahs before the noon, but if they pray these Rak`ahs after the noon, there is nothing wrong with this.



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**69- Awakening an interest in constantly practicing good deeds**

**Q: I pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) and regularly practice Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) for months at a time. I also constantly recite and listen to the Qur`an and religious tapes. However, sometimes I leave all of these practices and slacken off with respect to my religion after childbirth and stop offering Salah (Prayer) and Qur'an recitation during the postpartum period. Then, I restore my interest in the religious acts and return to regular practice of them. What should I do in order not to leave the religious practices? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** There is nothing wrong with this, because these are Nafilahs (supererogatory acts of worship). However, we advise you to persevere with these religious acts, and may Allah help you and grant you success in not going through a period of slacking off. You should struggle against yourself, as the human being is defective. Also, every period of enthusiasm is followed by a period of slacking off. Thus, it is normal that the believers should experience self-struggle with regard to doing good acts. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The dearest of actions to Allah is that which is done regularly, even if it is small.\)](#) Doing good actions regularly - such as offering Witr at night, reciting the Qur`an a lot, offering Nafilahs, uttering Tasbih (saying "Subhan Allah [Allah is the Greatest]"),

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Tahlil (saying: "La ilaha illa Allah [There is no god but Allah]"), Tahmid (saying: "Alhamdu lillah [all praise is due to Allah]") - are required. It is prescribed for the believers to take care of this matter and to practice them regularly and frequently. If they go through periods of slackness, there is no harm, as they are Nafilahs. All praise be to Allah.



## 70- Meaning of Qunut

**Q: The questioner says: What is Qunut? What does it mean?**

**A:** Qunut has various meanings, including expression of obedience and Khushu` (the heart being submissively attuned to the act of worship), silence; but its famous denotation has to do with Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units); it refers to reciting supplications during Witr Prayer. This was taught by the Prophet (peace be upon him) to Al-Hasan ibn `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him and his father). When a person stands after bowing in the last odd unit of Prayer, they should say after praising their Lord: ﴿Allahumma ihdini fiman hadayta, wa `afini fiman `afayta, wa tawallani fiman tawallayta, wa barik li fima a'tayta, wa qini sharra ma qadayta, fa inaka taqdi wa la yuqda `alaik, inahu la yadhilu man walayta, tabaraka Rabana wa ta'alayta (Allah Guide me among those whom You have guided; grant me well-being among those whom You have granted the same; include me among those You are Patron of; bless what you have given to me; spare me the evil of what You have predestined, as You predestine events and no one predestines for you; no humiliation affects the person whom You are Patron of and no honor is granted to the person whom you take as an enemy; Exalted and Glorified be You.)) ﴿Allahumma inni a'udhu bi-ridaka min sakhatik, wa-bimu'afatika

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min `uqupatik, wa-a'udhu bika mink la uhsi thana'an `alaika anta kama athnaita `ala nafsik (O Allah! I seek refuge in Your being pleased with me against Your Wrath upon me, and in Your Pardon against Your Punishment, and in You against You. I cannot count the praise You are worthy of in the same manner You have praised Yourself.)) This is the supplication that has been reported to be said in the Qunut of Witr any time the latter is offered during the night. It was taught by the Prophet (peace be upon him) to Al-Hasan ibn `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him and his father). The Prophet, namely, said: ﴿I will teach you some words to say during Qunut of Witr: 'O Allah Guide me among those whom You have guided; grant me well-being among those whom You have granted the same; include me among those You are Patron of; bless what you have given to me; spare me the evil of what You have predestined, as You predestine events and no one predestines for you; no humiliation affects the person whom You are Patron of and no honor is granted to the person whom you take as an enemy; Exalted and Glorified be You.))

This is the narration of Al-Hasan. He also added, according to another narration of him, that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to say during his Witr: ﴿O Allah! I seek refuge in Your being pleased with me against Your Wrath upon me, and in Your Pardon against Your Punishment, and in You against You. I cannot count the praise You are worthy of in the same manner You have praised Yourself.)) If a person is to add further supplications that are not long, this is also permissible.



### 71- Ruling on reciting Qunut in Witr

**Q: What is the ruling on reciting Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units)? Should**

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**I do anything if I leave it?**

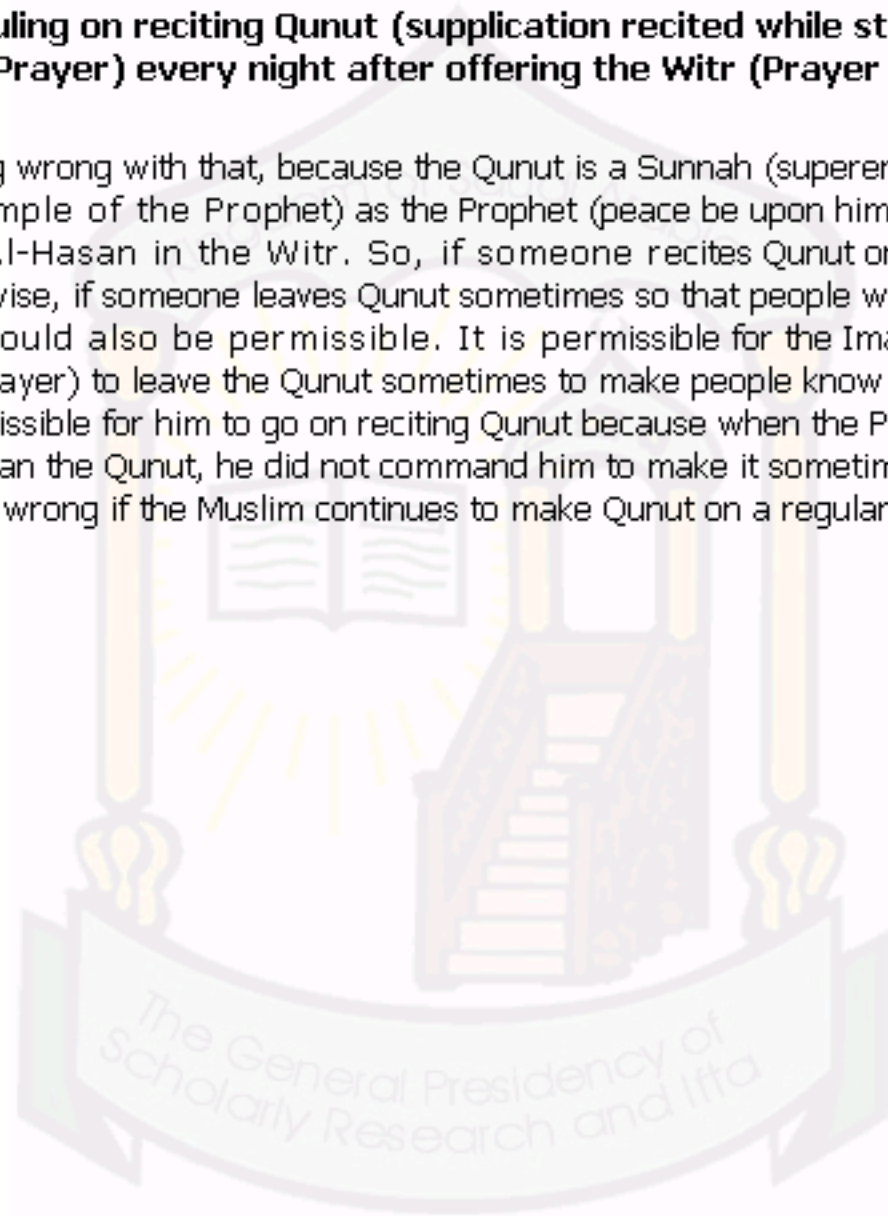
**A:** It is Mustahab (desirable) and not obligatory. There is nothing wrong if a person leaves it. If it is recited, this is Mustahab.





**Q: What is the ruling on reciting Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) every night after offering the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units)?**

**A:** There is nothing wrong with that, because the Qunut is a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite Qunut, which he taught Al-Hasan in the Witr. So, if someone recites Qunut one night, that would be permissible. Likewise, if someone leaves Qunut sometimes so that people would know that it is not obligatory, that would also be permissible. It is permissible for the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) to leave the Qunut sometimes to make people know that it is not obligatory and it is also permissible for him to go on reciting Qunut because when the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught Al-Hasan the Qunut, he did not command him to make it sometimes only. This indicates that there is nothing wrong if the Muslim continues to make Qunut on a regular basis.





**Q: Is Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) a prerequisite for the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units)? Was it reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) prayed the Witr without reciting Qunut?**

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**A:** Qunut is not a prerequisite for the validity of Witr. It is Mustahab (desirable) in Witr. Both the Qunut and the Witr are Mustahab. The Prophet (peace be upon him) taught it to Al-Hasan ibn `Aly. It is not obligatory and the Prophet (peace be upon him), as far as we know, did not recite Qunut continuously and did not make it once and leave it the next time. However, the Companions used to make it once and leave it once. When Ubay ibn Ka `b (may Allah be pleased with him) led people in Salah (Prayer) in the era of `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), he used to make Qunut once and leave it the next time. Hence, there is nothing wrong with leaving Qunut, because it is a supererogatory act of worship. It is permissible to leave it sometimes.



## 72-Ruling on adding some supplications to Qunut in Ramadan

**Q: Does Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in Ramadan have a specific Du`a' supplication or is it permissible to make additions to it? What is the best thing regarding the Du`a' of the Qunut especially in Ramadan?**

**A:** The Du`a' of the Qunut as reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) in a Hadith narrated by Al-Hasan (may Allah be pleased with him) as follows: [﴿O Allah, guide me among those whom You guided.﴾](#) It may also include good supplications that fit the various occasions. `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) used to recite Qunut

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and say: [﴿O Allah, we seek Your help and guidance.﴾](#) He also used to recite Qunut in times of afflictions by adding supplications to the reported Du`a' of Qunut. All this is good, In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills) as reported from the Salaf (righteous predecessors) (may Allah be pleased with them).



**Q: A questioner from Jeddah asks: What is the ruling on reciting the Du`a' (supplication) of Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units)? Is it obligatory to recite it on a daily basis?**

**A:** It is Mustahab (desirable) and not obligatory. The Du`a' of Qunut is only Mustahab in times of affliction and in Witr and there is nothing wrong if one leaves it sometimes.

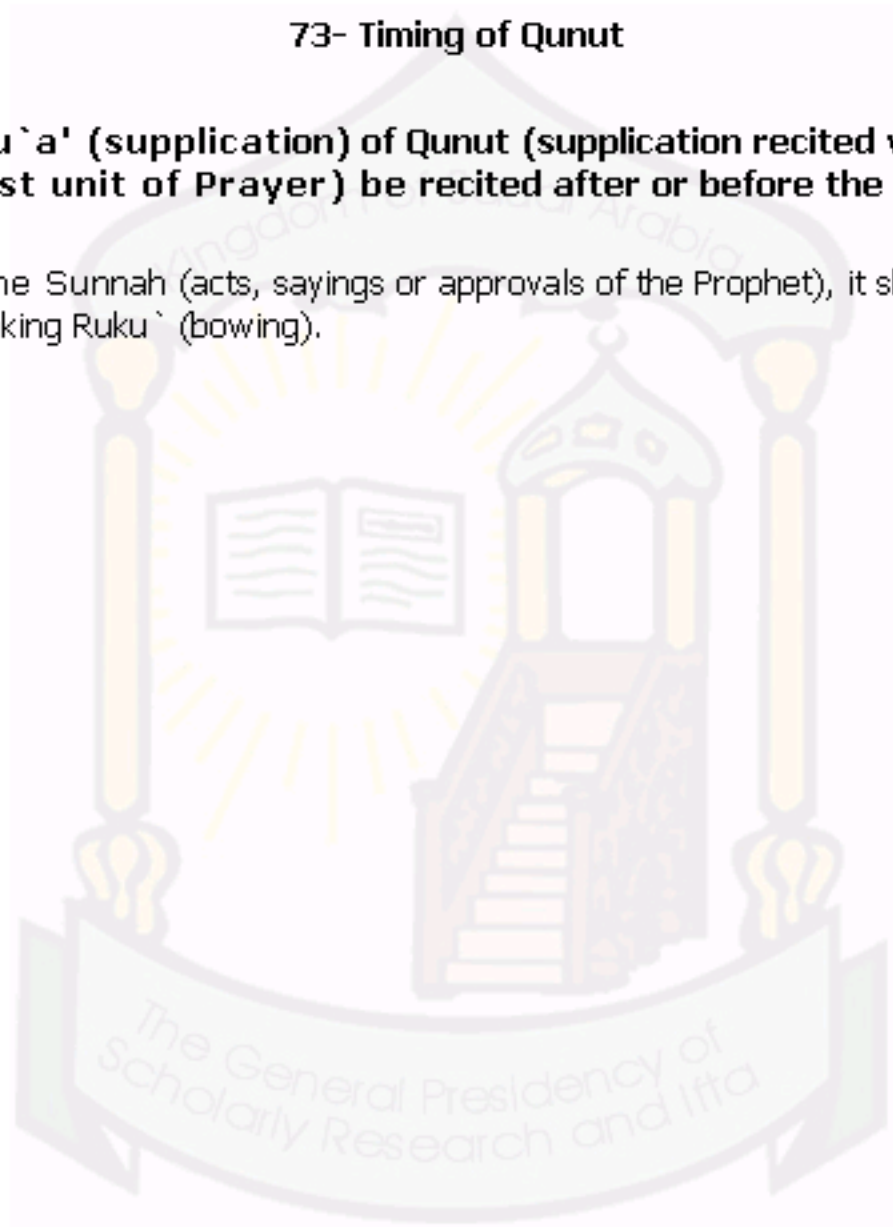




### 73- Timing of Qunut

**Q: Should the Du`a' (supplication) of Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) be recited after or before the last Rak`ah (unit of Prayer)?**

**A:** According to the Sunnah (acts, sayings or approvals of the Prophet), it should be recited in the last Rak`ah after making Ruku` (bowing).





#### 74- Cases when Qunut is permissible and ruling on making addition to it

**Q: What are the cases when Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) is permissible and what is its formula? Is it**

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**permissible to make additions to that Du`a' (supplication)?**

**A:** It is permissible to make Qunut every night in Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). The Du`a' of Qunut was mentioned in a Hadith narrated by Al-Hasan ibn `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him) as follows: ﴿O Allah, guide me among those whom You guided, grant me safety among those whom You granted safety, support me among those whom You supported, bless what You gave me, protect me with Your mercy against what You predestined, for You decide fate and nothing can be decided against You, and whoever You support is not humiliated and whoever You declare enmity against can never be honorable, Blessed and Exalted You are.﴾ In another Hadith narrated by `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him) the following addition is mentioned: ﴿O Allah, I seek refuge in Your pleasure against Your anger, in Your safety against Your punishment, in You against You. I cannot praise You duly, You are as You praised Yourself.﴾ If someone makes an addition to this Du`a', that will be permissible. This is the Qunut of the Witr that is recited in the Witr, which is the last single odd Rak`ah that one offers after rising from the Ruku` (bowing). One must then raise his hands and recite the Du`a' of Qunut and add whatever good Du`a' occurs to his mind. Also, when the Muslims are afflicted with a certain calamity, like being attacked by the enemy or undergoing a certain hardship, they make Qunut, asking Allah (Exalted be He) to relieve them of their distress. They can make Qunut in that case in the Zhuhr (Noon),

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`Asr (Afternoon), Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night) and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers or in some of them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to make Qunut in the Fajr or in the Fajr and the Maghrib Prayers whenever he was afflicted with a trial. Sometimes he used to make Qunut in all the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers. He used to make Qunut in Madinah, supplicating against the disbelievers of the Quraysh when they harmed and expelled him. He also used to make Du`a' for the weak Muslims in Makkah, asking Allah (Exalted be He) to relieve them of the evil of their enemy and to rescue them. When some Bedouins attacked a group of the Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him), he kept making Qunut against them for one whole month.



### 75- Evidence of the permissibility of reciting Qunut in Witr

**Q: Is there an origin in Shari`ah (Islamic law) for reciting Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) the way it is known? What is the evidence of this?**

**A:** Yes, reciting Qunut in the Witr at night is a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet). The Prophet (peace be upon him) taught it to Al-Hasan ibn `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him). When the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught something to any of his Companions, he was actually teaching the whole Ummah (nation based on one creed). Hence, reciting Qunut is a Sunnah and when a praying person offers the Witr and rises from Ruku` (bowing), he has to raise his hands and recite the Du`a' of Qunut: "O Allah, guide me among those whom You guided..."

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and whatever supplications that occur to his mind. And then he must make Sujud (prostration) following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the Companions.



**Q: An questioner asks: Is Qunut (supplications recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) obligatory during Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units)?**

**A:** Qunut is Mustahab (desirable) not obligatory. There is nothing wrong if someone offers Witr without reciting Qunut, but it is recommended to recite it.







### 76-Ruling on offering three Rak`ahs for Witr

**Q:** (A female questioner asks:) I shall tell you what I do, hoping for your advise. I pray `Isha' (Night) Prayer then I offer two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) after which I perform two Rak`ahs with one Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) and then I perform one Rak`ah and I raise my hands and recite Du`a' (supplication) in a relatively loud voice. Is what I am doing correct?

**A:** Yes, all this is right and good. However, concerning the voice, if there are no foreign men around you, it will be permissible for you to raise your voice as much as needed to make your heart present, attentive and submissive. Nonetheless, lowering your voice is better if there are foreign men in the place where you pray.

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### 77- Ruling on reciting Qunut during Witr every night

**Q: I heard that it is not necessary to recite Qunut (supplications recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) consistently in the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). Since I feel at peace when I recite Qunut, is it permissible to offer it?**

**A:** Qunut is not Wajib (obligatory), but rather Mustahab (desirable). There is nothing wrong if someone occasionally neglects to recite Qunut. However, it is desirable to offer it consistently. The Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed his grandson Al-Hasan ibn `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) to recite Qunut during Witr and did not suggest that he recite it occasionally. Thus the purport of his words was that he should offer Qunut at all times and recite: [﴿O Allah! Guide me among those You guide﴾](#) and so on, till the end of the supplication. Whoever performs Qunut consistently in the Witr Prayer does well and there is no objection to this according to the most correct opinion maintained by scholars. There is nothing wrong if someone sometimes neglects to offer Qunut, as it is an act of Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) not obligatory. However, it is better and a greater priority to perform it regularly as attested to by the general implication of the Hadith of Al-Hasan ibn `Aly (may Allah be with him and his father). The Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet, may Allah be pleased with them) sometimes recited Qunut and sometimes not. Therefore, the matter is open to choice, praise be to Allah, but it is better to follow the general implication of the Hadith and recite it regularly.



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### 78- Time of Qunut and ruling on not saying it

**Q: When I offer Shaf` (Prayer with an even number of units, particularly before the final unit of the odd-numbered Prayer) and Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), I sometimes do not supplicate while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer; rather, I directly prostrate and then offer Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). Is my Salah valid? Or there is something wrong with it if I do it in this way? Is it permissible for me to supplicate after Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer) of Witr instead of doing the same after Ruku` (bowing)? Give me a fatwa in this concern, may Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) is Mustahab (desirable) during Witr; it is not obligatory. It is desirable for the person who memorizes the supplication of Qunut to recite the same after bowing in the last unit of Witr Prayer whether Witr is offered in the first or last part of night. The relative supplication goes: [\(O Allah Guide me among those whom You have guided; grant me well-being among those whom You have granted the same...\)](#) and so on of the Qunut-related supplication, because the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) had taught the same to his grandson Al-Hasan (may Allah be pleased with him). The Prophet's instructing one person is like instructing all Muslims. So, if it is available for the person to say Qunut during Witr, it is preferable to recite it; and if not, there is no problem about it as it is not primarily obligatory- and Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah) any way. It is also Mustahab (desirable) to supplicate before Taslim after reciting Tashahhud. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) was teaching his Sahabah (Companions) how to recite Tashahhud, he (peace be upon him) said: [\(Then the Muslim is to choose](#)

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[of the supplications what they like most.\)](#) According to another narration of this hadith, the Prophet was reported to have said: [\(Then let the Muslim choose from beseeching what they like.\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to supplicate to Allah after reciting Tashahhud before Taslim and after sending blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him). Accordingly, it is desirable for a Muslim to recite Tashahhud, send blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him), and then seek refuge in Allah from the punishment of the Hellfire, punishment in the grave, the trials of living and death, and the trials related to Al-Masih-ul-Dajjal (the Antichrist); and then recite what is available to them from the good supplications reported to have been said by the Prophet (peace be upon him), such as [\(O Allah, help me remember You, express gratitude to You and worship You in the best manner.\)](#) [\(O Allah, I have done great wrong to myself. There is none to forgive the sins but You only. Grant me pardon from Yourself, have mercy upon me for You are Oft-forgiving and Compassionate.\)](#) This is a great supplication in fact. Of the supplications authentically transmitted from the Prophet (peace be upon him) is: [\(O Allah! I seek refuge in You from stinginess; O Allah! I seek refuge in You from cowardice; O Allah! I seek refuge in You from being turned back to the most decrepit age. O](#)

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from the temptations of this world and from the punishment in the grave.) All this is desirable to be said before Taslim. A Muslim is to choose the best to supplicate to Allah with. Of the best supplications are what we have quoted above, viz., "O Allah, help me remember You, express gratitude to You and worship You in the best manner." Both males and females may also say: "O Allah, I have done great wrong to myself. There is none to forgive the sins but You only. Grant me pardon from Yourself, have mercy upon me for You are Oft-forgiving and Compassionate. O Allah! I seek refuge in You from stinginess; O Allah! I seek refuge in You from cowardice; O Allah! I seek refuge in You from being turned back to the most decrepit age. O Allah! I seek refuge in You from the temptations of this world and from the punishment in the grave." Of the supplications to be recited also before Taslim are: "O Allah! Forgive me what I have done in my past life and what I have done recently, what I have done in secret and on public, what I have wasted extravagantly, and what you know about me better than me. You are the Expediter and You are the Delayer. There is no god except You." All these supplications are desirable to be said during Prayer before Taslim. As for Qunut, it is desirable to be recited during Witr while standing after bowing in the last odd unit of Prayer; but if the person does not perform Qunut, there is no problem with this.



### 79- Meaning of aggression in Du`a'

**Q: A questioner says: Your Eminence Shaykh, what is the meaning of 'aggression' (I`tida') in**

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**Du`a' (supplication)? Please, give examples.**

**A:** Aggression in Du`a' is to recite impermissible supplications and raise the voice, which is permissible only in Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer). It is preferable for one to recite Du`a' secretly. However, in Qunut, the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) may raise his voice to make the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) hear him. When one is alone, it is a Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) to lower the voice while reciting Du`a' and to say good supplications because saying bad supplications is counted among aggression in Du`a', such as invoking Allah to kill or impoverish someone.



## 80- Sunnah of Qunut during Witr and at time of calamity

**Q: A questioner from Northern Yemen asks about the ruling on Qunut (supplications recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) and says: Some people in Northern Yemen perform Qunut while others say that it is a Bid`ah (innovation in religion). What is the preponderant opinion on this issue? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Qunut during Witr Prayer (Prayer with an odd number of units) is a Sunnah (commendable) act. Performing Qunut is likewise a Sunnah at times of calamities that befall Muslims, such as when disbelievers attack fellow Muslims. In this case, Muslims are to perform Qunut, asking Allah to help the Muslims under attack and to grant them victory over the disbelievers and to

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make them triumphant over their enemies. Muslims are to supplicate to Allah, asking for the defeat and disunite their enemies. This is called 'Qunut at calamity' and is similar to the supplications made by the Prophet (peace be upon him) when he performed Qunut against Quraysh when they prevented him from visiting the Ka`bah and when tribes from among the disbelievers killed some Muslims. There is nothing wrong to do likewise. As for the Qunut performed in the morning, it is to be abandoned because the principle is that it is impermissible. However, the known practice is to perform Qunut during Witr Prayer or at times of affliction. Proof of this is a report narrated by Sa`d ibn Tariq ibn Ashyam Al-Ashja`y (may Allah have mercy on him) who said: [\(I asked my father: "O father! You prayed behind the Messenger of Allah \(peace be upon him\) and behind Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman and `Aly: Did they perform Qunut at Fajr \(Dawn\) Prayer?" His father replied: "This is an innovation.\)](#) (Related by Imam Ahmad, Al-Tirmidhy, Al-Nasa'y and Ibn Majah with a sound chain of narrators). He then told Tariq that it was an innovation and innovation is Bid`ah (innovation in religion). Some scholars maintain that there is nothing wrong in this, citing non-Prophetic reports as evidence, including some reports that the Prophet (peace be upon him)

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recited Qunut during Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. But they are Da`if (weak) reports. Even if they were to be construed as performing Qunut at calamity, then it is not to be made a regular practice. This is the preponderant opinion. But there is nothing wrong if you pray behind someone reciting Qunut, since this is a controversial matter. Likewise, if someone follows an Imam (the one who leads Congregational Prayer) who recites Qunut (regularly) during Prayer, there is nothing wrong in this; since they have followed the opinion of scholars who permit it. However, this Imam should be advised not to perform Qunut except at times of calamity.



### 81- Ruling on Ta'min after reciting Qunut on a recorded tape during Witr

**Q: If I prayed Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) and I reached the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), is it permissible for me to listen to the Du`a' (supplication) of Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) from a recorded tape and make Ta'min (saying: Amen) while performing the Witr? Please advise me, may Allah reward you.**

**A:** The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to recite Qunut yourself not to listen to a recorded tape. You must recite Qunut with whatever Du`a' that occurs to you even if it is simple it will be sufficient. Qunut is not obligatory and if you perform Witr without reciting Qunut, it is permissible. You can recite Qunut with simple words: "O Allah, guide me among those whom You have guided, grant me safety among those whom You have granted safety, support me among those whom You have supported, bless for me what You gave me and protect me against the evil of what You decreed for You command and You are not commanded.

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Whoever You support will not be humiliated and whoever You declare enmity against will never enjoy glory. You are Blessed and Exalted." This could be sufficient or you may also add: "O Allah, I seek refuge in Your pleasure against Your anger, in Your safety against Your punishment and I seek refuge in You from You. I can not praise You duly, You are as You praised Yourself. You may also add to this what you hear your Muslim brothers saying in Qunut. Thus, good and brief Du`a' in Qunut is enough but one must not depend on a recorded tape to recite Qunut.



## 82- Ruling on wiping one's face after Qunut

**Q: Is it Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) to supplicate to Allah after finishing Salah (Prayer) and wipe the face? I see some people do so. And what is the ruling on doing so after Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer)? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** The Hadiths reported with regard to wiping the face after supplication are considered Da`if (weak), but a group of scholars rank them as Hasan (good). Of these scholars is Al-Hafizh Ibn Hajar who maintains that such Hadiths have chains of narration that strengthen each other, so they are Hasan. Therefore, there is nothing wrong with wiping one's face after supplication. In the Sahih (authentic) Hadiths, however, there is no mention of wiping one's face. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) delivered the Friday Khutbah (sermon) and offered Salat-ul-Istisqa' (Prayer for rain) [both containing supplication, tr.] and did not wipe his face. He was not reported to have wiped his face after supplication.

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Not wiping the face after supplication is preferable; however, if a person does it, there is nothing wrong with it, for - as Ibn Hajar said - the Hadiths [referring to this] are all Hasan.





### 83- Ruling on saying: "O Allah, I ask You with Your Unreachable Majesty ..." in Qunut

**Q: We usually hear the Imams (the ones who lead congregational Prayer) supplicate in Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) saying: "O Allah, I ask You with Your Unreachable Majesty, Your Untouchable Lordship, Your Face by Whose Light the dark is vanished ..." Is it permissible to supplicate to Allah with such words?**

**A:** There is nothing wrong with using such words when supplicating to Allah (Exalted be He), for His Majesty is actually unreachable and His Lordship untouchable. All people's majesty is inferior to Allah's. All people are weak before Allah. He Alone is Capable of doing everything. The Light of His Face has lighted the dark. He possesses the light of heavens and earth. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [\(Allâh is the Light of the heavens and the earth.\)](#) Allah has lighted the heavens and earth and created the sun and the moon to light the life of the people. He is the Owner of everything. He is the Creator and Director of the sun, moon, and stars. He has endowed us with material light with which we light our life by means of

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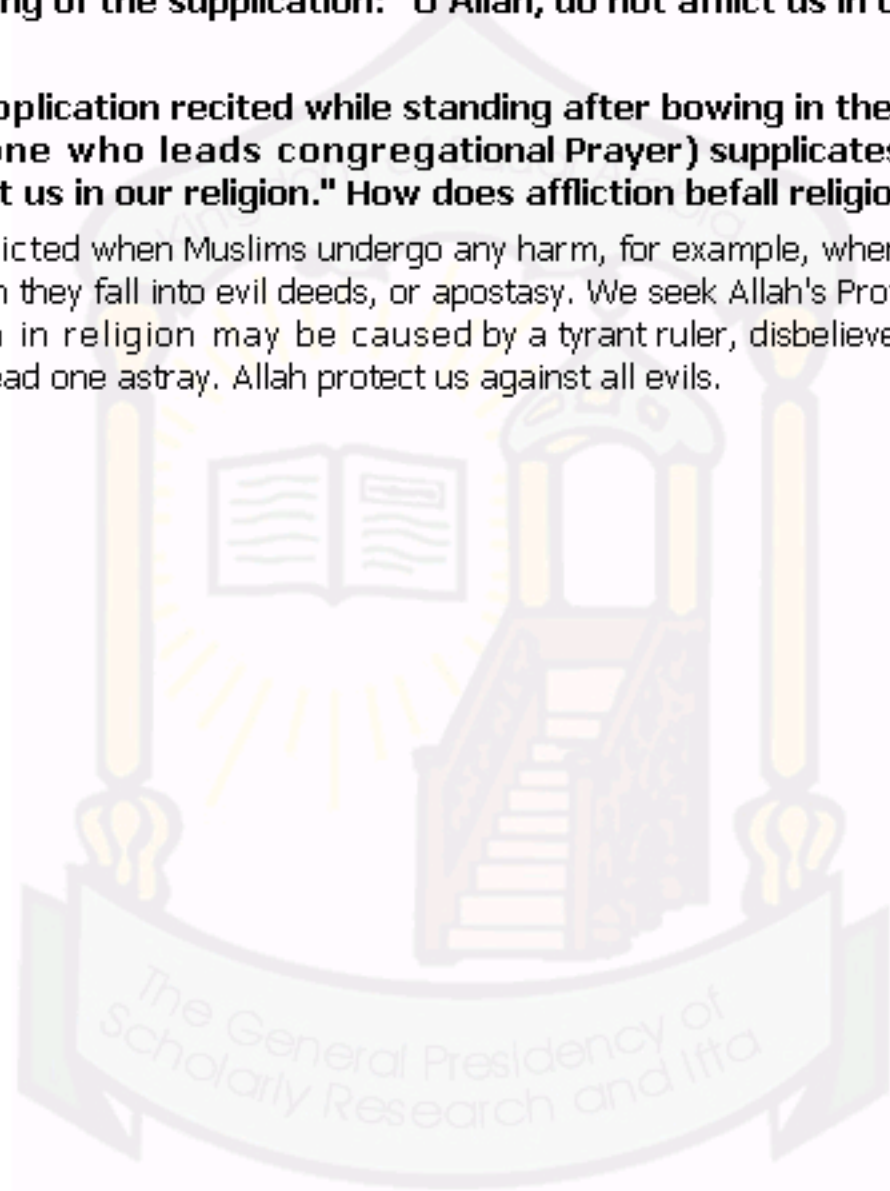
lamps, lanterns, and the like. All this is due to Allah's Graces. He has made it easy for the people to earn a living. Everything is under His Control. Therefore, His Lordship is untouchable and no one can affect His Glory by any means, for He is the Ruler over His Servants. Everything is under His Power, Glory, and Dominance, and all people are in His Grip.



**84- Meaning of the supplication: "O Allah, do not afflict us in our religion"**

**Q: In Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) supplicates to Allah saying: "O Allah, do not afflict us in our religion." How does affliction befall religion?**

**A:** Religion is afflicted when Muslims undergo any harm, for example, when an enemy has power over them; or when they fall into evil deeds, or apostasy. We seek Allah's Protection against all such evils. An affliction in religion may be caused by a tyrant ruler, disbelievers, vain desire, or bad company that may lead one astray. Allah protect us against all evils.



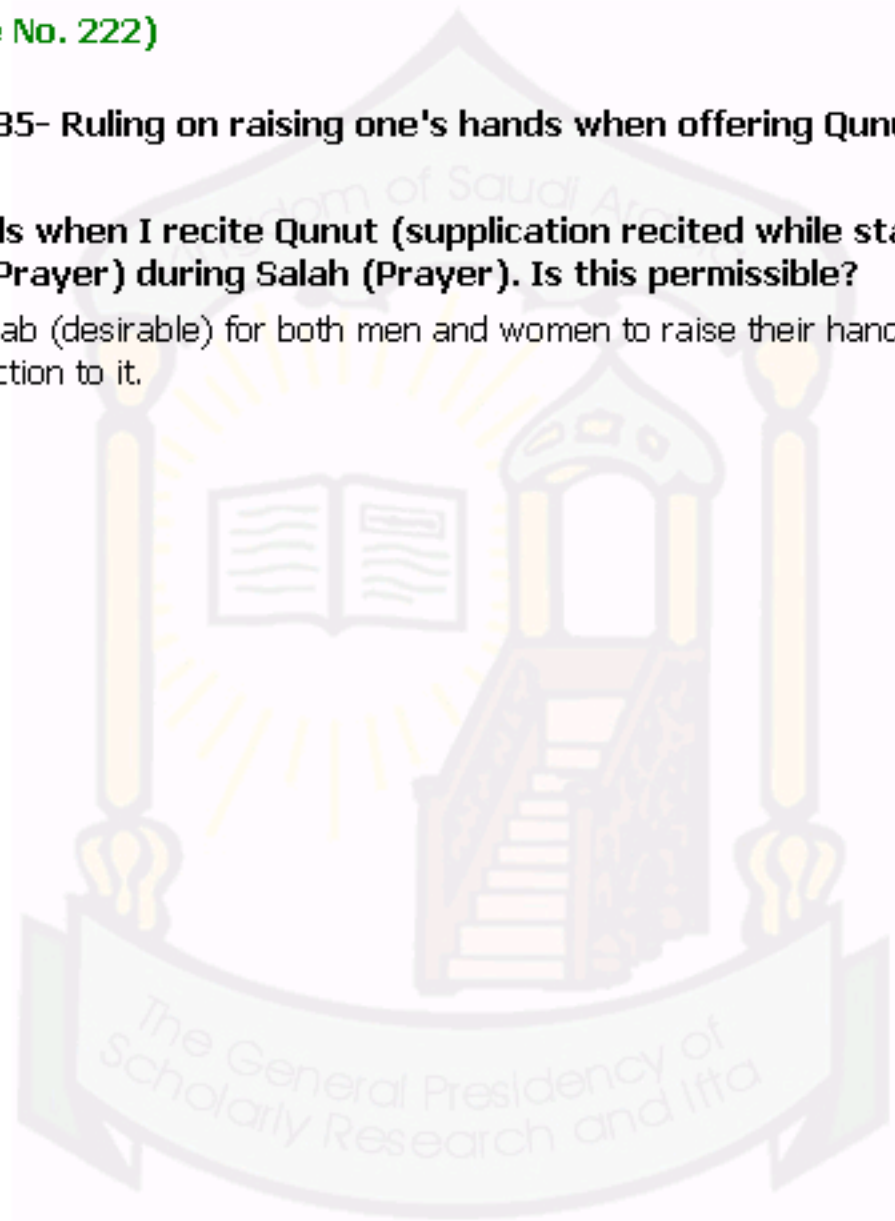


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**85- Ruling on raising one's hands when offering Qunut**

**Q: I raise my hands when I recite Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) during Salah (Prayer). Is this permissible?**

**A:** Yes, it is Mustahab (desirable) for both men and women to raise their hands when reciting Qunut and there is no objection to it.



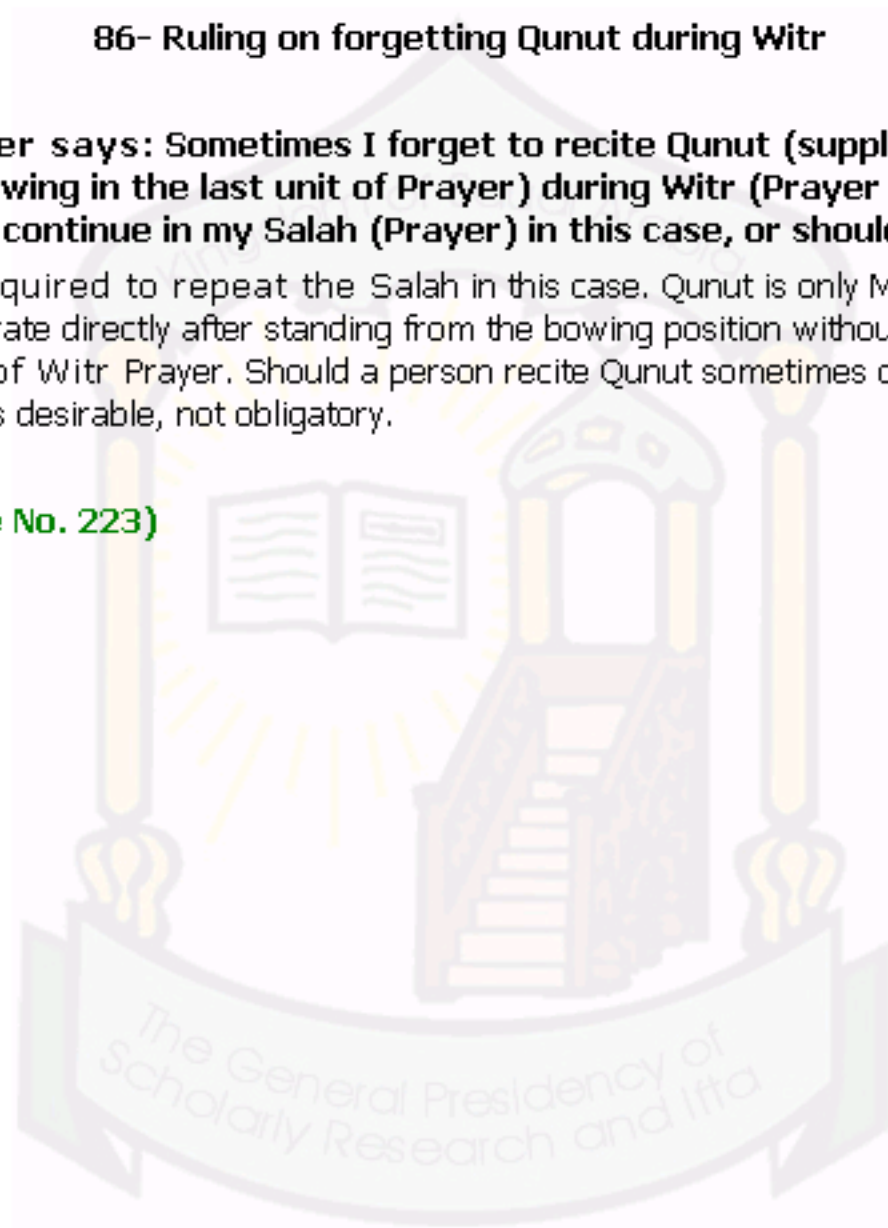


### 86- Ruling on forgetting Qunut during Witr

**Q: The questioner says: Sometimes I forget to recite Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) during Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). Should I continue in my Salah (Prayer) in this case, or should I repeat it?**

**A:** You are not required to repeat the Salah in this case. Qunut is only Mustahab (desirable). A person may prostrate directly after standing from the bowing position without reciting Qunut during the last odd unit of Witr Prayer. Should a person recite Qunut sometimes only, this would also be permissible. Qunut is desirable, not obligatory.

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**Q: What is the ruling on forgetting Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units)? And can it be made up for by Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness)?**

**A:** There is nothing wrong with forgetting Qunut in the Witr, and there is no need to offer Sujud-ul-Sahw at the end of the Witr, though if a person did, there is nothing wrong with that. Qunut in Witr is Mustahab (desirable) and not obligatory. Even if a person abandons Qunut on purpose, there is nothing wrong either. The Prophet's Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) were reported to have done so. The matter is open to choice, Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah).





### 87- Ruling on the permissibility of offering Qunut in the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers at calamity

**Q: Is it permissible to recite Qunut (supplication recited while recited after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) during Zhuhr (Noon) and `Asr (Afternoon) Prayers? Should it be recited audibly or silently?**

**A:** Yes, it is permissible to recite Qunut at calamity during the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers. The Prophet (peace be upon him) offered Qunut in the Five Daily Prayers at calamity. The preponderant opinion is that the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered Qunut in the Fajr (Dawn) and Maghrib (Sunset) Prayers. If Qunut is offered at Fajr, it is sufficient; if offered at Maghrib, it is sufficient and if offered in the Five Daily Prayers, it is permissible. Calamity includes whatever afflicts Muslims because of wars.

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) offered Qunut for an entire month against some Arab tribes who attacked Muslims after which he ceased. He used to offer Qunut before the conquest of Makkah, supplicating against some of the people of Makkah and supplicated for the weak of Makkah. During times of calamity, it is permissible to offer Qunut at all times, but the preponderant opinion is that it is best to offer Qunut during Fajr and Maghrib Prayers, since this was the practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him).



## 88- Ruling on Qunut during Fajr and Witr Prayers

**Q: There are some people who recite Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) during Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, and some who do this during Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). The latter offers Witr as three Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) and recite Qunut while standing after bowing in the third unit of Prayer. Who among them is right? Benefit us with an answer in this concern.**

**A:** Qunut is permissible during Witr; the time of which starts following `Isha' (Night) Prayer until dawn time. So, if a Muslim is offering Witr as a one-unit Prayer, they

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may recite Qunut during the same saying: "O Allah Guide me among those whom You have guided..." and so on. Should they offer a three- or extra -odd numbered Prayer, they are to offer the last unit on its own and the preceding units two by two with saying Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) at the end of each two units, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) night Salah \(Prayer\) is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.\)](#) Should they fear that the time for dawn would set in, they may offer one- unit Prayer to serve as Witr for their preceding optional Salah. This is to say, the person who offers a multi - unit optional Salah before dawn is to offer the same two by two performing Taslim at the end of each two units of Salah, and if they then want to finish their Salah, they are to end it by a one - unit Salah reciting Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an): [\(All the praises and thanks be to Allāh, the Lord of the `Alamīn \(mankind, jinn and all that exists\).\)](#) and then recite Surah Al-Ikhlās: [\(Say \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\): "He is Allāh, \(the\) One.\)](#) This is what is preferable to be recited here; but if they recited after Al-Fatihah another Surah other than Surah Al-Ikhlās: [\(Say \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\): "He is Allāh, \(the\) One.\)](#) there would be no problem. What is preferable is to recite Surah Al-Ikhlās: [\(Say \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\): "He is Allāh, \(the\) One.\)](#) Then the person should say after standing from the bowing position: "Allah hears whoever praises Him" whether the person performing Salah is an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) or Munfarid (person offering Prayer individually). A worshipper is to say also: "O our Lord! All praise be to You!" Then they are to recite the Qunut supplication, i.e., "O Allah Guide me among those whom You have guided " and so on., and if the person saying Qunut is an Imam, he is to say: "O Allah Guide us among those whom You have guided; grant us well-being" and so on.

As for Fajr, there is no Qunut to be recited during it except for an urgent reason like a calamity. The Prophet (peace be upon him) would recite Qunut during Fajr and other Obligatory Prayers

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when there was a calamity afflicting the Muslims, such as the non-Muslims' attacking the Muslims or besieging them. In such cases, the Prophet would say Qunut during the obligatory Prayers, especially Fajr Prayer to invoke Allah against their enemy. In such cases, he (peace be upon him) would say Qunut while standing after bowing during the last unit of Fajr Prayer. The Prophet (peace be upon

him) did this many times; sometimes he continued to do it for one month, sometimes for forty days and sometimes for less than this; then he would stop doing it. So when the Muslims recite Qunut after bowing during the last unit of Fajr Prayer or another Prayer to supplicate to Allah to grant victory to the Mujahideen (Muslims striving/fighting in the Cause of Allah) and defeat their enemy, they should not do this regularly; rather, they may do it intermittently until victory is granted. As for what some people do regarding reciting Qunut regularly during the Fajr Prayer even if there is no calamity afflicting the Muslims, this is Makruh (reprehensible); it should not be done; it is Bid`ah (innovation in religion) according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars because Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) did not do it regularly; he (peace be upon him) would only do it for the reason we mentioned above, i.e., when there is a calamity afflicting the Muslims. This is indicated by the Hadith Sahih (authentic Hadith) reported by Sa`d ibn Tariq ibn Ashyam Al-Ashja`y (may Allah be merciful to him) on the authority of his father (may Allah be pleased with him), according to which he said to his father Tariq: [\(O father! You have been led in Prayer by Allah's Messenger \(peace be upon him\), Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, and `Aly \(may Allah be pleased with them all\), would they recite Qunut](#)

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[during Fajr Prayer? Sa`d's father said: O son! This is a Bid`ah.\)](#) This is to say he told his son here that Qunut during Fajr Prayer is an innovation when there is no calamity. This Hadith was related by Ahmad (may Allah be merciful to him) in his Musnad (Hadith compilation). Al-Tirmidhy, Al-Nasa'y, Ibn Majah, and others also related this Hadith through authentic Isnad (chain of narrators) on the authority of Sa`d ibn Tariq Al-Ashja`y.

This Hadith Sahih is a clear proof that it is not lawful to recite Qunut regularly during Fajr Prayer. It is, rather, permissible to recite Qunut during Fajr and other Prayers from time to time, if there is a calamity afflicting the Muslims. But there are some scholars who hold that it is desirable to say Qunut regularly during Fajr Prayer. In fact, this opinion is based on doubtful narrations about the Prophet's having recited Qunut regularly in cases of calamity. Those scholars thought that it was desirable to say Qunut during Fajr Prayer regularly; they cited Da`if (weak) Hadiths regarding this subject, such as that the Prophet (peace be upon him) continued to recite Qunut during Fajr Prayer until he parted this world. But such Hadiths are weak and proved not to be authentically transmitted from the Prophet (peace be upon him). This group of scholars thought that such Hadiths are authentic and so they acted accordingly. But this opinion should be given up, because the Hadith reported by Sa`d ibn Tariq on the authority of his father is authentic and clearly states that the regular Qunut during Fajr Prayer is a Bid`ah. So the Muslims ought to not regularly say Qunut during Fajr Prayer, unless there is a calamity afflicting them.





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### 89- Ruling on regular Qunut during Witr Prayer

**Q: This questioner says: What is the ruling on Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer)? Is it obligatory to recite it regularly during Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) or not? What is the ruling on saying it during Fajr (Dawn) Prayer?**

**A:** Qunut is Mustahab (desirable) during Witr Prayer, not obligatory. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) was authentically reported to have instructed Al-Hasan ibn `Aly to say Qunut during Witr by saying this supplication: [﴿O Allah! Guide me among those whom You have guided...﴾](#) This is to say Qunut is desirable, not obligatory. If a person offers Witr without saying Qunut during it, there will be no problem with this. As for Qunut during Fajr Prayer, it is neither desirable nor permissible unless in cases of calamity. This is based upon the authentic Hadith reported by Sa`d ibn Tariq ibn Ashyam Al-Ashja`y to the effect that he said to his father: [﴿O father! You have been led in prayer by the Messenger of Allah \(peace be upon him\), Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, and `Aly, would they recite Qunut during Fajr Prayer? Sa`d's father said: O son, this is a Bid`ah \(innovation in religion\).﴾](#) But it was also authentically transmitted that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said Qunut in cases of calamity during Fajr Prayer and other Prayers also.

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When an enemy was attacking the Muslims, he (peace be upon him) would stand after bowing in the last unit of Fajr or other Prayers to invoke Allah against the enemy; he (peace be upon him) also invoked Allah against the polytheists when they were harming the Muslims, engaging with them in fighting. He besought Allah against a great number of the disbelievers and remained one month saying Qunut during Prayer to invoke Allah against a disbelieving group. Accordingly, it is lawful to say Qunut invoking Allah against the disbelieving enemy who is attacking Muslims at the time of this calamity. As for saying Qunut during Fajr Prayer without having a reason for this and when there is no calamity requiring the same, this is unlawful. This is the correct opinion maintained by scholars in this respect. Calamity here refers to an enemy attacking the Muslims, besieging their country or fighting against them. It is lawful in this case to say Qunut invoking Allah against this enemy during the Prayers while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer. Rulers are to give orders to the effect that the Imams (the persons who lead congregational Prayers) in Masjids (mosques) supplicate to Allah against the enemy who is attacking the Muslims in this case and the Ma'mums (persons being led by an Imam in Prayer) are to say Amen. For example, the Imam may supplicate saying: 'O Allah! Kill the enemy! O Allah! Spare us their evil! O Allah! Defeat them, as they cannot be defiant to You' and the like of other supplications which indicate invocation of victory for the Muslims and defeat of the disbelievers.



## 90- Ruling on reciting Qunut in Fajr Prayer and being Ma'mums in this case

**Q:** The questioner asks: "What is the Islamic ruling on reciting Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer? Is offering Salah (Prayer) with the Imams (the persons who lead the congregational Prayer) who recite Qunut valid? How can we refute the people saying that this is the Madh-hab (school of Jurisprudence) of Al-Shafi`y, as they accuse us of applying Bid`ah (innovation in religion) to the Madh-hab of Al-Shafi`y.

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**A:** There is well-known controversy concerning Qunut, as some scholars believe that it is always Mustahab (desirable) in the Fajr Prayer, while others believe that it is Mustahab only during times of calamity. If a calamity befalls the Muslims, such as a war against them, they recite Qunut in their Salah (Prayer) in which they supplicate to Allah against the enemy that is harming them, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) did during times of calamity. He recited Qunut for a month, supplicating against Ra`l and Dhakwan, who were a group of Arabs that attacked some of his Companions. Qunut during times of calamity is a well-known Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet).

However, it is better not to habitually recite Qunut in the Fajr Prayer, as it is authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq, `Umar, `Uthman, and `Aly that they did not recite Qunut in the Fajr Prayer. Sa`d ibn Tariq Al-Ashja`y said: ["O Father, you prayed with the Messenger of Allah \(peace be upon him\), Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, and `Aly, did they recite Qunut in the Fajr Prayer?" He said: "O Son! This is an innovated matter."](#) This implies that the Sunnah guides us to recite it only during times of calamity. If the Muslims are afflicted by a calamity, they may recite the Qunut. However, according to this authentic narration it is better not to recite it habitually. The Imams who recite Qunut in the Fajr Prayer, such as the followers of the Madh-hab of Al-Shafi`y and others, support their opinion by narrations in this regard reporting that

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the Prophet (peace be upon him) recited Qunut in the Fajr Prayer, such as the narration of Anas. He said that the Prophet recited it constantly; but these narrations are weak. The Prophet (peace be upon him) recited Qunut in the Fajr Prayer and other Prayers during times of calamity. It is better to recite Qunut in the Fajr, Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), Zhuhr (Noon), and `Asr (Afternoon) Prayers only during times of calamity.

However, according to the narration of Sa`d ibn Tariq, it is better not to habitually recite Qunut in the Fajr Prayer. However, there is nothing wrong with praying with Imams who recite Qunut, as they follow some Imams (initiators of schools of Jurisprudence). There is ambiguity concerning the narrations in which Qunut is mentioned. There is latitude in this matter, In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills). Pursuant to the authentic narration, it is better not to recite it habitually. It implies that doing this act habitually is Bid`ah; however, there is nothing wrong in reciting it during times of calamity. They know that it is not a Bid`ah made by the followers of Imam Al-Shafi`y, but it is better to follow the

most likely opinion. The people who believe that Qunut is Bid`ah support their opinion with the narration of Tariq ibn Ashyam Al-Ashja`y. The people who claim that it is Sunnah and Mustahab support their opinion with other weak narrations. It is better that the scholars follow the authentic and most credible opinion, without reviling those who recite Qunut. This is a minor matter over which we should not argue, but we should endeavor to follow the most credible opinion.



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### 91- Ruling on reciting Qunut in the Fajr Prayer

**Q: The questioner asks: "What is the ruling on reciting Qunut (supplication reciting while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in the Fajr Prayer?"**

**A:** There is nothing authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) in this respect, and the Hadiths mentioned by some scholars that claim he recited Qunut in the Fajr Prayer are Da`if (weak). They were interpreted by Ibn Al-Qayyim, if they are Sahih (authentic), that by Qunut they mean standing for a long time. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to stand for a slightly longer time in the last Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) of the Fajr Prayer. However, the Hadiths in this regard are weak, as he recited Qunut in Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units).

Also, he used to recite Qunut in the Fajr Prayer and the other Prayers during times of calamity, such as war being launched against the Muslims, or being attacked by highwaymen and the like.



## 92- Ruling on offering Qunut regularly during the Fajr Prayer

**Q: A questioner asks: Is Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) regularly during the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer an act of Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet)?**

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**A:** Performing Qunut in the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer is not an act of Sunnah. It should not be recited, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not offer Qunut in the Fajr Prayer. Qunut is offered during Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) at night. It is Mustahab (desirable) to offer Qunut at times of calamities in particular. If the Muslims are afflicted with a calamity, they supplicate to Allah to retaliate against the causer of this calamity and perform Qunut in the Masjids (mosques) during the Maghrib (Sunset) and Fajr Prayers as well as the other Prayers. Allah responds to their Du`a' (supplication), scatters and humiliates their enemies, all praise be to Allah. We ask Allah to grant Muslims the blessing of praising and thanking Him (Glorified and Exalted be He), to grant them success in fulfilling the rights He has over them, in having strong faith and in obeying Him constantly, and to scatter and deter the oppressors and annihilate their armies. This is one of the great graces that Allah made available to the Muslims. They should praise Allah, be steadfast in adhering to the truth, and cooperate in righteousness and piety. Also, they should praise Allah constantly for His great graces, one of which is the victory of the oppressed over the oppressors. It is really a great grace, which Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) made available through the armies. Allah made them beneficial, as they beat and humiliate the oppressors, bringing them out in ignominy and scattering them. All praise be to Allah. We ask Allah to set right the conditions of the Muslims, to grant them the blessing of praising Him as well as success in obeying Him

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and being steadfast in adhering to His religion. Muslims can praise Allah for His graces by doing what He commands and abstaining from what He forbids. We ask Allah to grant the Muslim rulers success in applying Allah`s Shari`ah (Islamic law) in all of the Muslims' affairs. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says in His Honorable Book: **(But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.)** and: **(And who is better in judgement than Allâh for a people who have firm Faith.)** and: **(And whosoever does not judge by what Allâh has revealed, such are the Kâfirûn (i.e. disbelievers of a lesser degree as they do not act on Allâh's Laws).)** and: **(And whosoever does not judge by that which Allâh has revealed, such are the Zâlimûn (polytheists and wrong-doers - of a lesser degree).)** and: **(And whosoever does not judge by what Allâh has revealed (then) such (people) are the Fâsiqûn [the rebellious i.e. disobedient (of a lesser degree) to Allâh].)** Thus, it is obligatory to apply Allah's Shari`ah. All of the Islamic governments should apply it, not others. It is not permissible to apply man-made systems, but Allah's Shari`ah should be applied to His servants. This will lead to happiness and rescue in this world and

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in the Hereafter as well as a great outcome for all of the rulers and the people. The systems, which do not contradict with the Shari`ah, can be applied. But it is not permissible to apply the systems that contradict with the Shari`ah; and Muslims should apply the Shar`y (Islamically lawful) Hudud (ordained punishments for violating Allah's Law). The rulers, wherever they are, should oblige the people to adhere to Allah's Commands, abstain from His prohibitions, propagate virtue and prevent vice. Also, they should apply and stick to Allah's Shari`ah. This leads to happiness and good outcome in this world and they will be granted Jannah (Paradise) and saved from Hellfire in the Hereafter. Allah has granted Muslims victory and the Muslim countries have been liberated from the oppressors, all praise be to Allah. This is really one of Allah's great graces; we should praise Allah for it by adhering to His commands and religion, urging one another to follow Al-Haqq (the Truth) and to be steadfast and co-operate in righteousness and piety. We ask Allah to unite the Muslims, set right their hearts and deeds, and grant them sound and successful understanding of the religion that satisfy Him and bring them close to His path.

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May Allah set right the Muslim leaders and rulers and grant them success in every good deed. May Allah set right the Muslim countries and let the best Muslims be in charge of their affairs to apply the Shari`ah.

May Allah set right and guide the rest of the Muslims and make the afflictions that befell them as purification of their sins. May Allah set right non-Muslims and guide them to Islam. May Allah help all Muslims and us avoid what displeases Him and violates His Shari`ah. May Allah grant all of us success and guidance and set right our hearts and deeds, He is the Most Generous, the Most Bountiful, and the Answerer of our supplications.



### Ruling on permissible times and evidence of Qunut

**Q: Is it permissible to recite Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) during Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, will you kindly let me know the verified evidence from the Sunnah? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Qunut is permissible during Fajr (Dawn) Prayer to invoke Allah to support Mujahids (sing. of Mujahid; one striving/fighting in the Cause of Allah) fighting in the Cause of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and His religion. It can be recited to ask Allah for safety from the conspiracies of the enemies. This should be done in intervals not constantly, in accordance with what the Prophet (peace be upon him) did. The Prophet (peace be upon him) might have recited Qunut asking Allah to support some people or to ask Him to destroy others. He recited Qunut for a whole month invoking curses on certain Arabian tribes.

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Therefore, if a Muslim recites Qunut to ask Allah to relieve the affliction that befell other Muslims or so, this would be permissible, but it should be done temporarily the way the Prophet (peace be upon him) did. Constant recitation of Qunut in Fajr Prayer, as some people do, is not permissible according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars, based on an authentic Hadith narrated by Sa`d ibn Tariq ibn Ashyam who said: ["I asked my father: 'You prayed behind the Messenger of Allah \(peace be upon him\), Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman and `Aly, did they say Qunut during the Fajr Prayer?' He replied, 'Dear son, it is an innovation.'"](#) (Related by Imam Ahmad, Al-Tirmidhy and Al-Nasa'y through authentic Isnad [chain of narrators]).

This indicates that reciting Qunut constantly in Fajr Prayer was not the habit of the Prophet (peace be upon him) nor the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. However, Qunut is only recited whenever there is a calamity in a Muslim country to ask Allah to support Muslims overcome their enemies and the like. It is permissible to do so every now and then, if necessary, following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him).



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**Q: A questioner from Yemen says: Is it permissible to recite Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) during Fajr (Dawn) Prayer or not? May you kindly mention the verified evidence, may Allah reward you with the best!**

**A:** Qunut during Fajr Prayer is not permissible since it was not authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he recited Qunut during Fajr Prayer except at times of calamity invoking Allah's curses against the Mushriks (people who associate others with Allah in His Divinity or worship), where he used to do so during Fajr as well as in other Prayers. Reciting Qunut every day during Fajr Prayer has no basis in the Shari`ah (Islamic law), and the safest procedure is to abandon it. Some scholars are of the opinion that it is Mustahab (desirable) all the time, though it has no basis in Shari`ah and the Hadith frequently quoted in this regard is Da`if (a Hadith that fails to reach the status of Hasan, due to a weakness in the chain of narration or one of the narrators). The most preponderant opinion is that it is not absolutely permissible, but it is permissible if there is a calamity like invasion or the like, in such cases, Muslims are allowed to recite Qunut during Fajr Prayer as well as during other daily prayers like what the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do .





**A questioner from Yemen says: I know that Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) during Fajr (Dawn) Prayer - I mean doing it constantly every day- is not permissible, We hopefully wish His Eminence Shaykh will clarify this issue for us in details, illustrating what is meant by Qunut at calamity ?**

**A:** Qunut is impermissible neither in Fajr nor in any other Prayer except in Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) except at times

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of calamity when enemies invade Muslim lands and decide to fight them to death, the guardian can recite Qunut during Fajr as well as other Prayers, to ask Allah to help them defeat the enemy and invoke Him to grant Muslims victory like what the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) did in those disastrous times. So, it is permissible for Muslims to invoke Allah's curses upon their enemies and for Him to grant Muslims victory over the disbelievers .



**Q: Is it obligatory to recite Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in Fajr (Dawn) Prayer ?**

**A:** Qunut is not permissible in Fajr Prayer or in other Prayers since it is only permissible in Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), namely the last unit of what Muslims pray after `Isha' (Night) Prayer or at late night Prayer in the last Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) except in times of calamities when Muslims are being attacked by an enemy when Imams can recite Qunut in Fajr Prayer, they can also recite it after the last Ruku` (bowing) in Fajr, Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon), Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) Prayer, the Prophet (peace be upon him) recited it at times of calamity. Muslims are allowed to recite it at those times of calamity invoking Allah to defeat the enemy and to support Muslims and turn them victorious following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him). If they recite Qunut, you have to follow them and show them the Sunnah of the Prophet if you are a scholar adopting what the Prophet said.

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«The Imam is appointed so that he should be followed, so do not be at variance with him.» They think that it is permissible because it is the opinion of some scholars who are of the opinion that Qunut is permissible in Fajr Prayer all the time. So, if they recite Qunut, join them and illustrate the Sunnah to them if you know it that they might listen to you, this should not generate difference among Muslims since it is the opinion of some scholars though the Sunnah is to abandon it and it is better and safer to leave it, according to the saying of Sa`d ibn Tariq : I asked my father: «O my father, you have performed prayed in congregation led by the Messenger of Allah (and blessings be upon him) and by Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman and `Aly, did they used to recite Qunut in Fajr prayer? Tariq replied (may Allah be pleased with him): Oh my son: this is an innovation.» This proves that Qunut was not the repeated action of the Prophet and his Rightly-Guided Caliphs, but is only done at times of calamity when Muslims are invaded, they can recite Qunut in Fajr as well as in other Prayers like what the Prophet (peace be upon him) did .



**Q: A questioner says: Is there any specific supplication based on transmitted reports to recite after rising from Ruku` (bowing) of the second Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer ? What is Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) ?**

**A:** Qunut is the supplication recited after bowing during Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) or that is done at times of calamity or Qunut during the Five Daily Prayers.

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Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is that one should not recite Qunut except during Witr which refers to the last Rak`ah of the Witr of the late night Prayer, there is no Qunut during day Prayers. If someone wants to pray, he should pray Shaf` (Prayer with an even number of units, particularly before the final unit of the odd-numbered Prayer), if he missed Prayer at night. If his habit is to pray three Rak'ahs at night, he has to pray them four at any time of the day with two Taslims (salutations of peace ending the Prayer), if his habit is to pray five Raka'hs at night but he slept or was ill, he has to pray them six Rak`ahs at any time of the day with three Taslims and this is not Witr. Qunut is recited in the last Rak`ah of late night prayer, moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught it to Al-Hassan ibn `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him). Some scholars are of the opinion that Qunut should always be recited in Fajr Prayer which is a weak one.

The most correct opinion is that Qunut should not be recited except at times of calamity, whenever any calamity takes place to Muslims like the invasion of Kuwait by the state of Iraq. This is an example of a calamity in which Muslims could recite Qunut in Fajr as well as any other Prayers, they could invoke Allah to support the oppressed and to help captives go back to their home. They could ask Allah to damn those who oppress Muslims and inflict harm on them; this is known as Qunut of calamity which the Prophet (peace be upon him) did in Fajr as well as in other Prayers, So, if the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) recites Qunut in Fajr, Maghrib, `Isha', Zhuhr or `Asr Prayers or in all of them invoking Allah's anger on the oppressors, this is permissible and allowed.



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**Q: A questioner from Jeddah says: Is there any reported supplication to be said in Fajr (Dawn) Prayer in the last Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) after reciting Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) ?**

**A:** There is no supplication based on transmitted reports but one should read, of the Qur'an, that which is easy (for him) in all his Prayers. One should start reciting what is easy for him after reciting Al-Fatihah in Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon), Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night) and Fajr Prayers. One should say Du`a-ul-Istiftah (opening supplication when starting the Prayer) before reciting Al-Fatihah and after saying Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer) saying: Glory be to You, O Allah, and Praise be to You and Blessed is Your Name, and Exalted is Your Greatness. There is no deity but You, or to recite another example of Du`a-ul-Istiftah saying: O Allah! Separate me from my sins, as You have separated the East from the West. O Allah! Purify my heart from sins as You have purified the white cloth from stains. O Allah! Wash away my sins with water, snow, and hail." There are other examples of Du`a-ul-Istiftah authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him). However, there is no such Du`a' after reciting Al-Fatihah, but one should only recite what is easy for him of the Glorious Qur'an. Moreover, if the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) paused a moment after reciting Al-Fatihah to give the Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) a chance to read it as well, there would be nothing wrong with that In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills) .



**Q: Is there any Du`a' (supplication) based on any authentic reports that one should recite in the last Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer after reading Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and another Surah (Qur'anic chapter)? What is the ruling on this Du`a' ?**

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**A:** It has no basis in Shari`ah (Islamic law), one has to bow down after finishing his recitation of Al-Fatihah and another Surah of what is easy for him of the Qur'an since there is no Du`a' neither after nor before Ruku` (bowing). Evidence on Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) after Ruku' in Fajr Prayer is based on weak Hadiths though some scholars are of the opinion of reciting it, but this opinion is weak. The correct opinion is to leave it as there is no Qunut except at times of calamity, only at this time is the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) allowed to recite Qunut during Fajr as well as in other Obligatory Prayers such as when Muslims are under siege, he can recite Qunut at any time asking Allah to help them defeat the Mushriks (people who associate others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) or to grant Muslims victory. As for the Qunut which is constantly recited in our days, is better to be abandoned .



#### 94- Impermissibility of Qunut in the Fajr Prayer except during times of calamity

**Q: Some people recite the Du`a' of Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer loudly. However, I read in the book of Fiqh Al-Sunnah by Sayyid Sabiq that it is not permissible to perform Qunut in the Fajr Prayer except during times of calamity in which it is permissible to recite Qunut in the Fajr as well as in the other Five Obligatory Daily Prayers. What is the ruling on this issue?**

**A:** The correct opinion is exactly the same as what you have read in Sayyid Sabiq's book. The Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is not to recite Qunut in the Fajr or any of the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers except during times of calamity, such as when a war is waged against Muslims. In these case, it is permissible for the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) as well as the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) to perform Qunut, asking Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) to relieve

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the distress of Muslims, support His Religion, and make His Word triumphant, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do in times of calamity. However, performing Qunut on a regular basis, especially in the Fajr Prayer without any reasons, is not Mashru` (Islamically prescribed). It was authentically reported on the authority of Sa`d ibn Tariq ibn Ashyam that he said: [\(I asked my father: "You prayed behind the Messenger of Allah \(peace be upon him\), Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, and `Aly; did they say Qunut in the Fajr Prayer?" He replied: "Dear son, this is an innovation."\)](#) (Related by Al-Tirmidhy, Al-Nasa'y, and Imam Ahmad through a good Isnad chain of narrators]) It is the Sunnah to abandon Qunut in the Fajr Prayer except during times of calamity. If there is a calamity, it is permissible to recite Quntut in the Fajr as well as the other Obligatory Daily Prayers, as Muslims did when Kuwait was invaded by the ruler of Iraq. This resulted in a great Fitnah (trial), so Muslims kept reciting Qunut in all the Obligatory Daily Prayers until Allah helped them defeat their enemy and granted them independence. We ask Allah to grant victory to His Religion and make His Word dominant.



**Q: Is Du`a' (supplication) of Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer a Bid`ah (innovation in religion) or a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet)?**

**A:** It is not Mashru` (Islamically prescribed) to recite the Du`a' of Qunut in the Fajr Prayer except for a reason,

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such as when Muslims are going through times of calamities like war, affliction, or invasion by an enemy. The Prophet (peace be upon him) supplicated to Allah in Qunut against the murderers of the Qur'an reciters and against the people of Makkah when they went to excess in Kufr (disbelief). This is called Qunut at calamity, which is Mashru`. As for regularly performing Qunut in the Fajr Prayer, this is not Mashru`, according to the correct opinion. It was reported that Sa`d Al-Ashja`y asked his father: [\(O my father! You prayed behind the Messenger of Allah \(peace be upon him\), Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, and `Aly; did they say Qunut in the Fajr Prayer? He replied: "Dear son, this is an innovation."\)](#) His father was Sa`d ibn Tariq Al-Ashja`y. This Hadith was reported by the Five Compilers of Hadith (Imams Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Al-Tirmidhy, Al-Nasa'y, and Ibn Majah) except Abu Duwad through a good Isnad (chain of narrators). This indicates that it is not Mashru` to recite Qunut in the Fajr Prayer except in times of calamity as has just been mentioned above.

As for saying that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite Qunut in the Fajr Prayer during his lifetime, it is a Da`if (weak), rather than Sahih (authentic) report. It was also reported on the authority of Anas that he said: [\(The Messenger of Allah \(peace be upon him\) kept reciting Qunut in the Fajr Prayer until he passed away.\)](#) Had this report been Sahih, it would have been clear, but it is

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a Hadith with weak Isnad. Some scholars said that if its meaning was correct, it would refer to the long pause after rising from Ruku` (bowing) since it is also known as Qunut but not the well-known Qunut of the Fajr Prayer; it may mean that the Messenger used to prolong his standing after Ruku`. But as we have just mentioned, the Isnad of this Hadith is not Sahih and is unreliable, so the correct opinion is that it is not permissible to recite Qunut in the Fajr Prayer on a regular basis. It is only permissible if there is a calamity befalling Muslims, in such cases it is permissible to recite Qunut in any of the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers, be it the Maghrib (Sunset), 'Isha` (Night), Zhuhr (Noon), or 'Asr (Afternoon), though the best is to recite it either during the Fajr or Maghrib Prayer.



**Q: Is Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) during Fajr (Dawn) Prayer permissible or not?**

**A:** The preponderant opinion is that Qunut during Fajr Prayer is not permissible, since it is restricted to the occurrence of calamities. Whenever there is a calamity the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) is allowed to recite Qunut after rising from Ruku` (bowing) in the last Rak'ah (unit in Prayer) of Fajr Prayer, invoking Allah's curses against the disbelieving transgressors in countries like Afghanistan, Palestine and the Philippines since they oppressed Muslims and killed them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite Qunut during Fajr as well as in other obligatory Prayers at times of calamities whenever there was any transgression or invasion against Muslims

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after rising from Ruku` saying: [«O Allah, kill the Kafirs \(disbelievers\) and the Mushriks \(people who associate others with Allah in His Divinity or worship\)»](#) and demolish them and grant us victory over them", and the like. But what some people do, of reciting Qunut constantly during Fajr Prayer is not desirable and should be abandoned. It was authentically reported in the Sunan (Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes) from Sa`d ibn Tariq Al-Ashja`y (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said to his father: [«O my father, You prayed behind the Messenger of Allah \(peace be upon him\), Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman and 'Aly \(may Allah be pleased with them\) did they say Qunut during the Fajr Prayer?»](#) He replied, "Dear son, it is an innovation".) This indicates that it is an innovation and that the Sunnah (action following the instruction of the Prophet) is to abandon it even if some scholars are of the opinion that it is permissible since they rely on Da`if (a Hadith that fails to reach the status of Hasan, due to a weakness in the chain of narration or one of the narrators) Hadiths in this regard. This is the correct opinion following the Sunnah of the Prophet and the most preponderant of the opinions of scholars.





**95- Stating the most preponderant opinion concerning the permissibility of reciting Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in Fajr (Dawn) Prayer**

**Q: A questioner says: Is Qunut obligatory**

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**during the second Rak'ah (unit in prayer) in Fajr Prayer or not? As the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) of our Masjid (mosque) does this constantly ?**

**A:** This is a controversial matter among scholars. Some of them are of the opinion that it is a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) during Fajr (Dawn) Prayer which should be performed every day. The most correct opinion maintained by scholars is that it is not Mustahab (desirable) except at times of calamities like war against Muslims. In such cases the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) recites Qunut during Fajr as well as in other Obligatory Prayers every day invoking Allah to destroy their enemies and to grant them victory over them. That is why it is known as Qunut at calamities. But the constant Qunut of Fajr Prayer is not permissible according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars, though some of them are of the opinion that it is permissible constantly. If you pray behind an Imam who recites Qunut, there is nothing wrong if you follow him, praise be to Allah. This is a doubtful matter and is open to choice. However, my advice to any Imam who recites Qunut is to abandon it since it is only permissible at times of calamities according to what has authentically been reported in the Hadith of Sa`d ibn Tariq that he said to his father: Tariq ibn Al-Ashyam (may Allah be pleased with him): [\(O my father, You prayed behind the Messenger of Allah \(peace be upon him\), Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman and 'Aly \(may Allah be pleased with them\) did they say Qunut in the Fajr Prayer?' He replied, "Dear son, it is an innovation"\)](#) This great Sahaby (Companion of the Prophet) told people that the Rightly Guided

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Caliphs had never did this nor did the Prophet (peace be upon him).



**Q: According to Imam (initiator of a School of Jurisprudence) Malik, Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) is recited in the second Rak'ah (unit in Prayer) in Fajr (Dawn) Prayer but according to Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal Qunut is recited in `Isha' (Night) Prayer especially in Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). What is the evidence on both? Thank you.**

**A:** Qunut is permissible in voluntary Prayers performed at night but not in `Isha' Prayer. It is permissible in late night Prayer according to the opinion of all scholars. It is Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) according to them. Witr starts immediately after `Isha' until the break of dawn. Qunut is permissible to be recited in the last Rak`ah of Witr according to the Hadith of Al-Hassan ibn `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: [\(The Messenger of Allah \(peace and blessings be upon him\) taught me some words to recite in the Qunut of Witr.\)](#) It is agreed upon that Qunut is permissible in Witr but I do not know whether Qunut is consensually agreed upon or if it is a controversial matter among scholars. However, it is a Sunnah without any doubt even if there is no consensus regarding it. It is Sunnah according to the Hadith of Al-Hasan (may Allah be pleased with him) on the Qunut of Witr in voluntary night Prayer. The Qunut done by some scholars in Fajr Prayer like Al-Shafi`y or Maliki jurists is not permissible according to the most correct opinion maintained by scholars except at times of calamities; if an enemy besieged Muslims, they are allowed to recite Qunut in

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Fajr as well as in other Obligatory Prayers invoking Allah to destroy them, but reciting Qunut constantly in Fajr Prayer is not permissible according to the most correct opinion maintained by scholars. Those who are of the opinion that it is permissible rely on the Hadith reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) by Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: [\(The Prophet kept reciting Qunut in Fajr Prayer until his death\)](#) but this Hadith is Da`if (a Hadith that fails to reach the status of Hasan, due to a weakness in the chain of narration or one of the narrators).

Some other Hadiths interpreted "to recite Qunut" as "to do so at times of calamities only". Those who are of the opinion that it is not permissible in Fajr Prayer are stronger with what is reported by Ahmad, Al-Nasa'y and others from the Prophet (peace be upon him) from Sa`d ibn Tariq I said to my father Tariq ibn Ashyam : [\(O my father, You prayed behind the Messenger of Allah \(peace be upon him\), Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman and `Aly did they say Qunut in the Fajr Prayer?' He replied, "Dear son, it is an innovation"\)](#) This Hadith indicates that it is an innovation and it should not be done during Fajr Prayer except at times of calamities. Reciting it constantly is an innovation and is not permissible though those who said that it is permissible may not know this Hadith since if they knew the Hadith of Sa`d ibn Tariq, they would follow it, but it seems that they did not hear it or they heard it and interpreted it different to its explicit meaning.

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In conclusion, the most correct and preponderant opinion is that Qunut takes place in Witr in late night Prayer and in Fajr Prayers as well as in other Prayers at times of calamities, but continuity in reciting it during Fajr Prayer should be abandoned because it is not permissible according to the

Hadith of Tariq ibn Ashyam which has just been mentioned since `Ibadah (worship) is Tawqifiy (bound by a religious text and not amenable to personal opinion) nothing is permissible unless it is based on evidence. However, if someone offers Prayer led by one of those who recite Qunut constantly, he should follow him as there is nothing wrong with that, since this is one of the doubtful matters, but the Imam should be advised to abandon it since that is better, preferable and preponderant to abandon it because Tariq mentioned that it is an innovation never done by the Prophet (peace be upon him) nor was it the habit of the Companions or the Rightly Guided Caliphs. So, it should be abandoned unless there is a good reason for it, like calamities.



**Q: Du`a' (supplication) in the second Rak'ah (unit in Prayer) of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer after rising from bowing (Ruku`) has become one of the most controversial topics, is it permissible to recite it loudly? Is it permissible to recite it collectively with other people though I always hear this Du`a' being said loudly especially when Fajr Prayer is broadcasted by some radio stations as they usually end it by saying: By the honor of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the secrets of Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an). I wish Your Eminence would clarify the issue for me, may Allah reward you with the best.**

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**A:** This Du`a' is known as Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer), it is recited after rising from Ruku (bowing) in the second Rak'ah (unit of Prayer) of Fajr Prayer. Scholars differed regarding this issue where some are of the opinion that it is desirable and said that it is a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the teachings of the Prophet) that should be done constantly. Other scholars are of the opinion that it is a Sunnah only at times of calamities such as siege or affliction befalling Muslims. In such cases, the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) is allowed to recite Qunut and the Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) say "Amen". Some scholars are of the opinion that it is only the ruler or the Sultan who has the right to do so like what the Prophet (peace be upon him) did at times of calamities. He asked Allah to destroy some tribes but he abandoned it soon after. Moreover, he recited it frequently whenever there were calamities, not constantly. The correct opinion is that it should only be done at times of calamities because it was authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he recited Qunut asking Allah to destroy some Arab tribes according to the Hadith of Ibn 'Umar from the Hadith of Al-Bara' ibn `Azib and from the Hadith of Abu Hurayrah and a group of Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) (may Allah be pleased with them) who reported that he (peace be upon him) recited Qunut asking Allah to destroy some Arab tribes who killed the seventy reciters, he did it for one month. He also did the same asking Allah to destroy a group of Quraysh before the Liberation of Makkah since it is permissible and Mustahab (desirable) when needed and justified.

But constant Qunut in Fajr Prayer after the second Ruku`, which is seen as desirable by some scholars is not permissible because the correct opinion is that it is not desirable in Fajr Prayer

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nor in any other Prayer, if done constantly. It should be restricted to times of calamities. In such cases the Imam can recite Qunut. But reciting Qunut constantly in Fajr Prayer as a continuous Sunnah which is the opinion of some Shaf`iy scholars (may Allah be pleased with them) and others is not the correct opinion since the correct one is that it is not desirable as it is authentically reported from Sa`d ibn Tariq ibn Ashyam Al-Ashja`y that he said: [\(O my father, You prayed behind the Messenger of Allah \(peace be upon him\), Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman and `Aly, did they say Qunut in the Fajr Prayer? He replied, "Dear son, it is an innovation".\)](#) This indicates that it was not known at the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) nor the time of his Rightly Guided Caliphs at times other than those of calamities, that is why the great Sahaby (Companion of the Prophet) said that: It is an

innovation; that is, doing it constantly and without need is an innovation. This is the most preponderant and verified opinion. However, if you offer Prayer led by an Imam who recites Qunut, there would be nothing wrong with that since this is one of the doubtful matters and he did so relying on weak Hadiths. So, you can offer Prayer behind him. Moreover, if you followed him in this Qunut and said "Amen", there would also be nothing wrong since this issue is open to choice, but the Sunnah is to abandon it.



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**Q: May Your Eminence kindly clarify to us Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) during Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, how should it be done and when? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** The correct opinion is that Qunut is not permissible during Fajr or any other Prayer except if there are justifications. But what some people do by constantly reciting it in Fajr Prayer relying on the opinion of some scholars is not correct because they lack evidence on this issue. Qunut is permissible if justified like that which is done during calamities such as when Kafirs (disbelievers) transgress against some Muslims, in such cases the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) should recite Qunut asking Allah to grant Muslims victory over their enemies and to destroy and defeat the disbelievers like what the Prophet (peace be upon him) did when he asked Allah to curse Quraysh and curse those who killed the reciters. Qunut at times of calamities is permissible, so one is allowed to ask Allah to curse and destroy the enemies and grant Muslims victory and a good end.



**Q: A questioner from the governorate of Hadramawt says: I would like to ask Your Eminence about the Du`a' (supplication) of Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer in Fajr (Dawn) Prayer by saying: 'Allahumma ihdini fiman hadayta...(O Allah! Guide me among those You have guided...) etc. Is it authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him)**

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**that he recited Qunut ?**

**A:** The Prophet (peace be upon him) recited Qunut at times of calamities whenever there was any affliction or invasion, in these cases the Prophet (peace be upon him) recited Qunut during Fajr Prayer, but unjustified constant Qunut done by some people during Fajr Prayer is not permissible, it was authentically reported in the Hadith of Sa`d ibn Tariq Al-Ashja`y that he said: **«O my father, You prayed behind the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman and `Aly did they say Qunut during the Fajr Prayer?» He replied, "Dear son, it is an innovation"»** This means that Qunut of Fajr Prayer was not allowed to be done unless there was a certain calamity such as when the enemy besieged Muslims or occupied their land. In such cases, Qunut is permissible in Fajr as well as in other Obligatory Prayer whether Fajr, Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), Zhuhr (Noon) or `Asr (Afternoon), the Imam raises his hands high after rising from Ruku` of the last Rak'ah (unit of Prayer) and asks Allah to destroy the enemies like what the Prophet (peace be upon him) did in his Du'a' against Mushriks (people who associate others with Allah in His Divinity or worship).



**96- Explaining the meaning of some words of Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer)**

**Q: From the Republic of Egypt : Was it authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him)**

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**used to lift his hands in the last Rak'ah (unit of Prayer) of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer after rising from Ruku (bowing) and say: ('Allahumma ihdini fiman hadayta (O Allah! Guide me among those You have guided) every night until he died, what is the meaning of Du`a' of Qunut: 'Allahumma ihdini fiman hadayta, wa 'afini fiman 'afayta (O Allah! Guide me among those who You have guided. Protect me among those You have protected) ?**

**A:** It was not authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) recited Qunut in Fajr Prayer using: 'Allahumma ihdini fiman hadayta (O Allah! Guide me among those You have guided) or any other version of Du`a', but he (peace be upon him) was used to reciting Qunut whenever there was a calamity like the transgression of an enemy and the like, he used to ask Allah to destroy the enemies, during Fajr, as well as in other Obligatory Prayers. But what some people do through constantly reciting Qunut in Fajr Prayer saying: 'Allahumma ihdini fiman hadayta (O Allah! Guide me among those You have guided) is contrary to what is permissible, it should be abandoned because the Hadiths in this regard are Da`if (a Hadith that fails to reach the status of Hasan, due to a weakness in the chain of narration or one of the narrators). It is permissible to recite Qunut at times of calamities only when Kafirs (disbelievers) transgress against Muslims. In such cases, they are allowed to recite Qunut in Fajr, Maghrib (Sunset), 'Isha' (Night), Zhuhr (Noon) and 'Asr (Afternoon), though the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite it more during Fajr but still at times of calamity. Constant reciting of Qunut has no basis in Shari`ah (Islamic law) and Hadiths dealing with this issue are weak. So, it should be abandoned. The meaning of

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'Allahumma ihdini fiman hadayta, wa 'afini fiman 'afayta (O Allah! Guide me among those You have guided. Protect me among those You have protected) is that you ask Allah to grant you guidance among those whom Allah has guided and to grant you protection among those whom He protected. The meaning of wa tawallani fiman tawallayta (Take me into Your Care among those You have taken into Your Care), means: "O Allah grant me guidance, protection and care like those whom You granted those favors.





**Q: A questioner says: Regarding the Du'a' (supplication) of Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer), was it authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him)? What is the meaning of "Allahumma ihdini fiman hadayta, wa 'afini fiman 'afayta, wa tawallani fiman tawallayta, wa barik li fima a'tayta" (O Allah! Guide me among those You have guided. Protect me among those You have protected. Take me into Your Care among those You have taken into Your Care ?**

**A.** Yes, the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite Qunut whenever there was a calamity befalling Muslims. In such cases he used to ask Allah to destroy the enemy. Moreover, he taught Al-Hasan the Du`a' of Qunut: (Allahumma ihdini fiman hadayta, wa 'afini fiman 'afayta (O Allah! Guide me among those You have guided, Protect me among those You have protected)) that is to say: "O Allah guide me among Your guided servants, and protect me like them and grant me blessing in my sustenance and take care of me."



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**97- Stating the rank of the reported Hadiths on the permissibility of Qunut during Fajr Prayer**

**Q: A questioner from Yemen, asks about Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in Fajr (Dawn) Prayer saying: Can you kindly tell me something about the Qunut of Fajr Prayer, its ruling, the ruling on abandoning it and if the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite Qunut during Fajr Prayer ?**

**A:** There is no authentically reported Hadith from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he recited Qunut in Fajr Prayer, though there are Da`if (a Hadith that fails to reach the status of Hasan, due to a weakness in the chain of narration or one of the narrators) ones. The correct opinion is that he (peace be upon him) used to recite Qunut only at times of calamities. If any affliction befell Muslims, he would recite Qunut during Fajr and Maghrib (Sunset) or any other Prayer. This is known as Qunut at times of a calamity. But constant Qunut was not authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him). It is only reported in weak Hadiths. It was authentically reported from Sa`d ibn Tariq ibn Ashyam that he said to his father (I asked my father: O my father, You prayed behind the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman and `Aly did they say Qunut in the Fajr Prayer?' He replied, "Dear son, it is an innovation".) This indicates that they did not recite Qunut in Fajr except

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at times of a calamity when any affliction befell Muslims. In such cases they used to recite Qunut asking Allah to defeat their enemies and asking Him to grant Muslims victory such as cases of invasion and transgression on Muslim land. But the constant recitation of Qunut is weak and not preponderant even if it is the opinion of some scholars. But it is better and preferable not to do it since it lacks evidence unless there is a calamity as this is the most preponderant opinion maintained by scholars. If you offer Prayer led by someone who recites Qunut, follow him since this issue is a doubtful one and is open to choice, though we advise our brothers who do it constantly to abandon it unless needed and justified like asking Allah to grant Mujahids (people fighting in the Cause of Allah) victory over their enemies and to the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina and similar cases. This is related to calamities and the like.



### 98- The ruling on Qunut at times of calamities

**Q: A questioner says: Is Du`a' (supplication) of Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) after the second Rak'ah (unit of Prayer) of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer reported ?**

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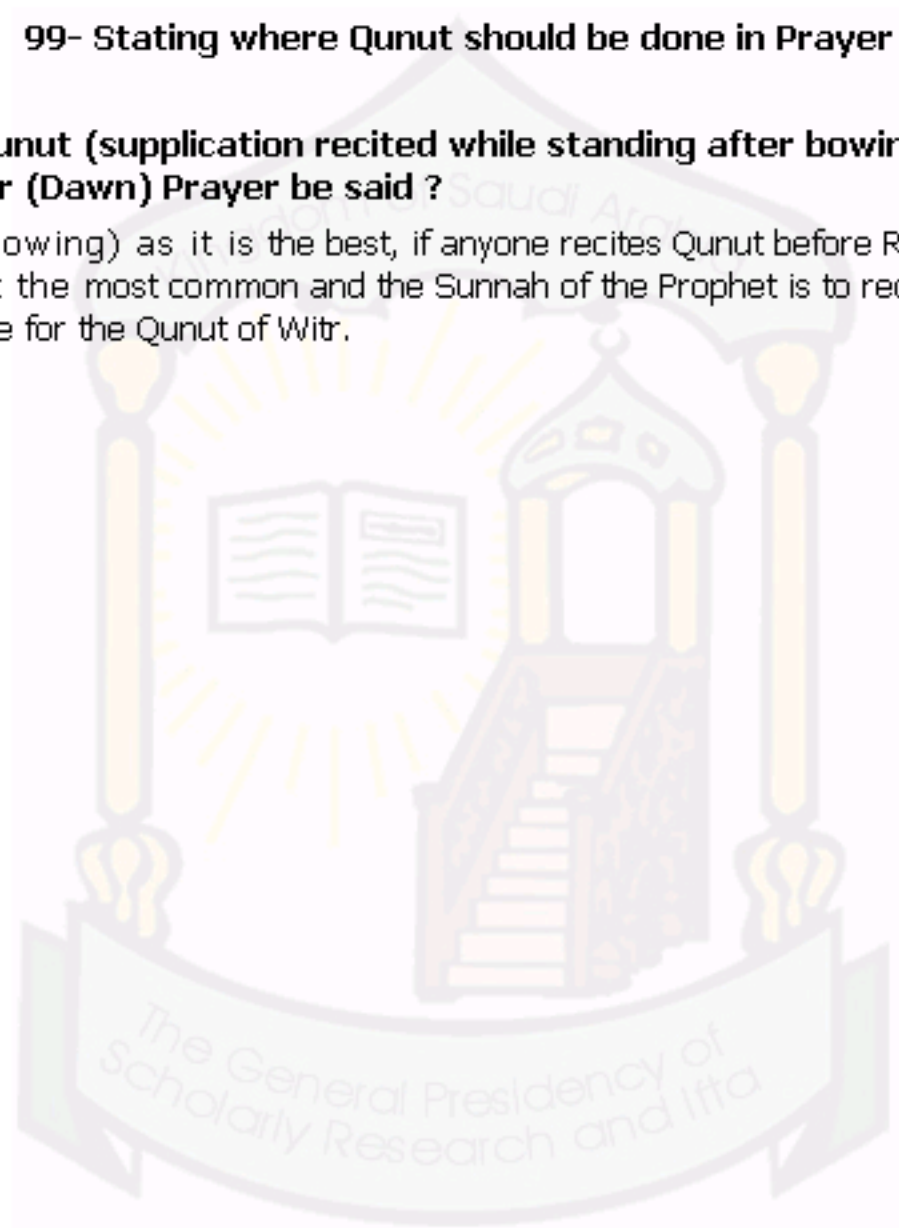
**A:** It is authentically reported at times of calamity only when some enemies attack Muslims since the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite Qunut after the last Ruku` (bowing) though he did the same in other Obligatory Prayers asking Allah to destroy the disbelievers, but constant recitation of Du`a' of Qunut in Fajr Prayer is not correct or permissible.



### 99- Stating where Qunut should be done in Prayer

**Q: When should Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) during Fajr (Dawn) Prayer be said ?**

**A:** After Ruku` (bowing) as it is the best, if anyone recites Qunut before Ruku`, there is nothing wrong with it. But the most common and the Sunnah of the Prophet is to recite it after rising from Ruku`, also the same for the Qunut of Witr.





**Q: If we recite Du`a' (supplication) of Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in a four Rak`ah Prayer, when should we do it and after which Ruku` ?**

**A: After the last Ruku` of any Salah (Prayer)**





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**100- Ruling on abandoning the congregation that regularly perform Qunut in the Fajr Prayer**

**Q: I know that Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) should not be recited except at times of calamity only. I adopt this opinion, but if the congregation of the Masjid (mosque) where I offer my Salah (Prayer) regularly recites Qunut in the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, should I contradict them and not recite Qunut or should I follow them?**

**A:** There is nothing wrong with following and advising them since some scholars are of the opinion that it is permissible to perform Qunut in the Fajr Prayer and cited evidence from some Hadiths which are Da`if (a Hadith that fails to reach the status of Hasan, due to a weakness in the chain of narration or one of the narrators). However, Qunut should be done during times of calamity in the Fajr, Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night) Prayers, and the other Five Obligatory Prayers as the Prophet (peace be upon him) did. When a war was waged against Muslims or an evil befell them, he (peace be upon him) would ask Allah to destroy the transgressor and save Muslims from the evils of their enemies. But to regularly recite Qunut in the Fajr Prayer is contrary to the Shari`ah (Islamic law) and should be abandoned. If you offer Salah with some people who are given a Fatwa by some scholars that they can recite Qunut in the Fajr Prayer, you can perform Salah and Qunut with them but continue advising the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and the congregation to abandon Qunut in the Fajr Prayer.

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It is prescribed for you to advise and guide them to the people of knowledge who will enlighten them that it is not permissible to perform Qunut in the Fajr Prayer except during times of calamity.



### 101- The ruling on raising the hands and Ta'min behind the Imam in Qunut

**Q. Our Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) sometimes recites Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in Fajr (Dawn), Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) after rising from Ruku (bowing) of the last Rak`ah (unit of Prayer), but after Qunut, he recites the Du`a' of Sunnah and raises his hands, is this Du`a' permissible? Should we raise our hands or is it enough for us to say Amen ?**

**A:** Qunut is permissible only at times of calamity meant to ask Allah to support Mujahids (people fighting in the cause of Allah) and to destroy disbelievers. If someone recites Qunut because of a calamity, such as asking Allah to help Mujahids, when their Jihad (fighting/striving in the Cause of Allah) is legally guided, or to suppress their enemies. In such cases, Qunut is permissible. Both the Imam and Ma'mums (people being led by an Imam in Prayer) have to raise their hands. The Imam recites Qunut and Ma'mums say amen like Salat-ul-Istisqa' (Prayer for rain). Qunut is not desirable in cases other than those of calamity except in Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). When someone offers Witr at night, he could recite Qunut in the last Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) after rising from Ruku (bowing). What some people do regarding reciting Qunut consistently in Fajr Prayer is not

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permissible and should be abandoned because the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not recite it except at times of calamity, that is when any affliction befell Muslims, he used to ask Allah to grant them victory and to destroy their enemies. He used to do it for awhile then he used to abandon it. The most correct of the opinions maintained by scholars is that constant recitation of Qunut in Fajr Prayer is not permissible.



## 102- Ruling on praying with an Imam who regularly recites Qunut in the Fajr Prayer

**Q: I have noticed that some people regularly recite Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. Is it permissible to offer Salah (Prayer) with Imams (the persons who lead the congregational Prayer) who recite Qunut in the Fajr Prayer, or to offer it at home? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** There is no harm in offering Salah with them, as some scholars have said that it is permissible. Also, because there is doubt regarding this matter, there is nothing wrong with doing so. You should offer Salah with them, not at home, as you should offer the Fajr Prayer in congregation with other Muslims, even if the Imam recites Qunut. However, it is better not to recite Qunut in the Fajr Prayer, as the Shar`y (Islamically lawful) evidence indicates that Qunut should only be recited during times of calamity. If the Muslims are afflicted by a calamity, they supplicate to Allah against their enemy. The Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) guides us not to recite Qunut habitually. But, as some scholars have said, if your Imam recites Qunut,

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there is nothing wrong in offering Salah with him.





### 103- Ruling on Ma'mums' raising their hands behind the Imam who recites Qunut during Fajr Prayer

**Q: A questioner asks: "The Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who leads us in Fajr (Dawn) Prayer usually performs Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer). He rarely abandons Qunut. Should we raise our hands for the sake of supplications behind this Imam?"**

**A:** If the Imam performs Qunut, there is nothing wrong with performing Qunut with him. However, it is better for him to abandon doing so. One should not perform Qunut in other than Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) except in times of calamity. If calamities such as war, or invasion of enemies befall Muslims, one can supplicate to Allah during his Salah after rising up from Ruku` (bowing). One should raise his hand and supplicate to Allah because of these calamities as it was done by the Prophet (peace be upon him) during Fajr Prayer and others. As for habitually offering Du`a' (supplication), it goes against the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet). Thus, it is preferable to give up doing so. However, if one performs Salah (Prayer) behind an Imam who performs Qunut, there is nothing wrong with raising the hands and saying "Amen".



#### 104- Ruling on labeling a person who regularly performs Qunut in Fajr Prayer as Muftadi`

**Q: Your Eminence Shaykh, a questioner from Hadramawt asks: Can we consider the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who keeps offering Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer as Muftadi` (one who introduces innovations in religion)? And**

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**how to refute the claims of those who argue that this is Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet)? They take as their evidence the Ayah (Qur'anic verse) that reads: (And your Lord said: "Invoke Me, [i.e. believe in My Oneness (Islâmic Monotheism) and ask Me for anything] I will respond to your (invocation).) And: (And stand before Allâh with obedience [and do not speak to others during the Salât (prayer)].) They also support their claim with the Hadith that states that the Prophet (peace be upon him) (kept offering Qunut in the Fajr Prayer till he died.)**

**A:** Some Muslim jurists argue that it is not permissible to label such a person Muftadi`, but it is preferable to advise them not to say Qunut regularly in the Fajr Prayer, because abandoning Qunut in the Fajr Prayer is better than doing it. Some Imams (initiators of Schools of Jurisprudence) as Al-Shafi`y and the Six Hadith Compilers (Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, Al-Tirmidhy, Al-Nasa'y, and Ibn Majah) agree with performing Qunut in the Fajr Prayer. However, this is a weak opinion. Anyway, we have to know that abandoning Qunut in the Fajr Prayer is better than doing it. As for the Hadith that maintains that the Prophet (peace be upon him) (kept offering Qunut in the Fajr Prayer till he died,) it is Da`if (weak). The Prophet (peace be upon him) supplicated to Allah against the Mushriks (ones who associate others with Allah in His Divinity or worship), but he did not offer Qunut in the Fajr Prayer consistently. It is prescribed to be offered in all prayers in times of calamity, e.g. when the enemy attacks Muslims. Those who are keen on offering it in the Fajr Prayer at times other than those of calamity, relying on such a Da`if Hadith, should be advised with wisdom, fair preaching, and kind words. They should be informed that it is Sunnah not to offer Qunut in the Fajr Prayer.



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**105- What should the Imam do when the congregation he is leading insists on offering Qunut in the Fajr Prayer?**

**Q:** I lead a group of people in congregational Salah (Prayer) and they insist that I should offer Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in the last Rak`ah of the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. However, as far as I know from authentic sources, the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered Qunut in the Fajr Prayer only in times of calamity. Should I obey them and, hence, act against the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet), disagree with them and adhere to the Sunnah, or give up leadership in Salah to avoid dispute?

**Please advise me. May Allah bless you.**

**A:** You should adhere to the Sunnah and draw the congregation's attention to this with wisdom and fair preaching. Offering Qunut in the Fajr Prayer on a regular basis is a newly invented practice (in religion) and not a prescribed one. It was reported in Musnad (Hadith compilation) of Imam Ahmad (may Allah be merciful to him), Sunan (Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes) of Al-Tirmidhy, and Sunan of Al-Nasa'iy and Ibn Majah from Sa`d ibn Tariq ibn Ashyam Al-Ashja`y that his father, Abu Sa`d, said: [\(O my father, you prayed behind the Prophet \(peace be upon him\), Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, and `Aly \(may Allah be pleased with them all\). Did they](#)

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[offer Qunut in the Fajr Prayer? He replied: It is an invented practice.\)](#) The father, Tariq, made it clear that it is an invented (not authentic) practice. It was also narrated on the authority of Anas and others, such as Abu Hurairah along with a group of the Companions, that the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered Qunut in the Fajr and other Prayers during times of calamity. If Muslims are attacked by an enemy, or a group of the Muslim army is attacked, the Imams (the ones who lead congregational Prayer) should supplicate to Allah in the last Rak`ah of the Fajr Prayer after rising from Ruku` (bowing). This would last till the calamity is over and then they would stop offering Qunut in the Fajr Prayer. Moreover, habitually offering Qunut in the Fajr Prayer is contrary to the Sunnah. It should be confined to the time of the calamity. Therefore, you should try to convince them and guide them to the correct way. If they are not convinced of this, there is nothing wrong with leaving them and going to another Masjid (mosque) in which you can adhere to the Prophet's Sunnah.



### 106- Ruling on following an Imam who offers Qunut in the Fajr Prayer

**Q:** A questioner from Yemen asks: There is an Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) who offers Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. We have advised him against doing this, but he insists on doing so, following the opinion of Al-Shafi`y (may Allah have mercy on him). We do not agree with him by any means. Should we offer Qunut with him, stick to our opinion, or move to another

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**Masjid (mosque)? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** There is nothing wrong with following the Imam who offers Qunut in the Fajr Prayer, for he is relying on evidence that is the opinion adopted by some scholars. However, if there is another Masjid available in which there is no Qunut offered in the Fajr Prayer, it will be much better to pray there. A person who insists on offering Qunut in the Fajr Prayer strictly follows the opinion of Al-Shafi`y and Malik and is ignorant of the more correct opinion. Actually, Taqlid (strictly following a specific School of Jurisprudence) without reasoning has dominated the thinking of many people. In any case, you have done no wrong if you pray with that Imam. However, it is much better for him to abandon Qunut in the Fajr Prayer except in times of calamity, e.g. an enemy attacking Muslims, where it is permissible to offer Qunut in all Prayers and supplicate to Allah to ward off such an enemy. As for regular Qunut, on the other hand, which usually starts as "O Allah, guide us among those whom You guided (to the right path)," it is legally confined to Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) and it is recommended that it not be done in the Fajr Prayer.



### 107- Controversial issues

**Q: We are a group of Arab immigrants working in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. There is a Masjid (mosque) at our work where we perform all prayers. The problem is that the Imam (one who leads congregational Prayer) always raises his hands in the second Rak`ah of the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer and supplicates to Allah for a long time, and the Ma'mums (persons being led by an Imam in Prayer) raise their hands as well. After finishing supplication, he prostrates and completes the Prayer. Most of the people attending the Prayer disagree with this**

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considering it incorrect and impermissible, for they are not accustomed to seeing this in Al-Haramayn Al-Sharifayn (the Two Sacred Mosques: the Sacred Mosque in Makkah and the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah), which are models to follow. The Imam (of our mosque) argues that abandoning this act of supplication in Al-Haramayn Al-Sharifayn cannot be taken as dependable evidence. We seek to learn the truth concerning this matter, especially as doubts still arise among people attending the Prayer. When we argue with the Imam, he says that Madh-habs (Schools of Jurisprudence) are extremely numerous, as many as sixteen hundred. What is your opinion concerning this issue? May Allah reward with you the best.

**A:** There is no doubt that the Imam's actions pertain to an opinion adopted by some scholars. The supplication he offers is called Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer). Al-Shafi`y Madh-hab argue for offering Qunut in the Fajr Prayer, and this is a well-known opinion, based on some Hadiths reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) which state that [\(the Prophet kept offering Qunut in the Fajr Prayer till he died.\)](#) The correct opinion, however, is that this is not prescribed except during times of calamity, such as when Muslims are being attacked by an enemy, where it is allowed for a certain period of time. The Prophet (peace be upon him)

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was reported to have offered Qunut during times of calamity for a certain period of time and then stopped doing it. Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) was not to offer Qunut except when he supplicated for or against some people. He offered Qunut for a month, supplicating against some people from Banu Sulaym.\)](#)

As for the Hadith referred to above [\(which states that the Prophet kept offering Qunut in the Fajr Prayer till he died,\)](#) it is Da`if (weak), according to scholars of Hadith. Moreover, it was stated in another Hadith reported from Sa`d ibn Tariq ibn Ashyam Al-Ashja`y, who asked his father: [\(O my father, you prayed behind the Prophet \(peace be upon him\), Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, and `Aly. Did they offer Qunut in the Fajr Prayer? He replied: It is a newly invented practice \(in religion\).\)](#)

Tariq, who is one of the Prophet's respectable Companions (may Allah be pleased with them), states that Qunut in the Fajr Prayer is an invented practice (in religion) and, hence, it should not be done,

and this is the preponderant opinion. All in all, a believer should adhere to the Ever-Glorious Qur'an, the Sunnah (acts, sayings, or approvals of the Prophet), and the established opinions of Muslim scholars with regard to Salah (Prayer) and all other deeds. Again, Qunut is not allowed in the Fajr Prayer except for the purpose of supplicating

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for or against some people, e.g. supplicating to Allah to support those Muslims fighting for the Cause of Allah and to defeat their enemies. This should only be done for a certain period of time, for regularly offering Qunut in the Fajr Prayer is not Mashru` (Islamically permissible), according to the preponderant opinion, though some followers of Al-Shafi`y Madh-hab argue for habitually offering Qunut in the Fajr Prayer. Allah (Exalted may He be) says: **﴿(And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allâh and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم), if you believe in Allâh and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.﴾** If we refer this issue to the Prophet's Sunnah, we will find that it is not Mashru` to offer Qunut in the Fajr Prayer on a regular basis. Therefore, the Imam should abandon this, following the authentic Sunnah and the opinion of the rest of the scholars, especially in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where Imams in general do not offer Qunut in Fajr Prayer, following the example of the Prophet that we have indicated. As for the Imam's claim that there are sixteen hundred Madh-habs in Islam, this is an unacceptable exaggeration, for not all Madh-habs are considered established. Some are false Madh-habs. Therefore, the Imam's statement is a repulsive kind of overgeneralization and exaggeration that he should not commit. Not every Madh-hab attributed to Islam is accepted or taken for granted. Madh-habs that do not abide by the rulings and teachings of the Ever-Glorious Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunnah are not acceptable. The prominent Madh-habs are Four: Shafi`y, Hanafy,

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Maliky, and Hanbaly. These are prominent scholars and jurists, whose Madh-habs are well-known, and many scholars adopted their opinions. Attached to these Madh-habs is the Zhahiry (literalist) Madh-hab, which is also well-known. All such Madh-habs are already established ones, and the issues on which they differ are referred to in the Ever-Glorious Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunnah. Those that are compatible with the Qur'an and the authentic Sunnah should be adopted, and those that conflict with them should be left null, even if they were adopted by Malik, Abu Hanifah, Al-Shafi`y, Ahmad, or the Zhahiry scholars. This is the correct approach. As for the Madh-habs referred to by that Imam, they should not be paid any attention. Nevertheless, a believer should take heed only of the already established ones, which are the Madh-habs of Ahl-ul-Sunnah (adherents to the Sunnah) and which are known for their straightforwardness, looking objectively for truth, and avoiding falsehood and Bid`ah (innovation in religion). Other Madh-habs, on the other hand, have Bid`ahs and deviations that make it obligatory to avoid them and take no notice of their opinions for fear of such evils. The five Madh-habs mentioned above abide by the rulings and teachings of the Ever-Glorious Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunnah, along with the opinions of the Prophet's Companions (may Allah be pleased with them). They have none of the Bid`ahs prevalent in other Madh-habs. Therefore, Muslim scholars are convinced of them and consider them established Islamic Madh-habs. When any difference arises among these Madh-habs concerning any issue,

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they refer to the Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunnah. Whatever conforms with both or one of them should be followed, and whatever does not correspond to them should be avoided. Regarding the present issue, if we refer the idea of offering Qunut in the Fajr Prayer on a regular basis to the Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunnah, we will find nothing justifying its permissibility. On the contrary, we

can see that the Hadith reported from Tariq ibn Ashyam (may Allah be pleased with him) states that Qunut is not to be offered on a regular basis and that it is only to be offered in times of calamity, e.g. supplicating for Muslims fighting in the Cause of Allah or against their enemies, provided that it is done when the need arises and only for a certain period of time, and is then stopped. May Allah grant us the best and lead us to the right path.



**Q: In the last Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) of the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, the Imam (one who leads congregational prayer) raises his hands and supplicates to Allah, and the congregation praying behind him says, "Amen". What is your opinion on this act?**

**A:** It is Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) not to offer Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer) in the Fajr Prayer except in times of calamity, e.g. suffering from famine, being attacked by an enemy, etc. Offering Qunut in the Fajr Prayer on a regular basis, on the other hand, is not prescribed, according to the correct opinion. The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not use to offer Qunut except in times of necessity. However, if you pray with people who offer Qunut in the Fajr Prayer, there is nothing wrong with

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saying, "Amen" with them, for they have evidence that supports their action, as the issue is subject to dispute among scholars. All in all, there is nothing wrong with praying in congregation with people who offer Qunut in the Fajr Prayer and saying "Amen" along with them, for the matter is disputable and some scholars adopt that opinion.





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### Chapter on Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib

#### 108- The number of Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib

**Q: Can you please tell me the number of supererogatory Salahs (Prayers) that should be offered before and after the obligatory ones?**

**A:** The Prophet (peace be upon him) regularly observed twelve Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of supererogatory Salahs in addition to the obligatory ones. These are called Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet). The twelve Rak`ahs are as follows: Four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs, two Rak`ahs after the Zhuhr Prayer, two after the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, two after the `Isha' (Night) Prayer, and two before the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. It is preferable to offer Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib at home; however, there is nothing wrong with offering them in the Masjid (mosque). They are stressed Sunnah when in the home; but when setting out on a journey, it is preferable not to offer them except for the two Rak`ahs before the Fajr Prayer and Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), which are offered even during a journey. It is Mustahab (desirable) to offer four Rak`ahs before the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, two Rak`ahs before the Maghrib Prayer, and two before the `Isha' Prayer, but they are not part of Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib. The Prophet (peace be upon him) regularly observed twelve Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of supererogatory Salahs in addition to the obligatory ones. These are called Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet). The twelve Rak`ahs are as follows: Four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs, two Rak`ahs after the Zhuhr Prayer, two after the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, two after the `Isha' (Night) Prayer, and two before the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. It is preferable to offer Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib at home; however, there is nothing wrong with offering them in the Masjid (mosque). They are stressed Sunnah in residence; but when setting out on a journey, it is preferable not to offer them except for the two Rak`ahs before the Fajr Prayer and Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), which are offered even during a journey. It is Mustahab (desirable) to offer four Rak`ahs before the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, two Rak`ahs before the Maghrib Prayer, and two before the `Isha' Prayer, but they are not part of Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib. The Prophet (peace be upon him)

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said: (May Allah have mercy on a person who performs four Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer.) He (peace be upon him) also said: (Pray (two supererogatory Rak`ahs) before the Maghrib Prayer. He (the Prophet) said it three times, and at the third time he said: 'For those who wish to do it.') He (peace be upon him) also said: (Between every two calls (Adhan [call to Prayer] and Iqamah [call to start the Prayer]) a Salah. He repeated it twice.) This includes the Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers, so it

is Mustahab to offer two Rak`ahs before each of them between the Adhan and the Iqamah. It is also Mustahab to offer four Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer, but they are not of Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib because the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not observe them on a regular basis. But they are still desirable due to the Prophet's command.



**Q: A questioner asks: What are the supererogatory Prayers that the worshipper must perform with consistency before and after the obligatory Prayers? Is there a specified number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) to be performed? Because sometimes I pray five Rak`ahs and sometimes four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer. Please guide me to what is right, may Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** The supererogatory Prayers that are to be performed with the obligatory Prayers, and that the Prophet (peace be upon him)

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used to perform with consistency, are twelve Rak`ahs. These are called: Al-Rawatib (supererogatory Prayers that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet), and are also called Nafilahs (supererogatory Prayers). The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to perform them regularly according to what was narrated by Ibn `Umar, `Aishah, Um Habibah and others (may Allah be pleased with them). These Prayers are: four Rak`ahs with two Taslims (salutations of peace ending the Prayer) before Zhuhr Prayer and two after Zhuhr Prayer, two after Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, two after `Isha' (Night) Prayer, and two before Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. These are called Al-Rawatib, and are also called the stressed Nafilahs.

Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) said: [\(I observed that the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) used to pray ten Rak`ahs: two before Zhuhr Prayer, and two after it, two after Maghrib Prayer at home, two after `Isha' Prayer at home and two before Fajr Prayer which was a time when no one visited the Prophet; Hafsaah told me that he used to pray two Rak`ahs when the Mu'adhin \(caller to Prayer\) calls to Fajr Prayer at dawn; \(he also used to pray two Rak`ahs at home after Jumu`ah \(Friday\) Prayer.\) He said: \(As for the supererogatory Prayers associated with Maghrib, `Isha' and Fajr Prayers, he used to perform them at home.\) And `Aishah \(may Allah be pleased with her\) also narrated: \(He \(peace be upon him\) used to pray](#)

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[four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr Prayer; he never abandoned them.\)](#) This was learnt by both `Aishah and Um Salamah, which means that performing four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr Prayer is better, and performing two Rak`ahs only as Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) reported is sufficient. But according to what was narrated by `Aishah and Um Habibah (may Allah be pleased with them), he (peace be upon him) used to pray four Rak`ahs with two Taslims before Zhuhr Prayer, making the sum of the Rak`ahs twelve, which is the best; and this is what was known about the Prophet (peace be upon him). It is also Mustahab (desirable) to pray four Rak`ahs after Zhuhr Prayer, by adding two Rak`ahs after it, because Um Habibah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whoever prays four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr Prayer and four Rak`ahs after it, Allah will shield him against Hellfire;\)](#) the same Hadith was also narrated as: [\(Whoever performs four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr Prayer and four after it with consistency, Allah will shield him against Hellfire,\)](#) which means performing them as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs, according to the Hadith which states: [\(The \(optional\) Salah \(Prayer\) by night and day should consist](#)

of pairs of Rak`ahs.) It is also Mustahab to pray four Rak`ahs before `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer,

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but this is not considered one of the Rawatib; rather, it is only Mustahab, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (May Allah have mercy on a man who performs four Rak`ahs before `Asr Prayer.) One can also perform two Rak`ahs before Maghrib Prayer after the Adhan (call to Prayer), and two before `Isha' Prayer after the Adhan, which are also Mustahab, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ("Between every two Adhans there is a Salah to be performed; between every two Adhans there is a Salah to be performed." Then he said: "For whoever wishes this",) in order to inform people that it is not Wajib (obligatory), but Mustahab. Therefore, these are Mustahab Prayers, not Rawatib: two Rak`ahs before Maghrib Prayer, two before `Isha' Prayer, four before `Asr Prayer, and two Rak`ahs to be performed in addition to the two regular Rak`ahs that are performed after Zhuhr Prayer. All these Prayers are Mustahab, not Wajib. It is also Mustahab to perform Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) with consistency; it consists of two Rak`ahs and is a stressed Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet), because the Prophet (peace be upon him) advised a number of his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) to perform it; Abu Dhar narrated: (In the morning Sadaqah (voluntary charity) is due from every joint in the body of every one of you: Each Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]") is considered a Sadaqah; and each Tahlil (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]") is considered a Sadaqah; and each Tahmid (saying: "Alhamdu lillah [All praise is due to Allah]") is considered a Sadaqah; and each Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") is considered a Sadaqah; and the propagation of virtue is a Sadaqah; and the prevention of vice is a Sadaqah; and performing two Rak`ahs before noon serves as sufficient for this.) Related by Muslim in

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his Sahih (authentic) Hadith Book. This shows the importance of these two Rak`ahs, and that they can stand for the Sadaqahs that are to be given for one's joints. Each one of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) and Abu Al-Darda' used to say: (The Prophet (peace be upon him) advised me to perform Salat-ul-Duha; and in another narration they said: advised me to perform the two Rak`ahs of Salat-ul-Duha.) `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: (The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pray Salat-ul-Duha as four Rak`ahs, or to add as Allah wills.) Thus Salat-ul-Duha is a stressed Sunnah that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to perform sometimes and to abandon in other times so as not to impose hardship upon his Ummah (nation based on one creed); but he recommended that it should be performed, and his recommendation is prior to his action, which shows that it must be performed every day at any time from sunrise until before noon, and it is better to perform it when the sun becomes hotter, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (The Prayer of those who are penitent is observed when the weaned camels feel the heat of the sun,) which means that it is better to pray it during the rise of the sun and when it is very

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hot; and there is no problem with performing it after the sun has risen high in the sky.



**Q: A questioner says: I beg Your Eminence's pardon to clarify to us the Prayers that are called Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory Prayers that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet), the other supererogatory Prayers that are not Rawatib, and the Prayers that are called Nafilahs (supererogatory). Please explain this because we are confused about the number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) that are to be performed concerning these Prayers, may Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib are twelve Rak`ahs: two before Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, four before Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer and two after it, two after Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, and two after `Isha' (Night) Prayer. These are twelve Rak`ahs; and it is better to pray four Rak`ahs after Zhuhr in addition to the four that are performed before it, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whoever prays four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr Prayer and four Rak`ahs after it, Allah will shield him against Hellfire.\)](#) It is also Mustahab (desirable) to pray four Rak`ahs with two Taslims (salutations of peace ending the Prayer) before `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(May Allah have mercy on a man who performs four Rak`ahs before `Asr Prayer.\)](#) It is Mustahab as well to pray two Rak`ahs between the Adhan (call to Prayer) and the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer) of Maghrib Prayer, and two Rak`ahs after the Adhan of `Isha' Prayer before the Iqamah, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Between every two Adhans there is a Salah \(Prayer\) to be performed; between every two Adhans there is a Salah to be performed. Then he said: For whoever](#)

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[wishes this;](#)) he also said: [\(Pray \(two supererogatory Rak`ahs\) before Maghrib Prayer. He said it three times, and at the third time he said: This applies to those who wish to do it.\)](#) Performing Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) is also Mustahab with two, four, six, eight or more Rak`ahs. It is a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet). Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) is also a Sunnah that is to be performed with any possible number of Rak`ahs: three, five, seven or more; and it is better to perform it with eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do. He said: [\(The \(optional\) Salah during the night should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs, but if one of you fears that dawn is approaching, he should pray one Rak`ah, which will make his Salah be of an odd number.\)](#) May Allah grant us all success.



### 109- Times of offering Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib

**Q: What are the number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) and the way of offering Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory Prayers that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet)? Does the time of the supererogatory Rak`ahs that are offered after Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer and Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer extend until the Adhan (call) of the next Prayer, i.e. `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer and `Isha' (Night) Prayer respectively?**

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**Is it permissible to offer a supererogatory Prayer after the Adhan, before praying `Asr or `Isha?**

**A:** Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib legislated by Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) that are offered along with the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers, which the Prophet (peace be upon him) regularly performed while resident - not traveling - are twelve Rak`ahs (units of Prayer): (1) four before Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer after midday, concluding every two Rak`ahs with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer); (2) two after Zhuhr Prayer concluding them with Taslim, this makes six; (3) two after Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer; (4) two after `Isha' (Night) Prayer; (5) and two before Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. These are the supererogatory Prayers that were regularly performed by the Prophet (peace be upon him) when he was resident. During his travels, he (peace be upon him) used to cease performing them all except the two supererogatory Rak`ahs before Fajr Prayer, which he (peace be upon him) maintained whether traveling or resident. In addition to the previously mentioned supererogatory Prayers, it is recommended for the Muslim to pray four Rak`ahs before `Asr Prayer, after the time of `Asr is due, concluding every two Rak`ahs with Taslim, acting upon the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(May Allah have mercy on a person who performs four Rak`ahs before `Asr \(Prayer\).\)](#) Yet these four Rak`ahs are not counted among Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib. [\(It is reported that the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) might offer two or four Rak`ahs before `Asr.\)](#) They were not regularly performed by the Prophet (peace be upon him), but it is Mustahab (desirable) to offer them.

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Thus, it is better for the believer, man or woman, to observe these four Rak`ahs before `Asr Prayer, concluding every two with Taslim. It is also Mustahab to offer two before Maghrib Prayer - after the Adhan and before Iqamah (call to start the Prayer). The same applies to 'Isha' Prayer, two Rak`ahs can be offered after the Adhan and before praying `Isha'. This is preferred, but it is not among the regularly performed supererogatory Prayers. After announcing the Adhan of Maghrib or `Isha', a worshiper who is sitting in the Masjid (mosque) waiting for the Prayer to start is recommended to rise and offer two Rak`ahs before it starts. If the worshiper offers more, this is permissible. Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) is also Mustahab after praying 'Isha' and its time extends until the end of the night. There is no limit for the number of its Rak`ahs; a worshiper may pray as many Rak`ahs as Allah makes him able to perform, even if it is only one Rak`ah offered as Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). Praying more is better; praying three, five, seven, or more Rak`ahs as Witr is better, concluding every two with Taslim. This is the preferred pattern. The best number of Rak`ahs

to offer is eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs, but praying more or less is permissible, with every two Rak`ahs being concluded with Taslim, so acting upon the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him). It is permissible to delay performing the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) after Zhuhr Prayer, because its time extends until the Adhan of `Asr Prayer. So in case of any delay it can be offered before `Asr Prayer, but before the start of the time of `Asr Prayer.

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The case is the same for Maghrib Prayer; it is permissible to delay performing its Sunnah Ratibah until the time before the red twilight disappears - close to `Isha'. However, it is better to pray it early before any hindrance arises. This is the best course of action; nevertheless, its prescribed time extends until the disappearance of the red twilight, i.e. evening time. Similarly, the Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed after an obligatory Prayer) of Zhuhr Prayer extends until the time of `Asr Prayer starts. The better course of action is to offer these supererogatory Prayers early before any hindrance arises and to pray them at home, but there is nothing wrong with praying them at the Masjid, yet at home is better.



## 110- Number of Rak`ahs of Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib and clarification of their importance

**Q: Please inform us about Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory Prayers that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet), concerning the number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) and their importance, may Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** The supererogatory Prayers that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to perform with consistency are twelve Rak`ahs by night and day, and these are called Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib that are performed with the obligatory Prayers. These are: four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer and two after it, two after Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, two after `Isha' (Night) Prayer, and two before Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, according to the Hadiths that were narrated by `Aishah, Ibn `Umar and

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Um Habibah (may Allah be pleased with them) and others. These are: four Rak`ahs with two Taslims (salutations of peace ending the Prayer) before Zhuhr Prayer and two after it with one Taslim -and it is better to pray four Rak`ahs after Zhuhr Prayer, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whoever prays four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr Prayer and four Rak`ahs after it, Allah will shield him against Hellfire.\)](#) Related by Imam Ahmad and Ahl-ul-Sunan (authors of Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes) through good Isnad (chain of narrators), and narrated by Um Habibah (may Allah be pleased with her)-; two Rak`ahs after Maghrib Prayer, two after `Isha' Prayer and two before Fajr Prayer. This was narrated by Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim), that is, it was agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim, through the narration of Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them), and it was also narrated by other people beside Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them), such as `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) and others. It is also Mustahab (desirable) to pray four Rak`ahs before `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, according to the Hadith: [\(May Allah have mercy on a man who performs four Rak`ahs before `Asr Prayer.\)](#) [\(It was also reported that the Prophet did this, and it was also reported that he \(peace be upon him\) used to do this sometimes,\)](#) which shows that it is Mustahab to perform four Rak`ahs before `Asr Prayer with two Taslims, which is not one of Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib. It is Mustahab as well to pray two Rak`ahs between the two Adhans (calls to Prayer) -that is, after the Adhan for Maghrib Prayer- and two Rak`ahs after the Adhan for `Isha' Prayer. This is to be done if the Adhan is performed while the worshipper is in the Masjid (mosque),

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and it also applies to `Isha' Prayer; if one enters the Masjid after the Adhan, he should pray Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque), and he may also pray additional Rak`ahs before the Salah (Prayer) starts. As for Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, two Rak`ahs only are to be performed before it, and it is better to pray them at home; but if he reaches the Masjid before the Salah starts, that is, after the arrival of the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) and before the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer), he should perform Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid; and if he prays these two Rak`ahs in the Masjid, they suffice for Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid, because the Prophet (peace be upon him)



said: (There is no Prayer (to be offered) after dawn except the (missed) two supererogatory Rak`ahs of the Fajr Prayer.) Thus if one misses them, he can pray them after Fajr Prayer, and if he does not manage to pray them before dawn, he can pray them after dawn or after sunrise.



**Q: A questioner says: Please state Al-Rawatib (supererogatory Prayers that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) and the supererogatory Prayers that are to be performed before and after each obligatory Prayer.**

**A:** Al-Rawatib that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to perform with consistency with the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers are twelve Rak`ahs (units of Prayer): four before Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer with two Taslims (salutations of peace ending the Prayer),

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two after Zhuhr Prayer with one Talsim, two after Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, two after `Isha' (Night) Prayer, and two before Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. These are twelve Rak`ahs, which the Prophet (peace be upon him) never abandoned while not traveling, but used to abandon while traveling, except the two Rak`ahs before Fajr Prayer, he used to pray them in all cases. He also used to pray Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) and Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) whether he was at home or traveling. It is also Mustahab (desirable) to perform four Rak`ahs before `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, which is not considered one of Al-Rawatib, but the Prophet (peace be upon him) said about it: [\(May Allah have mercy on a man who performs four Rak`ahs before `Asr Prayer.\)](#) It is also prescribed for the worshipper who enters the Masjid (mosque) to pray Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque), and it suffices for the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) if it happens to be at the same time in which the Sunnah Ratibah is to be performed. For example, if someone enters the Masjid after the Adhan (call to Prayer) of Zhuhr Prayer and prays four Rak`ahs, they suffice for both the Sunnah Ratibah and Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid; also if someone enters the Masjid after the Adhan for Fajr Prayer and prays the Sunnah Ratibah of Fajr Prayer, it suffices for Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid, and he may intend them both. A Prayer between the two Adhans is also Mustahab, that is, between the Adhan and the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer). Thus if someone has performed the regular supererogatory Prayer after Zawal (midday) and the Adhan was late, and then it was called, he may perform two Rak`ahs between the Adhan and the Iqamah beside the supererogatory Prayer that he has performed after Zawal and before the Adhan. This also applies if one prays the two regular supererogatory Rak`ahs before Fajr Prayer, and then he arrives at the Masjid, he may

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pray two Rak`ahs as Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid if the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) has not started the Salah (Prayer). Also if the Adhan is called while the worshipper is still in the Masjid after Maghrib Prayer, he may pray two Rak`ahs before the Salah; likewise, if the Adhan for `Isha' Prayer is called while he is in the Masjid, he may pray two Rak`ahs before the Salah; and if he enters the Masjid and prays Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid, it suffices, and there is no problem if he prays more as well.



### 111- Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib

**Q: What are Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory Prayers that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet)? In the four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) before the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer and before the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, should I perform Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib consist of twelve Rak`ahs: four before the Zhuhr Prayer with two Taslims, two after it with one Taslim, two after the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer with one Taslim, two after the `Isha' (Night) Prayer with one Taslim, and two before the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer with one Taslim. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to regularly observe these twelve Rak`ahs when he was in residence. He (peace be upon him) said: [\(Allah will build a house in Paradise to anyone who prays twelve \(supererogatory\) Rak`ahs](#)

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[every day and night.](#)) Another Hadith explained that these twelve Rak`ahs are Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib. Anyone who regularly observes them will be greatly rewarded, as this Hadith indicates that Allah will build a house in Paradise for the person who voluntarily observes these twelve Rak`ahs: four before the Zhuhr Prayer with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs, two after the Zhuhr Prayer, two after the Maghrib Prayer, two after the `Isha' Prayer, and two before the Fajr Prayer. If a person performs four Rak`ahs after the Zhuhr Prayer, this is better, for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Allah will make the Fire forbidden to anyone who regularly performs four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr Prayer and four after it.\)](#) Only two and not four after the Zhuhr are of Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib, but if a person adds another two Rak`ahs, acting upon the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him), this is better. It is reported on the authority of Um Habibah bint Abu Sufyan, Mother of the Believers (may Allah be pleased with her), that she heard the Prophet (peace be upon him) saying: [\(Allah will make the Fire forbidden to anyone who regularly performs four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr Prayer and four after it.\)](#) It is also Mustahab (desirable) to perform four Rak`ahs, with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs, before the `Asr Prayer, but they are not of Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib.

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(May Allah have mercy on a person who performs four Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer.\)](#) (Related by Ahmad, Al-Tirmidhy and the Six Hadith Compilers [Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, Al-Tirmidhy, Al-Nasa'y, and Ibn Majah] through an authentic Sanad [chain of narrators] on the authority of Ibn `Umar) It is also Mustahab to perform a Salah (Prayer) between every Adhan (call to Prayer) and Iqamah (call to start the Prayer). It is Mustahab to perform two Rak`ahs between the Adhan and Iqamah of the Maghrib Prayer and `Isha' Prayer, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\('Between every two calls \(Adhan and Iqamah\), there is a Salah.' He repeated it twice, and on the third time he said, 'This applies to those who wish to do it.'\)](#) He (peace be upon him) also said: [\('Pray before the Maghrib, pray before the Maghrib.'](#) Then, he (peace

be upon him) said, 'For whoever wishes.')

The Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet, may Allah be pleased with them) used to perform two Rak`ahs after the Maghrib Prayer and two Rak`ahs after the Adhan of the Maghrib Prayer. This is a supererogatory Salah, but not one of Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib. Likewise, the four Rak`ahs after the Zhuhr Prayer and the four before the `Asr Prayer are supererogatory Salaha, but not of Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib, with the exception of the two after the Zhuhr Prayer. Those who are not of Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib were not exhorted or regularly observed by the Prophet (peace be upon him). However, it is preferable for the Mu'min (believer) to perform four Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(May Allah have mercy on a person who performs four Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer.\)](#) It is better to observe four Ra`kahs before the `Asr Prayer, acting upon the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

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Likewise, it is preferable to observe two Ra`ahs between the Adhan and Iqamah of the Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers. Also, it is Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) to perform Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), which lasts from the time when the sun rises high in the sky up until it is directly overhead (at its zenith). A person may offer two, four, or more Rak`ahs in Salat-ul-Duha as the Prophet (peace be upon him) occasionally did. He (peace be upon him) recommended it for a group of his Sahabah, so it is Mustahab to perform it whether a person is traveling or in residence. Similarly, it is Sunnah to perform Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) after the `Isha' Prayer; a person may pray as much as Allah makes easy for him and then end with one Rak`ah as Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). A person may perform three, five, seven, nine, eleven, thirteen, or more Rak`ahs either at the beginning, middle, or end of the night, following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him), who used to perform Tahajjud and end with Witr. He (peace be upon him) would sometimes perform Witr at the beginning of the night, and would other times perform it in the middle of the night. Then at the end of his lifetime, he (peace be upon him) would perform Tahajjud and Witr in the last part of the night. This is the best option, if possible. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(If a person is afraid that they may not get up in the last part of the night, they should observe Witr in the first part of it; and if a person is eager to get up in the last part of it, they should observe Witr at the end of the night, for Salah at the end of the night is witnessed \(by the angels\) and that is preferable.\)](#) The minimum number of Rak`ahs that a person can perform in Witr is

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one Rak`ah after the supererogatory Salah performed after the `Isha' Prayer, though it is better to perform Witr in three or more Rak`ahs, performing Taslim after every two Rak`ahs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) usually performed eleven Rak`ahs in Tahajjud, making Taslim after every two Rak`ahs and ending with one Rak`ah as Witr in the last part of the night. He sometimes performed thirteen Rak`ahs, with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs. To perform Taslim after every two Rak`ahs is the best option. However, there is nothing wrong if a person performs three, five, or seven consecutive Rak`ahs and sits at the end of them, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) sometimes did that. He (peace be upon him) sometimes performed seven consecutive Rak`ahs and sometimes he would sit during the sixth Rak`ah to recite the first Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of Prayer) and then stand up to perform the seventh Rak`ah. It is also permissible for a person to perform nine consecutive Rak`ahs, sit during the eighth Rak`ah to recite the first Tashahhud, and then stand up to perform the ninth Rak`ah. However, as we stated earlier, the best option is to perform Taslim after every two Rak`ahs. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) used to perform eleven Rak`ahs at night, with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs and one as Witr.\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Night Salah](#)

consists of twos (two Rak`ahs followed by two). If you fear

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that dawn is about to break, pray one Rak`ah that makes the Salah you have offered odd-numbered.﴾ This is the best. If a person fears being unable to get up at the end of the night, they should offer Tahajjud, with three, five, or more Rak`ahs, with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs, before going to sleep, to be on the safe side. May Allah grant us all success.



## 112- Clarification of the time of the Sunnah Ratibah of Zhuhr Prayer and prompting its performance

**Q: I heard that there are supererogatory Rawatib (supererogatory Prayers that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet), which are twelve Rak`ahs, including Prayers that are performed before and after Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer and after Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer. My question is: Does the word "before" Zhuhr Prayer mean that it is to be performed after the Adhan (call to Prayer) for Zhuhr Prayer, or before I pray it, or before the Adhan? Please inform me about its exact time and about these supererogatory Prayers, may Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Al-Rawatib are twelve Rak`ahs as the questioner mentioned, including four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr Prayer and two after it, in addition to two Rak`ahs after Maghrib Prayer, two after `Isha' (Night) Prayer and two before Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. These Prayers are called: Al-Rawatib, and the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to perform them with consistency. It was authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him)

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said: [\(Whoever prays twelve Rak`ahs every night and day, a house is built for him in Paradise; the same Hadith was narrated with adding: twelve supererogatory Rak`ahs.\)](#) Al-Tirmidhy (may Allah be merciful to him) added: These Prayers are the Rawatib. It is thus prescribed for every believer, whether man or woman, to perform these Rawatib with consistency, following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Additionally, praying four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr Prayer -which means after Zawal (midday)- even before the Adhan, as long as it is after Zawal, suffices the purpose; and they can also be prayed after the Adhan. Anyway, it should be performed with two Taslims (salutations of peace ending the Prayer) before the obligatory Prayer and with one Taslim after it. Two Rak`ahs are also to be performed after Maghrib Prayer, two after `Isha' Prayer and two before Fajr Prayer. These are the Rawatib.



**Q: The supererogatory Salah (Prayer) of the `Isha' (Night), `Asr (Afternoon), and Zhuhr (Noon) are four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) each. I saw some people in the Masjid (mosque) who pray the supererogatory Salah of the `Isha', `Asr, and Zhuhr with four Rak`ahs each. They pray two Rak`ahs at first, ending their Salah with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), then they move a step to the right or the left or backwards and pray the other two Rak`ahs. Is this Salah valid? And did the Prophet (peace be upon him) do this or not?**

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**A:** Concerning the Zhuhr Prayer, it was authentically reported that `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated that: [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) never abandoned praying four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer.\)](#) (Related by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih) Um Habibah, Mother of the Believers (may Allah be pleased with her), also narrated what was related by Al-Tirmidhy, that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to regularly pray twelve supererogatory Rak`ahs by night and day. He mentioned four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer, which indicates that it is Mustahab (desirable) to pray four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer. It is better to pray them in pairs, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said in the Sahih (authentic) Hadith: [\(The \(optional\) Salah by night and day should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs.\)](#) As for moving forward and backward, or taking a step to the right or to the left, this was only reported in some Da`if (weak) Hadiths. I do not know anything reported in this respect that indicates that this is Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet). Rather, some Da`if Hadiths mentioned moving forward, backward, to the right or to the left, about which some scholars stated that this is done so that these spots witness the worship that is performed upon them. However, I do not know anything that was authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) in this respect. There is nothing wrong if the worshipper performs the Sunnah Prayer in one place, because there is no evidence on the desirability of moving from one place to another to perform the last two Rak`ahs, whether to the right, to the left or backwards. The worshipper may do this, and I think that

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there is nothing wrong with doing this, but I have no evidence to support that it is Mustahab or an act of obedience to Allah. This also applies to all the other Prayers. It is also Sunnah to pray four Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer, because it was authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(May Allah have mercy on a person who performs four Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer.\)](#) (Related by Ahmad, Al-Tirmidhy, and others through a good Isnad [chain of narrators]) As for the supererogatory Salah after the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, it consists of only two Rak`ahs, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pray two Rak`ahs after the Maghrib Prayer. Also the supererogatory Salah after the `Isha' Prayer is two Rak`ahs and it is permissible to pray more Rak`ahs after the Maghrib or the `Isha' Prayers, even if a person prays ten or twenty Rak`ahs; there is no problem with this. The supererogatory Salahs that are known from the Prophet (peace be upon him) and that he used to perform with consistency are two Rak`ahs after the Maghrib and other two Rak`ahs after the `Isha' Prayer, in addition to two Rak`ahs before the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer which he

used to perform at home and then leave home to perform the Fajr Prayer. It was authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Anyone who prays twelve supererogatory Rak`ahs by night and day will have a house built for them in the Jannah \(Paradise\).\)](#) (Related by Muslim in his Sahih) It was also related by Al-Tirmidhy with this addition: [\(four Rak`ahs before](#)

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[the Zhuhr Prayer and two after it, two after the Maghrib Prayer, two after the `Isha' Prayer and two before the Fajr Prayer.\)](#) These are called Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet). Ibn `Umar also narrated the same Hadith but with ten Rak`ahs, mentioning two Rak`ahs only before the Zhuhr Prayer, while `Aishah and others narrated what proves that they are twelve Rak`ahs, and that they are four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer, making Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib twelve Rak`ahs. The way of reconciliation between the two Hadiths can be that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used sometimes to pray two Rak`ahs before Zhuhr, as Ibn `Umar mentioned, making the sum of Rak`ahs of Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib ten, and sometimes to pray four Rak`ahs as mentioned by `Aishah and others. Therefore, there is in fact no contradiction or controversy between the two Hadiths.





**Q: It was reported in some narrations that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to perform four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) before the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer and four Rak`ahs before the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer. Should this be done before or after the Adhan (call to Prayer)?**

**A:** It was authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pray four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer, after Zawal (midday), after the Adhan. This is a Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis), with Taslim (salutations of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs. He used also to perform two Rak`ahs after the Zhuhr Prayer, which is a Sunnah Ratibah too. It is also better to pray four Rak`ahs after the Zhuhr Prayer, because

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the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(If anyone regularly performs four Rak`ah before the Zhuhr Prayer and four after it, Allah will shield them against Hellfire.\)](#) This is after Zawal. Four Rak`ahs are also to be performed before the `Asr Prayer, because it was reported [\(that the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) used to pray four Rak`ahs.\)](#) It was authentically reported that he (peace be upon him) said: [\(May Allah have mercy on a person who performs four Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer;\)](#) that is, with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs.



### 113- Ruling on praying four consecutive Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer

**Q: Concerning the supererogatory Salah (Prayer) of the Zhuhr (Noon), does it contain a first Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of Prayer), or is it performed as four consecutive Rak`ahs (units of Prayer)? Please benefit us, may Allah benefit you!**

**A:** The supererogatory Salah is to be performed in pairs of Rak`ahs, that is, two Rak`ahs ending with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer), and then another two Rak`ahs ending with Taslim. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) Salah by night and day should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs.\)](#) Thus the supererogatory Salah before the Zhuhr is four Rak`ahs with two Taslims, and after the Zhuhr four Rak`ahs with two Taslims. There is nothing wrong if the worshipper prays two Rak`ahs only after the Zhuhr Prayer. That is the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis), but it is better to pray four Rak`ahs

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because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(If anyone regularly performs four Rak`ah before the Zhuhr Prayer and four after it, Allah will shield them against Hellfire.\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pray four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer and two after it; this is the Sunnah Ratibah. But it is better to perform four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer and four after it, making the sum eight Rak`ahs. Whoever performs this will have their reward; if a person prays four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer and four after it, Allah will shield them against Hellfire. These four Rak`ahs should be performed in pairs, offering Taslim after each two Rak`ahs. This is the action that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do.



### 114- Sunnah Ratibah of Zhuhr Prayer

**Q: What is the merit of offering four supererogatory Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) before and after the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer? Is it permissible to offer the four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer with one Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer)?**

**A:** The Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) before the Zhuhr Prayer is four Rak`ahs, which the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to regularly perform. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) would not leave \(observing\) four \(Rak`ahs\) before the Zhuhr Prayer and two after it.\)](#) The Sunnah is four Rak`ahs

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before the Zhuhr Prayer with two Taslims and two after it with one Taslim. If a person offers four Rak`ahs after the Zhuhr Prayer, this is preferable, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Allah will make the Fire forbidden to anyone who regularly performs four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr Prayer and four after it.\)](#) The best option is to offer four Rak`ahs before and after the Zhuhr Prayer, with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs, as combining the four Rak`ahs with one Taslim is Makruh (reprehensible). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The optional Salah \(Prayer\) by night and day is twos by twos \(two Rak`ahs followed by two\).\)](#) Likewise, it is preferable to offer, before the `Asr Prayer, four Rak`ahs with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(May Allah have mercy on a person who performs four Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer.\)](#) Similarly, a person may offer two Rak`ahs after the `Isha' Prayer, two after the Maghrib Prayer, and two after the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do. A person may offer many Rak`ahs between the Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers or during the night, with no limit, because this is a time for offering supererogatory acts of worship. However, it is better to offer eleven or twelve Rak`ahs, with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs and one as Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) during the night. It is also permissible to offer as many as fifty, one hundred, or more Rak`ahs and end with one Rak`ah as Witr.

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The optional Salah \(Prayer\) by night and day is twos by twos.\)](#) He (peace be upon him) did not limit the number of Rak`ahs for optional night Salah, but it is preferable to stick to eleven or thirteen Rak`ahs, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do during Ramadan and at other times.



**Q: A questioner asks about the supererogatory Salah (Prayer) before and after the obligatory Zhuhr (Noon). Is it permissible to perform it in four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer)?**

**A:** The Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) associated with the Zhuhr Prayer consists of four Rak`ahs with two Taslims (salutations of peace ending the Prayer) before the Zhuhr Prayer, and two after it. This is the Sunnah Ratibah that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to perform on a regular basis. However, it is better to pray four Rak`ahs with two Taslims after the Zhuhr Prayer, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [﴿If anyone regularly performs four Rak`ah before the Zhuhr Prayer and four after it, Allah will shield them against Hellfire.﴾](#) (Related by Imam Ahmad and Ahl-ul-Sunan (authors of Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes) through authentic Isnad (chain of narrators), on the authority of Um Habibah [may Allah be pleased with her]). However, the Sunnah Ratibah that the Prophet (peace be upon) used to regularly perform for the Zhuhr Prayer is four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer and two after it, with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs. But it is better to perform also four Rak`ahs with two Taslims after the Zhuhr Prayer,

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according to the previously mentioned Hadith.



**Q: Are the four supererogatory Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) before the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer performed with one Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) or with two Taslims?**

**A:** The Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) is to perform the four Rak`ahs with two Taslims, meaning with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs, whether for Zhuhr or any other Prayer. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) Salah \(Prayer\) by night and day should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs.\)](#) The worshipper, therefore, should pray four Rak`ahs with two Taslims before the Zhuhr Prayer, as well as before the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer. This is the Sunnah in addition to the four Rak`ahs with two Taslims after the Zhuhr Prayer. This is better.





### 115- Ruling on performing the Ratibah after Iqamah

**Q: Is it permissible to perform the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) between the Adhan (call to Prayer) and the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer), or should it be performed after the Iqamah like the Ratibah of the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer? And is it permissible to perform it after Iqamah and then to perform the obligatory Salah (Prayer), or should the obligatory Salah be performed first if the Iqamah has already been called? May Allah reward you with the best.**

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**A:** The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: **(If the Iqamah for Salah is pronounced, there is no Salah (should be performed) except the obligatory one.)** This means that after the Iqamah, no Nafilah (supererogatory Prayer) should be performed. Thus if the worshipper has offered Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer) and then the Iqamah is pronounced, he should discontinue his Salah, because the time after Iqamah is not for offering Nafilahs, but for preparing oneself for the obligatory Salah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: **(If the Iqamah for Salah is pronounced, there is no Salah (should be performed) except the obligatory one.)** Therefore, if the Iqamah is called while the worshipper is still performing the Nafilah, he should discontinue it and get ready for the obligatory Salah, unless he is about to finish the Nafilah, that is, unless he has offered the second Ruku` (bowing), because in this case the Salah is almost finished.



### 116- Ruling on performing the Ratibah before Adhan

**Q: Is it permissible to perform the Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer) half or quarter of an hour before the Adhan (call to Prayer)? Please guide me, may Allah reward you with the best, especially with regard to Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer.**

**A:** The Sunnah Qabliyyah should be performed after the time for the obligatory Salah (Prayer) begins; the Sunnah Qabliyyah of the Maghrib, `Asr (Afternoon), Zhuhr (Noon), Fajr (Dawn), and `Isha' (Night) Prayers should all be performed after the time

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for the obligatory Salah begins. Praying before the time is due, however, is considered an additional supererogatory Salah. A person may pray at any time other than that when it is not permissible to offer supererogatory Salah, such as praying Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) before the sun is directly overhead (at its zenith), or praying before the time of the `Asr begins. These are all considered additional supererogatory Salahs. The time before the Maghrib Prayer; however, is a time when it is not permissible to offer supererogatory Salah, except for a reason; such as Salat-ul-Kusuf (Prayer during a solar eclipse), Salat-ul-Tawaf (two-unit Prayer performed after circumambulating the Ka`bah) for the one who circumambulates the Ka`bah after the `Asr Prayer, and Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque). Also there is nothing wrong with praying before the `Isha' Prayer because it is a time when it is permissible to perform supererogatory Salah; however, the Sunnah Qabliyyah of the `Isha' Prayer is to be performed after twilight after the time for `Isha' Prayer begins. The Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) of the `Isha' Prayer cannot be performed before the time for the `Isha' Prayer begins. If a person prayed before the time for `Isha' Prayer begins, this is considered supererogatory Salah and not Ratibah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: **«Pray (two supererogatory Rak`ahs [units of Prayer]) before the Maghrib Prayer. He repeated it three times, and on the third time he said: "This is for those who wish to do so.»** He also stated: **«Between every two Adhans (i.e. Adhan and Iqamah) there is a Salah to be performed; between every two Adhans there is a Salah to be performed. Then he said on the third time: "For whoever wishes.»** These Hadiths; therefore, show the desirability of praying before the Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers.



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**Q: A questioner from Tanumah asks: Is it permissible to pray Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) before the Adhan (call to Prayer)?**

**A:** Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib should be performed after the Adhan, the Sunnah (supererogatory) Prayer of the Zhuhr is four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) before it, and two or four after it; the Sunnah Prayer of the Fajr (Dawn) is two Rak`ahs after it; while the Sunnah Prayer of the Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) is two Rak`ahs after each of them. If the worshiper wishes to pray before the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, they may perform four Rak`ahs after the time of the `Asr Prayer starts, and it is better to perform them with two Taslims (salutations of peace ending the Prayer). But it is not permissible to perform this Sunnah Prayer before the Adhan, because it will not be valid; the Sunnah Prayer will not be considered one of Al-Rawatib if it is performed before the time of Prayer starts. For example, if the worshiper performs it before the Adhan of the `Isha' Prayer, it will be considered a supererogatory Prayer that is performed between the Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers. The same applies if the worshiper prays before the time of the Zhuhr Prayer starts; it will be considered a part of Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), if it is before the sun has risen directly overhead (at its zenith). If the sun is already at its zenith, however, no supererogatory Salah (Prayer) should be offered because this is a time when it is not permissible to offer except the occasional Salahs that are offered for specific reasons.





**Q: Is it permissible to pray the Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer) and the Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed after an obligatory Prayer) an hour or half an hour before or after the obligatory Salah (Prayer)?**

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**A:** There is no problem with this as long as the time of the Salah has started. There is nothing wrong with praying the Sunnah Qabliyyah or the Sunnah Ba`diyyah within the time of the Salah, even if it is delayed some time after the Salah or is performed some time before it; such as performing the Sunnah of the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer after Zawal (midday), or the Sunnah Ba`diyyah of the Zhuhr Prayer before the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer. All this is permissible.



### 117- Ruling on praying the Sunnah Ratibah in congregation

**Q: A questioner from Riyadh asks: Is it permissible to perform the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis), such as that of the Zhuhr (Noon) or `Asr (Afternoon) Prayers, in congregation?**

**A:** It is prescribed that the Sunnah Ratibah should not be performed in congregation; rather, it should be performed individually. That is, each person must pray it alone, not with others. However, if some people perform it congregationally, it will be valid, but the action that follows the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him) is to pray it individually. There is nothing reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) or his Companions which states that they performed the Sunnah Ratibah in congregation. Thus, the Sunnah of the Zhuhr, Fajr (Dawn), or Maghrib (Sunset) Prayers should be performed individually; there is no need to perform it congregationally. Concerning Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), however, the Prophet (peace be upon him) sometimes performed it congregationally when visiting some of his Companions; therefore there is nothing wrong with this. As for the Sunnah Ratibah, on the other hand, such as the Sunnah of the Fajr, Maghrib, `Isha' (Night) or Zhuhr Prayers, I do not know that the Prophet (peace be upon him), or his Companions, performed it in congregation. I do not recall

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anything in this respect. It is thus better for worshipers to perform it on their own.



### 118- Clarifying the virtue of praying Sunnah Ratibah at home

**Q:** The questioner from Al-Madinah Al-Nabawiyyah asks: I live in Al-Madinah Al-Nabawiyyah and all praise to Allah for blessing me with the ability of performing the obligatory Salahs (Prayers) in Al-Masjid Al-Nabawy (the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah). My question is about the Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed after an obligatory Prayer); I am confused about two Hadiths: The first one says: [\(A Salah in my Masjid \(mosque\) is better than a thousand Salahs...\)](#)

**While the second Hadith says:** [\(The best Salah a man performs is that which he performs at home, except the obligatory Salah.\)](#) Please guide us, our respected Shaykh.

**A:** To follow the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him), it is better for the believer to perform the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) at home, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said in an Sahih (authentic) Hadith: [\(The best Salah a man performs is that which he performs at home, except the obligatory Salah.\)](#) That is what the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) in Madinah, in his holy Masjid (mosque).

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Your supererogatory Salah at home is better than praying in the Masjid; you will have a great reward because you will be obeying the commands of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and following his guidance. Thus, if you pray the obligatory Salah in the Masjid, it is better to perform the Ratibah at home, because if it is equal to a thousand Salahs if offered in the Masjid, it will be equal to more if performed at home. You will be obeying the Prophet (peace be upon him) and following his way. The same applies to Makkah and anywhere else. Additionally, the ruling on the obligatory Salah applies also to any Salah that is prescribed to be performed congregationally, such as Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan), Salat-ul-Kusuf (Prayer on a solar eclipse) or Janazah (Funeral) Prayer. It is better to perform these Salahs in Masjids or Musallas (places for Prayer) than at home.



### 119- Ruling on praying the Nafilah in the office

**Q: Is praying Nafilah (supererogatory Prayer) in the office, for the employee who works seven hours shifts, better than praying in the Masjid (mosque)? Is it the same as praying at home?**

**A:** If praying Nafilah in the office does not hinder any work, but is done during the employee's spare time, it becomes Mustahab (desirable). In this case, it is good to offer a Nafilah, such as Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon). However, if praying Nafilah will hinder work or reduces it, the employee should go on with his work. His supererogatory Salahs in the office is equal to his supererogatory Salahs at home if they do not hinder, harm or reduce any work.

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In this case, it is a good action, because seizing opportunities and seeking to achieve good deeds is required in the office, while traveling, at home and everywhere else. The believer is required to seize any opportunity to say Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]"), Tahlil (saying: "La ilaha illa Allah [There is no god except Allah]"), Tahmid (saying: "Alhamdu lillah [All praise is due to Allah]"), to recite Qur'an, to pray Nafilah, to call to Allah, to propagate virtue, to prevent vice and so on, anywhere on condition that he does not harm or hinder any work he is supposed to do.



## 120- Ruling on abandoning some of Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib

**Q: A questioner from Riyadh asks: Our respected Shaykh, we are a group of teachers in a school and we pray on two mats in turns. While I am praying there is always someone standing behind me waiting for me to finish my Salah (Prayer), so I leave some of Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory Prayers performed on a regular basis), especially the ones associated with the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer. Sometimes I am not able to perform these Salahs so that my colleagues have a chance to pray after me. How can I make up for these missed Salahs? Is there any sin on me for doing this?**

**A:** Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib of the Zhuhr, Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night) and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers are all supererogatory Salahs; there is no sin in not praying them. All praise is due to Allah! But one should perform them with consistency to follow the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him). It is better for you to pray them

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at your workplace at their due times, then your sister in Islam can pray like you. You should not be hasty; pray the obligatory and the supererogatory Salahs and then your sister can pray like you. Do not be hasty! All praise is due to Allah, there is a long period of time after Zhuhr. This is a great benefit. Leniency in this matter is not permissible. Rather, one should pray four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) with two Taslims (salutations of peace ending the Prayer) before Zhuhr, and two Rak`ahs with one Taslim after Zhuhr; and it is better to perform four Rak`ahs with two Taslims after Zhuhr too. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Anyone who performs four Rak`ah before Zhuhr Prayer and four after it with consistency, Allah will shield him against Hellfire.\)](#) This is a great favor from Allah (Exalted be He). So it is better for all men and women, to pray four Rak`ahs with two Taslims before and after Zhuhr. You can pray them at your workplace at their due times, then your sister can pray after you. This is best and all praise is due to Allah!



## 121- Ruling on performing the Sunnah Ratibah of Zhuhr before Jumu`ah Prayer

**Q: The Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer) of Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer is four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer). Does this apply to Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer too? Or is it a Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) for Zhuhr only? When should the Sunnah Ratibah be performed? Is there any controversy about its time? Please mention the preponderant opinion with its evidence. May Allah reward you with the best.**

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**A:** The four Rak`ahs are the Sunnah Qabliyyah for Zhuhr only, because `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) never missed four \(Rak`ahs\) before Zhuhr Prayer.\)](#) The same was also narrated by Um Habibah (may Allah be pleased with her). Therefore, the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) for the believer, man or woman, is to pray four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr with two Taslims (salutations of peace ending the Prayer) after Zawal (midday). It is better to pray four Rak`ahs with two Taslims after the Adhan (call to Prayer) for Zhuhr, then two Rak`ahs with one Taslim after praying Zhuhr. Also, what is even better and more perfect is to pray four Rak`ahs with two Taslims after Zhuhr too. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said in the Sahih (authentic) Hadith: [\(Anyone who performs four Rak`ah before Zhuhr Prayer and four after it with consistency, Allah will make him forbidden for Hellfire.\)](#) Thus, the Sunnah Ratibah of the Zhuhr Prayer, which the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to perform with consistency, consists of six Rak`ahs: four before Zhuhr, and two after it. Performing four Rak`ahs after it is an additional merit for the worshipper. Jumu`ah Prayer on the other hand, has no Sunnah Qabliyyah, but the believer may pray four, six, eight or more Rak`ahs as they wish, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Anyone who performs Ghusl \(full ritual bath\) and then goes to offer Jumu`ah \(Prayer\) and pray as much as Allah wills for him...\)](#) and he (peace be upon him) did not mention a certain number of Rak`ahs, which indicates that this Salah (Prayer) has no specific number of Rak`ahs.

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Thus, the worshipper can perform what is possible for him: two, four, six or eight Rak`ahs, but he should offer Taslim after each two Rak`ahs, which complies with the Sunnah, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) Salah by night and day should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs.\)](#) This is how the Hadith was related in the Sunan (Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes): [\(The \(optional\) Salah by night and day,\)](#) adding "and day", which is a good narration of reliable authenticity that shows the desirability of performing optional Salah during the day as pairs of Rak`ahs like the Salah performed at night.



## 122- Encouraging the performance of Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib and other supererogatory Salahs

**Q:** A sister from Makkah Al-Mukarramah asks: I pray four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) about ten minutes before `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer and I also pray four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, and two Rak`ahs after it. Also, I pray the two supererogatory Rak`ahs of Wudu' (ablution) before Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer. By the end of the night I pray Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) from 12:00 am till 1:00 am, and finally I perform two Rak`ahs before the Adhan (call to Prayer) for Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. My question is: What is the ruling on these Salahs?

**A:** All these are Sunnah (supererogatory) Salahs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [﴿May Allah have mercy on a person who performs](#)

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[four Rak`ahs before `Asr Prayer.﴾](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also used to pray four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr and two after it. It is better to perform four Rak`ahs after Zhuhr too, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [﴿Anyone who performs four Rak`ah before Zhuhr Prayer and four after it with consistency, Allah will make him forbidden for Hellfire.﴾](#) Thus, praying four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr and four after it is much better.

The Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) of Zhuhr, therefore, consists of six Rak`ahs: four Rak`ahs with two Taslims (salutations of peace ending the Prayer) before Zhuhr Prayer and two Rak`ahs with one Taslim after it. This is the Sunnah Ratibah of Zhuhr. Moreover, it is better to perform four Rak`ahs after Zhuhr as well. Also, it is better to offer two supererogatory Rak`ahs after announcement of the Adhan (call to Prayer) for Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) Prayers, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [﴿Between every two calls \(Adhan \[call to Prayer\] and Iqamah \[call to start the Prayer\]\) there is a Salah to be performed; between every two calls there is a Salah to be performed. Then he \(peace be upon him\) said, 'For whoever wishes.'﴾](#) According to another wording of the Hadith: [﴿Pray before Maghrib. Then he \(peace be upon him\) said, 'For whoever wishes \(to do so\).'﴾](#) This shows that this Salah is Mustahab. The Sunnah Ratibah of Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers is two Rak`ahs after each; while that of Fajr is two Rak`ahs before it.



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123- The time of the four supererogatory Rak`ahs to be performed before `Asr Prayer

**Q:** A questioner from Jeddah says: My question is about the four supererogatory Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) to be performed before `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, about which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(May Allah be merciful to the person who performs four Rak`ahs before `Asr Prayer;\)](#) are they to be performed before the beginning of the time of `Asr Prayer or before the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer) of `Asr Prayer?

**A:** These four Rak`ahs are to be performed after the time of `Asr Prayer had set in and before performing it. [\(May Allah be merciful to the person who performs four Rak`ahs before `Asr Prayer.\)](#) 'Before `Asr Prayer' here means before performing this obligatory Salah (Prayer). The worshipper is to perform the supererogatory Prayer after the beginning of the time of `Asr Prayer and before the Iqamah. These four supererogatory Rak`ahs are to be performed with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs.





**Q: It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (May Allah have mercy on a person who performs four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) before the `Asr Prayer.) He (peace be upon him) also reported that Allah will shield the person who offers four Rak`ahs after the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer and four after it against Hellfire. Are these eight Rak`ahs before and after the Zhuhr Prayer Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis)? Should the four Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer be performed after hearing the Adhan (call to Prayer) or before that?**

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**I hope you will guide us. May Allah bless you.**

**A:** The four Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer should be performed after the time of Prayer is due. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (May Allah have mercy on a person who performs four Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer.) The Hadith apparently indicates that they should be performed before the `Asr Prayer, meaning after its time is due. These four Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer are not Sunnah Ratibah, but they are legislated by Shari`ah (Islamic law), because the Prophet (peace be upon him) recommended it and supplicated to Allah for those who perform it. These four Rak`ahs are an act of Sunnah, a Qurbah (a good deed by which Allah's Pleasure is sought), and an act of obedience that should be performed in twos after the time of Prayer is due. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (The (optional) Salah by night and day should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs.) That is to say, they should be in twos, following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him). The Sunnah Ratibah of the Zhuhr Prayer is four Rak`ahs before it and two after it, as reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) on the authority of `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) and Um Habibah (may Allah be pleased with her). The four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer should be with two Taslims (salutations of peace ending the Prayer), and the two after it with one Taslim. It is reported on the authority of Um Habibah bint Abu Sufyan (may Allah be pleased with her and her father) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (Allah will make the Fire forbidden to anyone who regularly performs four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr Prayer

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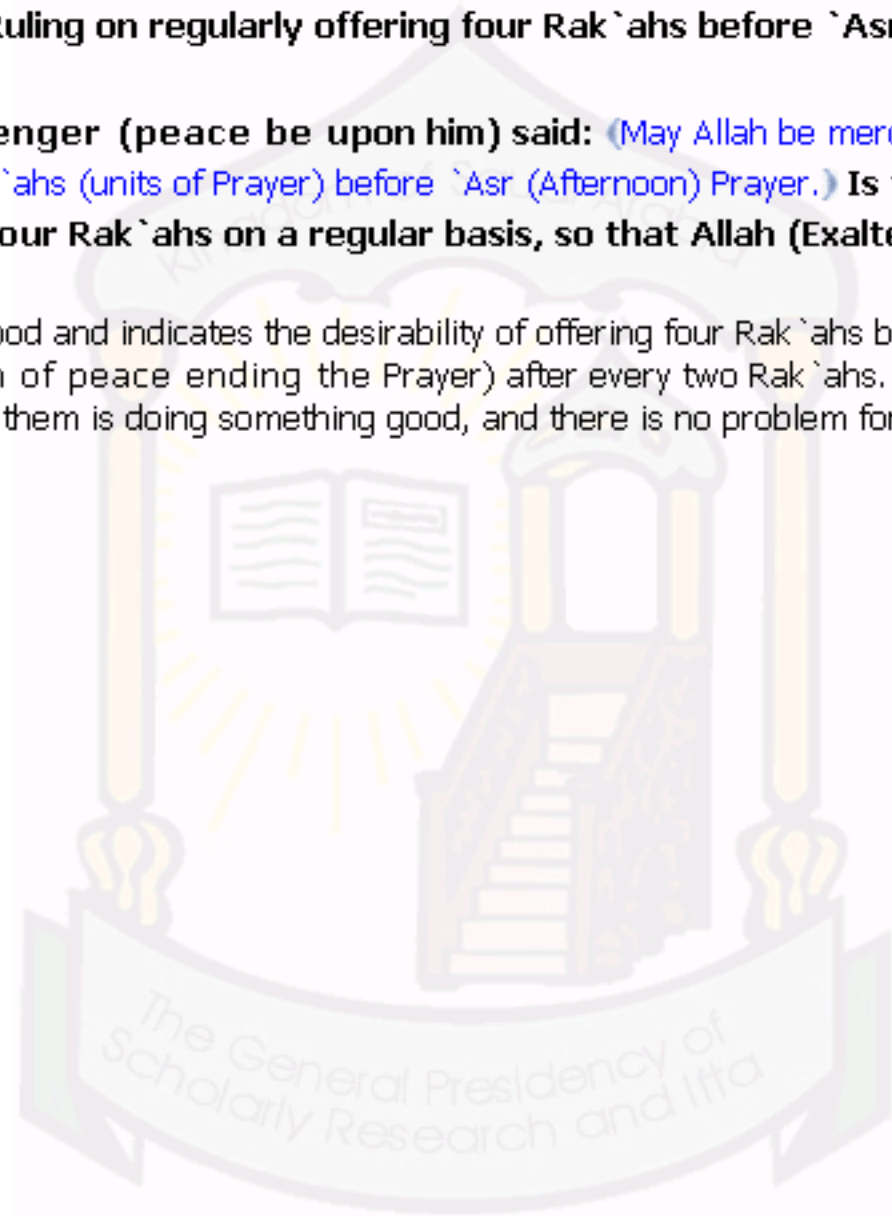
and four after it.) These four Rak`ahs before and after the Zhuhr Prayer include the Sunnah Ratibah which is six Rak`ahs and other two extra Rak`ahs; observing these eight Rak`ahs is an act of immense goodness.



#### 124- Ruling on regularly offering four Rak`ahs before `Asr Prayer

**Q: Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said:** [\(May Allah be merciful to the person who performs four Rak`ahs \(units of Prayer\) before `Asr \(Afternoon\) Prayer.\)](#) **Is the person required to offer these four Rak`ahs on a regular basis, so that Allah (Exalted be He) is merciful to them?**

**A:** This Hadith is good and indicates the desirability of offering four Rak`ahs before `Asr Prayer with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs. This is preferable; the person who offers them is doing something good, and there is no problem for anyone who does not do the same.





## 125- Ruling on offering supererogatory Salah after `Asr Prayer

**Q: A questioner asks: Is there a Sunnah (supererogatory) Prayer after `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer? If so, is it permissible**

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**to offer Salah (Prayer) before sunset?**

**A:** There is no Sunnah Prayer to be offered after `Asr Prayer, as Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) forbade that a Prayer other than a missed one be offered at the time from after `Asr until sunset. Anyone who has missed a certain Prayer and then remembers has to make up for it even if he does so after `Asr Prayer; this is implied in the generality of the Prophet's Hadith: **(The person who has forgotten a certain Salah is to perform it as soon as they remember it; there is no Kaffarah (expiation) for missing it except that.)** If, for example, a person remembered after `Asr Prayer that they had forgotten to offer the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, or any other Prayer; they are to make up for these missed Prayers. The same applies when a person, after `Asr Prayer, enters a Masjid (mosque), or circumambulates the Ka`bah in Makkah; they may offer Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit Prayer to honor the mosque) and the two Rak`ahs after Tawaf (two-unit Prayer performed after circumambulating the Ka`bah). Likewise, if the sun has eclipsed after `Asr Prayer, Muslims may offer Salat-ul-Kusuf (Prayer at the time of a solar eclipse), as the latter is one of the optional Salahs that are offered for specific reasons. Performing a Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) after `Asr Prayer should not be done. This was something specific to the Prophet (peace be upon him); he (peace be upon him) offered two Rak`ahs after `Asr Prayer because he was distracted from offering them after Zhuhr Prayer; and then he used to make up for them after `Asr Prayer whenever he was distracted from offering them after Zhuhr Prayer. When he (peace be upon him) was asked by the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet): 'Should we make up for them?' He (peace be upon him) said: 'No.' `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) would offer them after `Asr Prayer. So, his offering them after `Asr Prayer

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was something specific to him (peace be upon him).

It is also not permissible to offer Salah before sunset except as we mentioned above, such as optional Salahs offered for specific reasons like Salat-ul-Kusuf, Salat-ul-Tawaf in Makkah, and Tahiyat-ul-Masjid.



### 126- Ruling on offering Salah before the `Asr Prayer

**Q: If I offered the Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer) related to `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer or to any other obligatory Salah (Prayer) before the Adhan (call to Prayer) of that obligatory Salah, and offered the obligatory Salah after the Adhan, would this Sunnah Qabliyyah be recorded as the Sunnah Qabliyyah relative to the obligatory Salah? Or, should I offer the Sunnah Qabliyyah after the Adhan of that obligatory Prayer? Please clarify this matter for me.**

**A:** The Sunnah Prayer is supererogatory, not obligatory. It is desirable to offer four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) before `Asr Prayer, this is to say, after the time of the `Asr Prayer has started. This Sunnah Prayer is to be offered two by two, i.e., making Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs. It is also permissible to offer supererogatory prayers; even a hundred- Rak`ah Prayer, before the Adhan of `Asr Prayer, i.e., between Zhuhr (Noon) and `Asr Prayers. Time between these two obligatory Salahs is ample and there is nothing wrong with praying during that time. The worshipper may offer any even-numbered Prayer during that time - Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah), making Taslim after every two Rak`ahs. It is desirable to offer four Rak`ahs after the Adhan of `Asr Prayer, i.e., after the time of the Prayer has began,

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making Taslim after every two Rak`ahs, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [﴿May Allah be merciful to the person who performs four Rak`ahs before `Asr Prayer.﴾](#) These four Rak`ahs are desirable, not obligatory. It is the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers, i.e., Zhuhr, `Asr, Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers that must be performed.

The Sunnah Salahs related to these obligatory Prayers, Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), and Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) are supererogatory Prayers. If the person did not perform these, they would not be sinful; but they will receive a great reward if they have offered them.



### 127- The time of the Sunnah Prayer related to the Maghrib Prayer

**Q: A questioner asks: Does Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer have Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer) or Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed after an obligatory Prayer)?**

**A:** The Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) related to Maghrib and `Isha' (Night) Prayers are to be offered after they are performed. The Sunnah Prayer performed before Maghrib Prayer is not Ratibah. If the worshipper is in the Masjid (mosque), it is desirable for them to offer two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) after the Adhan (call to Prayer) of Maghrib Prayer and this is also the case after the Adhan of `Isha' Prayer, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [«Between every two calls \(Adhan and Iqamah \[call to start the Prayer\]\) there is a Prayer. He repeated it twice, and at the third time, he said: 'For those who wish to do it.'»](#) Accordingly, it is desirable to offer two Rak`ahs after the Adhan of Maghrib and after the Adhan of `Isha'. There is another Hadith to the same effect: [«Pray before Maghrib Prayer. Pray before Maghrib Prayer,](#)

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[and at the third time, he said, 'For those who wish to do it.'»](#) This indicates that offering these two supererogatory Rak`ahs is only desirable, not obligatory.



### 128- Supererogatory Prayer after Sunnah Ba`diyyah for Maghrib Prayer

**Q: Some people offer six Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) after the Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed after an obligatory Prayer) for the Maghrib (Sunset), offering units of two Rak'ahs. They call such a Prayer Salat-ul-Awabin (the Prayer of the oft-repenting person). What is the ruling on such a Prayer?**

**A:** This Prayer has no basis in Shari`ah (Islamic law). They also call it Mu'nisat (consolatory Rak`ahs), but this has no basis in Shari`ah also. Salat-ul-Awabin is Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon). If it is observed at hot forenoon time, the Prophet (peace be upon him) called it Salat-ul-Awabin. Still, a person can offer six, ten or even twenty Rak`ahs, with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each two Rak`ahs after the Maghrib Prayer. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) night Salah is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.\)](#) Thus, after the Maghrib Prayer, a person can offer four Rak`ahs with two Taslims, six Rak`ahs with three Taslims, eight Rak`ahs with four Taslims and so on. But, there is no basis for offering specifically six Rak`ahs after the Maghrib Prayer, which some people call them Mu'nisat.



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**Q: Some people offer six Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), with a Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each two Rak`ahs, following the Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed after an obligatory Prayer) for Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer. They claim that such Rak`ahs are called Salat-ul-Awabin (the Prayer of the oft-repenting person). What is the ruling on such a Salah?**

**A:** This Salah has no basis in Shari`ah (Islamic law). Salat-ul-Awabin is Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), when it is observed at hot forenoon time, according to the relevant Sahih (authentic) Hadith. During the period between Maghrib and `Isha' (Night) Prayers, it is recommended to offer as many Rak`ahs as possible, but to offer specifically six Rak`ahs has no basis in Shari`ah. It is a Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) to offer two Rak`ahs after the Maghrib Prayer preferably at home. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to regularly observe this Salah. It is a Sunnah Ratibah also to offer two Rak`ahs after the `Isha' Prayer. Again, a person can offer six, ten, twenty or even one hundred Rak`ahs with a Taslim after each two Rak`ahs after the Maghrib Prayer for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The optional night Salah is offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs and so on.\)](#) A person can offer six, eight, ten or more Rak`ahs as supererogatory Salah during the period between Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers. But, there is no authentic evidence for the belief that six Rak`ahs specifically are to be offered.



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129- Merit of offering Sunnah Ratibah for Maghrib Prayer at home

**Q: Is it better to offer Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) for Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer at the Masjid (mosque) or at home?**

**A:** It is better to offer the Sunnah Ratibah for Maghrib, `Isha' (Night) and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers at home; it has been stressed that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to observe them at home. The case is the same for Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer as well as all other supererogatory Prayers, it is better to pray them at home. [\(The best Salah of a person is that which he offers in his home, except the obligatory Salah.\)](#) (Related in the Two Sahih [authentic] Books of Hadith [i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim])





### 130- Ruling on Salah before the Maghrib Prayer

**Q: Before Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, some worshippers offer two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) allegedly as Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer), but some people do not offer such Sunnah Qabliyyah claiming that there is no Sunnah Qabliyyah before the Maghrib Prayer. I wish to ask whether there is a Sunnah Qabliyyah before the Maghrib Prayer or not.**

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**A:** There is no Sunnah Qabliyyah for the Maghrib Prayer, but the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\('Pray \(two supererogatory Rak`ahs\) before the Maghrib Prayer. Pray before the Maghrib Prayer.' And the third time he \(peace be upon him\) added, 'For those who wish.'](#)) This Hadith indicates that though this Prayer is legislated, it is not Wajib (obligatory). If anyone happens to be in the Masjid (mosque) and the Adhan (call to Prayer) for the Maghrib Prayer is made, they are recommended to get up and offer two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), following the above Sahih (authentic) Hadith as well as another Hadith that reads: [\('There is a Salah between each two calls to Salah. There is a Salah between each two calls to Salah. There is a Salah between each two calls to Salah.'](#)) i.e. between the Adhan (call to Prayer) and Iqamah (call to start the Prayer). Thus, a person may offer two Rak`ahs, but they are not considered a Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) for the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not observe them regularly. Rather, they are recommended for anyone present in the Masjid at the time of the Adhan, who should get up and offer two Rak`ahs, or anyone who comes after the Adhan. Anyone who comes after the Adhan should offer two Rak`ahs as Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit Prayer to salute the mosque) following the two well-known Hadiths above [and this will also count as two Rak`ahs between the Adhan and Iqamah]. The Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) also used to observe this Salah. When the Adhan was made, they used to get up and offer two Rak`ahs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) would see them and would not prohibit them from offering them. Rather, he instructed them: [\('Pray \(two supererogatory Rak`ahs\) before the Maghrib Prayer. Pray before the Maghrib Prayer.' And the third time he \(peace be upon him\) added, 'For those who wish.'](#))



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### 131- Offering two Rak`ahs after the Adhan for Maghrib Prayer

**Q: I used to offer two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) before Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, after the Adhan (call to Prayer), but some people told me that this is Bid`ah (innovation in religion). What do you advise me to do? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** It is Mustahab (desirable) to offer two Rak`ahs after the Adhan. The Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed us: [\('Pray \(two supererogatory Rak`ahs\) before the Maghrib Prayer. Pray before the Maghrib Prayer.'](#) And the third time he (peace be upon him) added, ['For those who wish.'](#)) When the Adhan was made, the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet, may Allah be pleased with them) used to get up and offer two Rak`ahs. This is a Sunnah (i.e. supererogatory) Salah after the Adhan. It is Sunnah (acts, sayings or approvals of the Prophet) for anyone who is already present in the Masjid (mosque) to offer two Rak`ahs before the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer). Anyone who denies this must be ignorant of the Sunnah.



### 132- Ruling on regularly offering six Rak`ahs after the Maghrib Prayer

**Q: I am used to offering six Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) after the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, in which I recite only Al-Fatihah (the opening Chapter of the Qur'an) without any other Surah (Qur'anic chapter). Is it permissible to do so?**

**A:** It is prescribed to offer two Rak`ahs after the Maghrib Prayer as a Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis). If, however, you offer

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six, eight, ten Rak`ahs, or more after these two Rak`ahs, there is nothing wrong with that. Some people think that it is better to offer six Rak`ahs in particular, but this opinion has no basis in the Shari`ah (Islamic law). There is no Sahih (authentic) Hadith related from the Prophet (peace be upon him) supporting this opinion, although some people do it regularly. If a worshiper wishes to offer six, eight, or ten Rak`ahs after the Maghrib Prayer to attain more reward and to perform more `Ibadah (worship), there is no harm in that, as there is no limit for the number of Rak`ahs that may be offered. You may offer Salah and worship as you wishes between the Maghrib Prayer and `Isha' (Night) Prayer. The Sunnah Ratibah which the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to perform after the Maghrib Prayer is two Rak`ahs only. If you pray additional Rak`ahs, there is nothing wrong with that. Reciting Al-Fatihah only is sufficient, but it is better to recite one or two Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) or a short Surah after it.



### 133- Time of Sunnah Ratibah when combining the Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers

**Q: We offered the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer and the `Isha' (Night) Prayer in congregation in the Masjid (mosque) due to rain and cold weather. The question is: When should we offer the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) if we combine the Maghrib Prayer and the `Isha' Prayer? How many Rak`ahs should we offer? Is it permissible to offer the Shaf` (Prayer with an even number of units, particularly before the final unit of the odd-numbered Prayer) and Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) at the same time or should we delay them?**

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**A:** If you combine the Maghrib Prayer and the `Isha' Prayer at the time of the earlier one, you may offer the Sunnah Ratibah of the Maghrib Prayer followed by that of the `Isha' Prayer, and then, you may offer the Witr even if it is the time of the Maghrib Prayer. This is because when the time of the `Isha' Prayer comes, the time of Witr and the Sunnah Ratibah of the `Isha' comes, even if the `Isha' Prayer is combined with the Maghrib Prayer at the time of the Maghrib Prayer. Likewise, if you combine the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer and the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer due to rain or illness, there is no Sunnah Ratibah to be offered after them. There is no supererogatory Salah (Prayer) after the `Asr Prayer, as it is time when it is not permissible to offer supererogatory Salah. Thus, if you combine the Zhuhr Prayer and the `Asr Prayer, the Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed after an obligatory Prayer on a regular basis) of the Zhuhr Prayer is waived, because it is better to offer the `Asr Prayer before the Sunnah Ratibah of the Zhuhr Prayer in case of combining the Zhuhr Prayer and the `Asr Prayer. You may offer four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) as a Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer on a regular basis) before the Zhuhr Prayer. The `Asr Prayer should follow the Zhuhr Prayer directly without being separated by the Sunnah Ba`diyyah of the Zhuhr Prayer. As for the Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers, they are not performed at a time when it is not permissible to offer supererogatory Salah. Thus, after you offer the `Isha' Prayer, you may offer two Rak`ahs as the Sunnah of the Maghrib Prayer, followed by two Rak`ahs offered as the Sunnah of the `Isha' Prayer. Then, you may offer the Witr or delay it until the middle or last part of the night. The matter is open to choice, all praise be to Allah.



### 134- The Sunnah Ratibah of the `Isha' Prayer

**Q: Please tell me about the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) of the `Isha' (Night) Prayer. May Allah reward you with the best.**

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**A:** The Sunnah Ratibah of the `Isha' Prayer is two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) according to what the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do. If you offer four, eight, or more Rak`ahs, there is nothing wrong with that, as Salah (Prayer) can be offered at any time during the night. However, the Sunnah Ratibah of the `Isha' Prayer is two Rak`ahs. You may offer any number of Rak`ahs at the beginning, middle, or end of the night. Then, you may offer one Rak`ah as Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), in which you recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and [Say \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\): "He is Allâh, \(the\) One."](#) This is the Sunnah that may be done at the beginning, middle, or end of the night. You may offer two Rak`ahs, followed by one Rak`ah as Witr. You may also offer four or more Rak`ahs, followed by one Rak`ah as Witr. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer ten Rak`ahs, followed by one Rak`ah as Witr. He sometimes offered twelve Rak`ahs, followed by one Rak`ah as Witr, saying Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) at the end of every two Rak`ahs. There is nothing wrong with offering even a hundred or fifty Rak`ahs, provided that you say Taslim at the end every two Rak`ahs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The night Salah is two by two, then when you fear that dawn is about to break, then pray one Rak`ah and make the Salahs that you have offered odd-numbered.\)](#) This Sunnah may be offered in twos at the beginning,

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middle, or end of the night. Then, you may offer one Rak`ah, in which you recite Al-Fatihah and [Say \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\): "He is Allâh, \(the\) One."](#) You may perform Qunut (supplication recited while standing after bowing in the last unit of Prayer), in which you may recite the Du`a' (supplication) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught to Al-Hassan (may Allah be pleased with him): [\(O Allah, guide me among those whom You have guided.\)](#) It is preferable to recite more pleasant pieces of Du`a' after Ruku` (bowing).



### 135- Ruling on offering supererogatory Salah before the `Isha' Prayer

**Q: Is there a supererogatory Salah (Prayer) of two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) to be performed before the `Isha' (Night) Prayer?**

**A:** It is prescribed to offer two Rak`ahs before every Salah, i.e., before the `Isha', the Maghrib (Sunset), the `Asr (Afternoon), the Zhuhr (Noon), and the Fajr (Dawn) Prayers. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(Pray \(two supererogatory Rak`ahs\) before the Maghrib Prayer. He \(the prophet\) said it three times, and at the third time he said, "This is for those who wish to do it."\)](#) This means that performing two Rak`ahs before the Maghrib Prayer is Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet). The Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet)

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used to offer two Rak`ahs before the Maghrib Prayer, i.e., after the Adhan (call to Prayer) and before the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer). It is preferable to do this also before the `Isha' Prayer. When the Adhan for the `Isha' Prayer is announced, it is preferable to offer two Rak`ahs according to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(There is between the two calls \(Adhan and Iqamah\) a Salah. He repeated it twice.\)](#) There is a Salah, clarified by the Prophet (peace be upon him) between the Adhan and the Iqamah, including the Salah performed before the `Isha' Prayer. If the Adhan for `Isha' is announced, it is prescribed for those sitting in the Masjid (mosque) and those entering to offer two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) as supererogatory Salah before the `Isha' Prayer. The persons sitting in the Masjid should offer these two Rak`ahs for being at the Masjid. Also, these two Rak`ahs are regarded as Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit Prayer to greet the mosque) for those entering the Masjid. This Salah combines the merit of praying between the Adhan and the Iqamah and that of Tahiyat-ul-Masjid. Likewise is the case of the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer; if a person is in the Masjid and the Adhan for the Zhuhr Prayer is announced, they may offer two or four Rak`ahs, and the latter is better in the case of the Zhuhr Prayer, as `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(Allah's Messenger \(peace be upon him\) never missed four \(Rak`ahs\) before the Zhuhr Prayer.\)](#) He performed two Taslims (salutations of peace ending the Prayer) in these four Rak`ahs. Also, before the `Asr Prayer, they may offer four Rak`ahs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(May Allah have mercy on a man who performs four \(Rak`ahs\) before the `Asr Prayer.\)](#) Also, it is permissible to offer two Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer according to the previous Hadith: [\(There is between the two calls \(Adhan and Iqamas\) a Salah.\)](#) If they offer four Rak`ahs,

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it is preferable based on the previous Hadith: [\(May Allah have mercy on a man who performs four \(Rak`ahs\) before the `Asr Prayer.\)](#) These are the supererogatory Salahs that should be offered before the obligatory Salahs: two or four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer, and the latter is preferable, four Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer, also two Rak`ahs suffice, two Rak`ahs before the Maghrib Prayer, and two Rak`ahs before the `Isha' Prayer. Also, there is Sunnah Ratibah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) before the Fajr Prayer.





**Q: A brother from the Arab Republic of Syria, Dur Al-Zur says: " Many people in our village debate about the Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer) of the `Isha' (Night) Prayer. Some of them say that it is a stressed Sunnah while others say that it is not. I hope that Your Eminence can clarify this matter for us. A:**

**A:** It is not a stressed Sunnah, all praise be to Allah. It is between the Adhan (call to Prayer) and the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer) and may be performed by anyone who wishes to offer it, and may be left by anyone who wants to abandon it. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(There is between the two calls \(Adhan and Iqamah\) a Salah \(Prayer\). This applies to those who wish to do it.\)](#) It is between the Adhan and the Iqamah. The worshiper has the choice of performing or abandoning it. This also applies to the Sunnah before the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer. However, the Sunnah Qabliyyah before the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer is stressed, as the praying person should offer four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) with two Taslims (salutations of peace ending the Prayer). The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him)

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used to offer four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer by performing two Rak`ahs followed by two. This Salah is considered as Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis). However, the Salah before the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer is Mustahab (desirable) and not stressed. A Hadith says: [\(May Allah have mercy on a man who performs four \(Rak`ahs\) before the `Asr Prayer.\)](#) This Sunnah should be offered in tows, according to the Hadith that reads: [\(The \(optional\) Salah by night and day should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs.\)](#) This is mentioned by the Prophet (peace be upon him) and we should not debate about this matter. These are Mustahab matters and Nafilahs (supererogatory Prayer), about which we should not debate. However, the seekers of knowledge should learn and study these matters in order to obtain benefit. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: [\(There is between the two calls \(Adhan and Iqamah\) a Salah. He repeated it twice.\)](#) If the praying person offers two or four Rak`ahs between the Adhan and the Iqamah of the Maghrib, the `Isha', and the `Asr Prayers, there is no harm in that. The Zhuhr Prayer has Sunnah Ratibah Qabliyyah that consists of four Rak`ahs. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) never missed four \(Rak`ahs\) before the Zhuhr Prayer.\)](#) This means that he used to say Taslim after every two Rak`ahs.

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer two Rak`ahs as Sunnah Ratibah after the Zhuhr Prayer. If a person offers four Rak`ahs, this will be preferable. There are two Rak`ahs to be performed after the `Isha' Prayer and the Maghrib Prayer. Also, there are two Rak`ahs to be performed before the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. These Salahs are Sunnah Ratibah, consisting of twelve Rak`ahs: four before the Zhuhr Prayer and two after it, two after the Maghrib Prayer, two after the `Isha' Prayer, and two before the Fajr Prayer, which the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer. It is better to offer them at home; but if they are performed at the Masjid (mosque) there is nothing wrong with that.



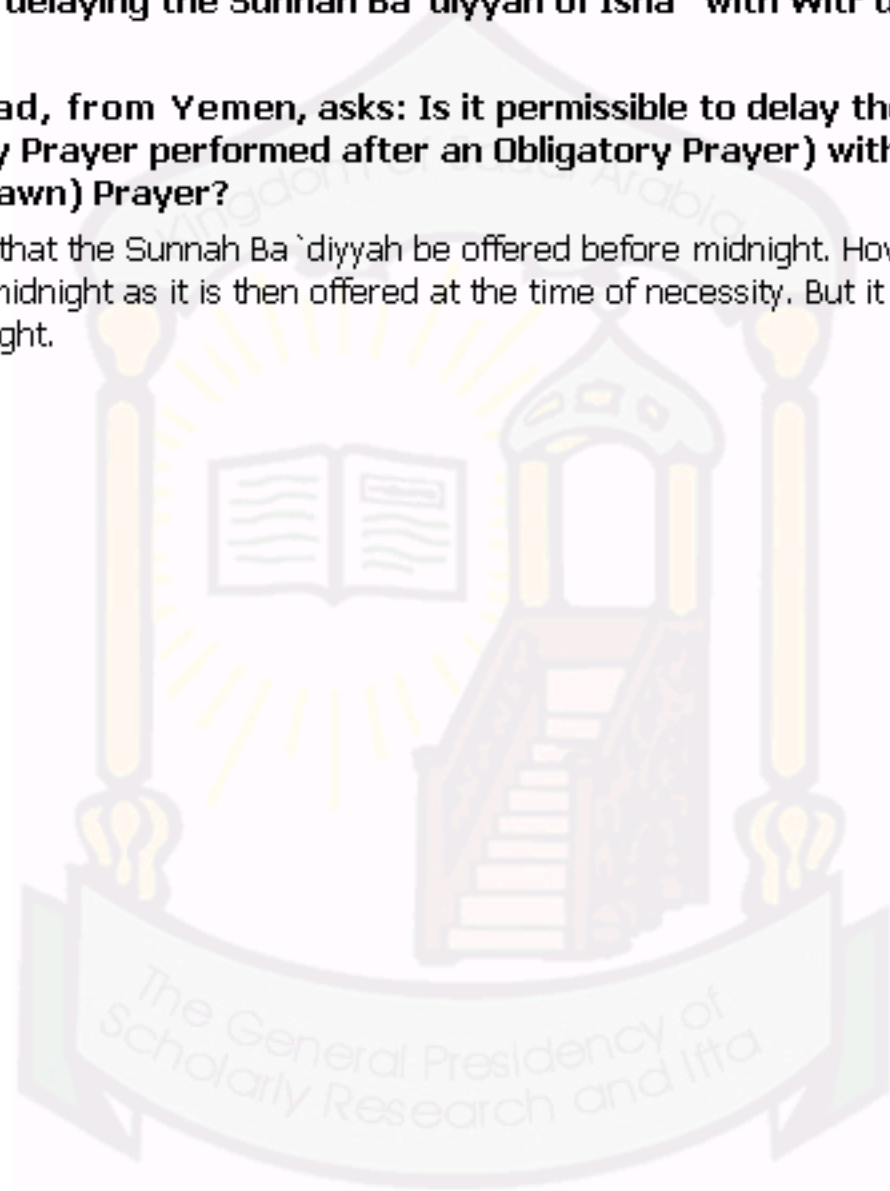




**136- Ruling on delaying the Sunnah Ba`diyyah of Isha` with Witr until late at night**

**Q: Brother Ahmad, from Yemen, asks: Is it permissible to delay the Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed after an Obligatory Prayer) with the Witr until right before the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer?**

**A:** It is preferable that the Sunnah Ba`diyyah be offered before midnight. However, it will be valid if delayed until after midnight as it is then offered at the time of necessity. But it is still preferable to be offered before midnight.





**Q. A questioner asks: Is it permissible and valid to postpone offering the Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed after an obligatory Prayer) of `Isha' (Night) Prayer to be carried out with Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units)**

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**a short time before Fajr (Dawn) Prayer?**

**A.** The safest practice is to offer the Sunnah of `Isha' Prayer as early as possible before midnight since the time of `Isha' is prolonged only to midnight, though if someone offered it after midnight, there would be no blame on them since it has become necessary for them to offer it at this time. However, again, it would be better to offer it as early as possible before midnight.



**Q. A questioner asks: Is it permissible to postpone offering the Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis after an obligatory Prayer) of `Isha' (Night) Prayer to be carried out after `Isha' Prayer two or three hours later?**

**A:** There is nothing wrong to postpone offering the Sunnah of `Isha' a short time before midnight, but it would be better if you offer it before midnight because the time of `Isha' is till midnight.





**Q: What is Your Eminence's opinion if I am used to offering Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) forty-five minutes before the Adhan (call to prayer) of Fajr (Dawn) because if I offered it at one or two o'clock after midnight, I sometimes oversleep and cannot offer Fajr Prayer in congregation?**

**A:** It is preferable to postpone offering Qiyam-ul-Layl until the late hours of the night to be able to offer what Allah (Exalted be He) makes easy for you

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and to attend Fajr Prayer in congregation; however, if you offer it in the middle of the night and then sleep, this might lead to missing Fajr Prayer in congregation, so you have to be careful not to miss Fajr in congregation because it is Wajib (obligatory) to offer it on time. It is Wajib on every male Muslim to offer Fajr in congregation like the other prescribed Prayers, one should not offer it at home. So, you could offer Qiyam-ul-Layl at the late hours of the night so that you could perform both; Qiyam and Fajr in congregation.



**137- Clarifying the time for offering the Sunnah Salah of Fajr Prayer and the merit of offering it at home**

**Q: A questioner asks: How did the Prophet (peace be upon him) use to offer the Sunnah (supererogatory) Salah of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer; should it be offered after the Adhan (call to Prayer) or when?**

**A:** The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer the Sunnah of Fajr at home after the break of dawn and after the Adhan when he was sure that it was the due time for Fajr. Then, he (peace be upon him) used to go to the Masjid (mosque) and order them to announce the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer). He used to offer it and lie on his right side for a while then go to the Masjid to offer the obligatory Prayer. He (peace be upon him) said: [\( Bilal announces Adhan during the night, so eat and drink, till you hear the Adhan of Ibn Um Maktum. \)](#)



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### 138- Clarifying the time for Sunnah Ratibah of Fajr Prayer

**Q. What is the time for offering Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, before or after the Adhan (call to Prayer)? If it is after the Adhan, would it be immediately after my entering the Masjid (mosque) while the Adhan is still being announced or should I wait till the muezzin finishes, and start to offer Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit Prayer to greet the mosque) then the Ratibah or should I offer the Ratibah only?**

**A:** The time for offering the Sunnah (supererogatory Salah) of Fajr Prayer is after the break of dawn, whether or not the muezzin announced the Adhan for Fajr Prayer. If you offered it after the break of dawn, there would be no blame on you whether you are at home or in the Masjid. Moreover, the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is to offer it after the Adhan. What is important is to offer it after the break of dawn, so if the muezzin announced the Adhan before the break of dawn, and you offered it after the Adhan but before the break of dawn, you would not then offer the Sunnah or discharge your responsibility; it must be offered after the break of dawn or after the Adhan if the muezzin announces it after the break of dawn. If you came to the Masjid without offering the Ratibah at home, you have to offer two Rak`ahs with the intention of Ratibah and they would suffice for those of Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid if you combined the intention of both. There would be no blame on you for that. Furthermore, you are in no need to offer another extra two Rak`ahs because those two Rak`ahs will suffice for both. Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah)



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### 139- Ruling on what should be recited in the Sunnah of Fajr

**Q: A questioner asks: We would like you to explain to us whether or not should we recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) accompanied by another Surah (Qur'anic chapter) in the Sunnah (supererogatory Salah) of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer?**

**A:** This Sunnah Salah is called the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) of Fajr Prayer. Raghilah, as some people call it, has no basis in Shari'ah (Islamic law). It consists of two Rak'ahs (units of Prayer) and is better to be offered at home, though if it is offered in the Masjid (mosque), there would be no blame for that. One has to recite Al-Fatihah followed by: ﴿Say: (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to these Mushrikûn and Kâfirûn): "O Al-Kafirûn (disbelievers in Allâh, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar)!﴾ in the first Rak'ah and in the second Rak'ah he can recite: ﴿Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.﴾ after reciting Al-Fatihah, or one can recite the Ayah (Qur'anic verse) of Surah (Qur'anic chapter) Al-Baqarah (the Cow) after Al-Fatihah in the first Rak'ah: ﴿Say (O Muslims), "We believe in Allâh and that which has been sent down to us and that which has been sent down to Ibrâhîm (Abraham), Ismâ'il (Ishmael)"﴾ and in the second Rak'ah one could recite the Ayah of Al Imran (The House of Imran): ﴿Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allâh (Alone)﴾ This is what the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do. It is a stressed Sunnah, but it is legally permissible to shorten the recitation in it. It is better to offer it at home but if it is offered in the Masjid, there would be no blame.

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It should be offered by both men and women, those on a journey as well as residents.





**140- Ruling on offering voluntary Prayer before the Sunnah of Fajr Prayer after the second Adhan**

**Q: What is the ruling on offering voluntary Prayer before offering the Sunnah (supererogatory Salah) of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer? That is, after the second Adhan (call to Prayer)?**

**A:** It is Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) to offer the Sunnah of Fajr Prayer at home or in the Masjid (mosque) and do nothing else because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **(There is no prayer (to be offered) after dawn except the two Rak`ahs of the Fajr prayer.)** When it is Fajr due time, one should only offer the Sunnah of Fajr whether at home or in the Masjid and go to the Masjid to offer the obligatory prayer.



## 141- Clarifying what should be recited in the two Rak`ahs of the Sunnah of Fajr

**Q: A questioner says: I have heard that it is preferable for anybody who is offering the two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer to recite the Surah (Qur'anic chapter) of Al-Kafirun (The Disbelievers) in the first Rak`ah and in the second one to recite: (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.) Is that correct?**

**A:** Yes, because the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) for both men and women is to recite those two Surahs in the Sunnah (supererogatory Salah) of Fajr Prayer.

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After reciting Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) in the first Rak`ah one should recite: (Say: (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to these Mushrikûn and Kâfirûn): "O Al-Kafirûn (disbelievers in Allâh, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar)!)" and in the second Rak`ah one should recite: (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.)" after reciting Al-Fatihah. This applies to both men and women. The Sunnah is to offer it at home but if it is offered in the Masjid (Mosque), there would be no blame. One can also recite the Ayah (Qur'anic verse) of Surah Al-Baqarah (The Cow): (Say (O Muslims), "We believe in Allâh and that which has been sent down to us and that which has been sent down to Ibrâhîm (Abraham), Ismâ'îl (Ishmael)") in the first Rak`ah after reciting Al-Fatihah. In the second Rak`ah one should recite the Ayah of Surah Al-`Imran (The House of `Imran): (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you.)"

This also complies with the Sunnah and the action of the Prophet (peace be upon him), since he sometimes used to recite these two short Surahs, namely (Say: (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to these Mushrikûn and Kâfirûn): "O Al-Kafirûn (disbelievers in Allâh, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar)!)" and (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.)" and at other times he (peace be upon him) used to recite the two Ayahs: (Say (O Muslims), "We believe in Allâh and that which has been sent down to us and that which has been sent down to Ibrâhîm (Abraham), Ismâ'îl (Ishmael)") in the first Rak`ah after reciting Al-Fatihah, and in the second Rak`ah he (peace be upon him) used to recite: (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians))" after reciting Al-Fatihah. Reciting either of the pairs of Surahs complies with the Sunnah of the Prophet. If you recite any other Ayahs other than those Surahs or Ayahs, there would be no blame on you, though reciting them is preferable because it shows one's following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him).



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### 142- Clarifying the sufficient amount of Ayahs recited in Salah

**Q: Must those who offer Nafilah (supererogatory) Prayer recite any Surahs (Qur'anic chapters) other than Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an)? I am used to reciting Surah Al-Ikhlâs (Faithfulness) in the two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer.**

**A:** It is permissible for whoever is going to pray a Nafilah (supererogatory) Prayer in the daytime or at night to recite what is easy for them after reciting Al-Fatihah. This is what is preferable. Only the Fatihah is Wajib (obligatory) because it a Rukn (integral pillar) of Salah (Prayer). If the person offering Salah recited it, doing so would be sufficient but if they recited other Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) or Surahs, this would be better. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite some other Ayahs after reciting Al-Fatihah. He (peace be upon him) said: [\(The Salah of whoever does not recite Surah Al-Fatihah is invalid.\)](#) Reciting Al-Fatihah is Wajib and that is why the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The Salah of whoever does not recite Surah Al-Fatihah is invalid.\)](#) The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is that when one comes to offer Salah, they have to recite other Ayahs after reciting Al-Fatihah. This is preferable. In the Sunnah of Fajr Prayer one should recite Surah: [\(Say: \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to these Mushrikûn and Kâfirûn\): "O Al-Kafirûn \(disbelievers in Allâh, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar\)! and: \(Say \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\): "He is Allâh, \(the\) One.\)](#) In the first Rak`ah one should recite:

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[\(Say: \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to these Mushrikûn and Kâfirûn\): "O Al-Kafirûn \(disbelievers in Allâh, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar\)! and in the second one: \(Say \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\): "He is Allâh, \(the\) One.\)](#) After Surah Al-Fatihah, one can also read the Ayah of Surah Al-Baqarah (The Cow): [\(Say \(O Muslims\), "We believe in Allâh and that which has been sent down to us"\)](#) or that of Al-Imran (The House of `Imaran): [\(Say \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\): "O people of the Scripture \(Jews and Christians\): Come to a word that is just between us and you..."](#) This is also the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) as he sometimes used to recite: [\(Say: \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to these Mushrikûn and Kâfirûn\): "O Al-Kafirûn \(disbelievers in Allâh, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar\)! and: \(Say \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\): "He is Allâh, \(the\) One.\)](#) and at other times the aforementioned two Ayahs.

If somebody recited Ayahs other than what has just been mentioned, there would be no blame on them, though it is preferable to recite what the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite in the Sunnah (supererogatory) Salah of Fajr. It was also his (peace be upon him) habit in the Sunnah of Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer to read: [\(Say: \(O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to these Mushrikûn and](#)

Kâfirûn): "O Al-Kafirûn (disbelievers in Allâh, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar)﴾ and﴾ Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.﴾ after reciting Al-Fatihah and also in the Sunnah of Tawaf (circumambulation of the Ka`bah). So, if one is going to perform Tawaf, he has to recite the two Surahs of Al-Ikhlâs:﴾ Say: (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to these Mushrikûn and Kâfirûn): "O Al-Kafirûn (disbelievers in Allâh, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar)!﴾ and:﴾ Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.﴾ This is to be done after reciting Al-Fatihah following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in this regard.



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**Q: A questioner asks: Is Surah Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) sufficient in the Sunnah (supererogatory) Salah of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer or should I recite Al-Fatihah and another Surah?**

**A:** Reciting Al-Fatihah only is sufficient but the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to recite another Surah (chapter of the Qur'an) after reciting it. In the first Rak`ah (unit of prayer) you should recite: (Say: (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to these Mushrikûn and Kâfirûn): "O Al-Kafirûn (disbelievers in Allâh, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar!)") and: (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.") in the second after reciting Al-Fatihah, or you should recite in the first Rak`ah: (Say (O Muslims), "We believe in Allâh and that which has been sent down to us") of Surah Al-Baqarah (The Cow) and in the second Rak`ah: (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you...") of Surah Al-`Imran (The House of `Imran).



### 143- Ruling on observing constant recitation of certain Surahs in Nafilah Prayers

**Q: What is the ruling on observing constant recitation of certain Surahs (Chapters of the Qur'an) in Nafilah (supererogatory) Prayers like Surah Al-Masad (Palm Fibers) and Al-Kafirûn (The Disbelievers) in the two Rak`ahs (units of prayer) of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer for example? May Allah reward you with the best.**

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**A:** There is nothing wrong to recite certain Surahs consistently if the person thinks that other Surahs could also be recited but they recite those because they have memorized them well or because they are easier to recite than other Surahs. However, if one believes that other Surahs would not be sufficient, it would be impermissible. So, if somebody recites these Surahs because it is easier for them to memorize or recite or because they are short, there would be nothing wrong with that. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite in the Sunnah (supererogatory) Salah of Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, the Sunnah of Fajr Prayer and that of Tawaf (circumambulation of the Ka`bah): (Say: (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to these Mushrikûn and Kâfirûn): "O Al-Kafirûn (disbelievers in Allâh, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar!) and: (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.) and in the Sunnah of Maghrib he (peace be upon him) used to recite: (Say: (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to these Mushrikûn and Kâfirûn): "O Al-Kafirûn (disbelievers in Allâh, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar!) and: (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.) Moreover, he (peace be upon him) used to recite in Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) Surah Al-A`la (The Most Exalted), Al-Ghashiyah (The Enveloper) and: (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.) In the last three Rak`ahs of his Witr, he (peace be upon him) used to recite Al-A`la in the first one, then Al-Ghashiyah in the second one and: (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.) in the third one after reciting Al-Fatihah. There is nothing wrong with all that, all praise be to Allah.



#### 144- Clarifying that Ratibah can be a substitute for Tahiyat-ul-Masjid

**Q: Some people offer four Rak`ahs (units of prayer) before Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, is this permissible?**

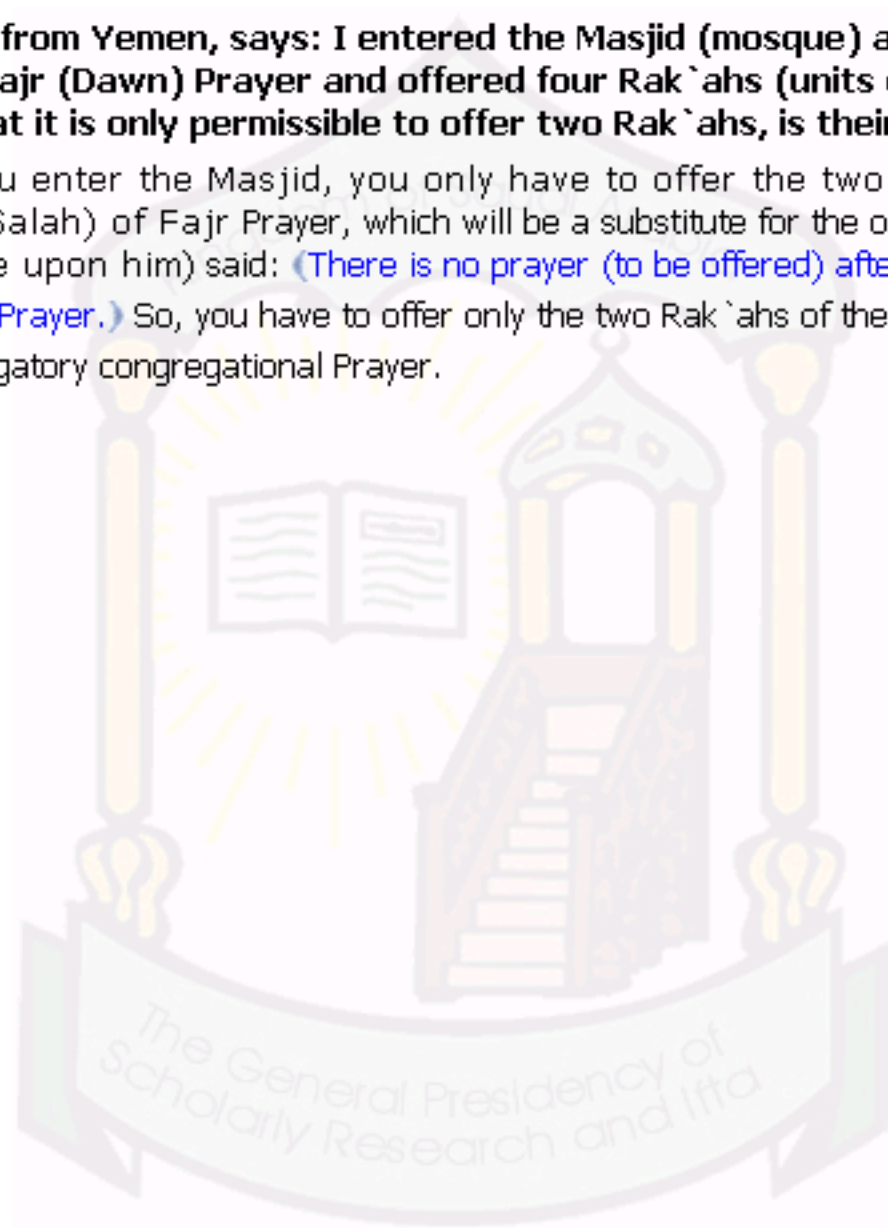
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**A:** The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to offer only two Rak`ahs which is a substitute for both Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque) and Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis). Some people think that they have to do both and they offer Tahiyat-ul-Masjid first followed by Sunnah Ratibah, but there is no need for that because it is reported in a Hadith: [\(There is no prayer \(to be offered\) after dawn except the two Rak`ahs of the Fajr Prayer.\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not use to offer any Salah (Prayer) after dawn except the two Rak`ahs of the Sunnah of Fajr. The Sunnah for whoever enters the Masjid (mosque) and does not offer Ratibah, is to offer two Rak`ahs with the intention of offering Ratibah; moreover, if one combines one's intention to offer Tahiyat-ul-Masjid as well, there would be nothing wrong with that, and those two Rak`ahs are sufficient. So, Sunnah Ratibah can be a substitute for Tahyaht-ul- Masjid and if one combines one's intention to offer them both within two Rak`ahs, there would be nothing wrong with that.



**Q: A questioner from Yemen, says: I entered the Masjid (mosque) after the Adhan (call to Prayer) for Fajr (Dawn) Prayer and offered four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) but some people told me that it is only permissible to offer two Rak`ahs, is their opinion correct?**

**A:** Yes, when you enter the Masjid, you only have to offer the two Rak`ahs of Sunnah (supererogatory Salah) of Fajr Prayer, which will be a substitute for the other two Rak`ahs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(There is no prayer \(to be offered\) after dawn except the two Rak`ahs of the Fajr Prayer.\)](#) So, you have to offer only the two Rak`ahs of the Sunnah of Fajr Prayer and wait for the obligatory congregational Prayer.







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**145- Ruling on Tahiyat-ul-Masjid for those who have already offered the Sunnah of Fajr at home**

**Q: A questioner says: I wake up about half an hour before Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. I offer four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) at home offering them two by two, then I go to the Masjid (mosque) and offer the two Rak`ahs of the Sunnah (supererogatory Salah) of Fajr Prayer. Is this permissible and valid?**

**A:** Offer whatever Rak`ahs you like at night two by two and then end up with only one as Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). You could also offer the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) at home or in the Masjid with two Rak`ahs. If you offered it in the Masjid, this would substitute the two Rak`ahs of Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque). If you offered them at home, once you enter the Masjid, offer the two Rak`ahs of Tahyat-ul-Masjid and sit down.



**Q: What is the ruling on somebody who entered the Masjid (mosque) after dawn; should he offer the two Rak`ahs of Tahiyat-ul-Masjid, or should he offer the two Rak`ahs of Sunnah of Fajr? May Allah grant you success.**

**A:** It is preferable to offer the Sunnah (supererogatory Salah) of Fajr (Dawn) only, which is enough and substitutes that of Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque). Moreover, obligatory prayers substitute Tahiyat-ul-Masjid, so if somebody entered the Masjid and found that they were already offering obligatory prayer, he should join them instantly and he would not be asked to offer Tahiyat-ul-Masjid. It is prescribed to offer two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) once one enters the Masjid before one sits down, but if one found people offering obligatory prayer,

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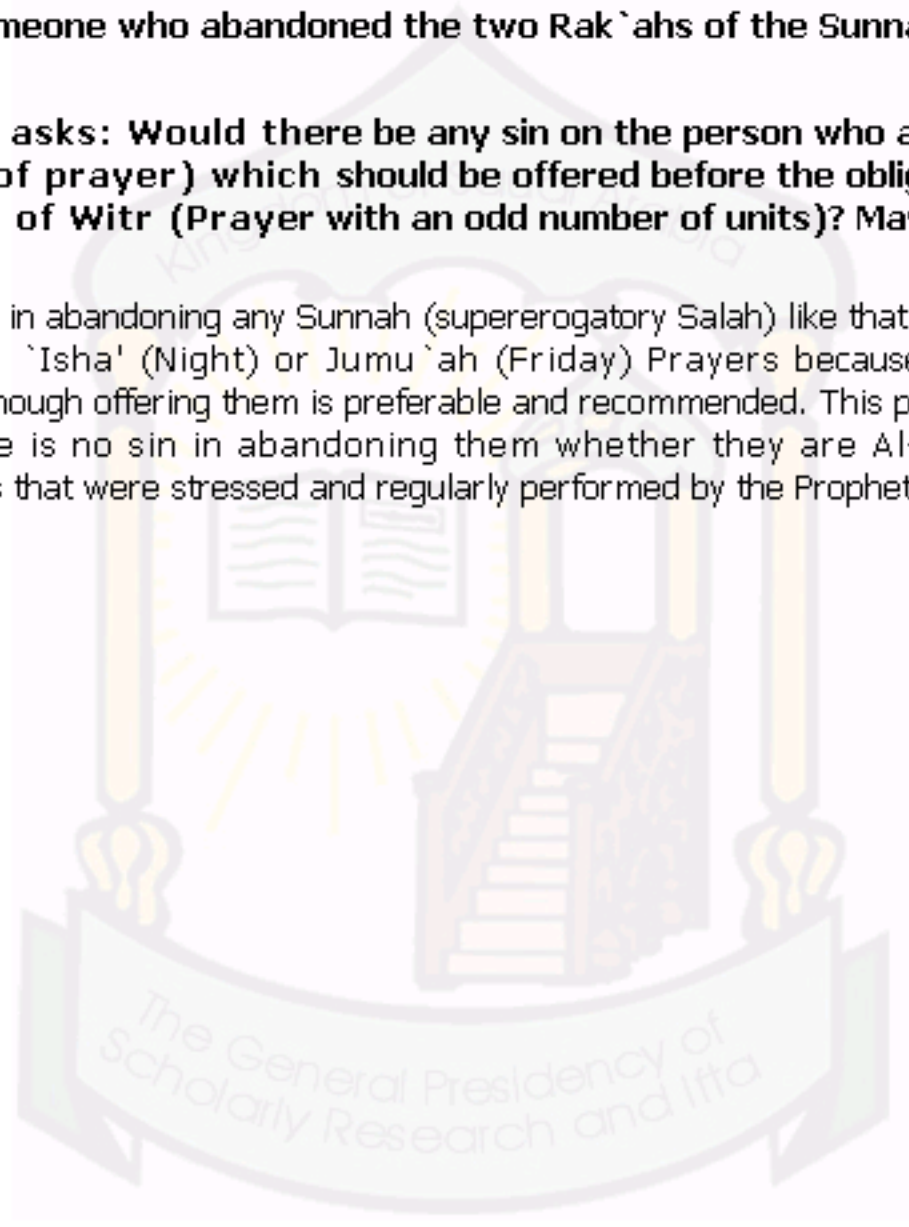
one should join them at once and this obligatory Prayer is a substitute for the Sunnah of Tahiyat-ul-Masjid. However, if one offered Tahiyat-ul-Masjid and then the Sunnah of Fajr, there would be nothing wrong with that, but it is more preferable not to do so because the preferable and best practice is to offer the Sunnah of Fajr as it is both a Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) and a substitute for Tahiyat-ul-Masjid. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer only two Rak`ahs as the Sunnah of Fajr. He (peace be upon him) never used to offer more than two Rak`ahs as Sunnah after the break of dawn. If somebody offered those two Rak`ahs with the intention of the Sunnah of Fajr, they would be a substitute for Tahiyat-ul-Masjid, but if one offered the Sunnah Ratibah of Fajr at home and came to the Masjid, one should offer Tahiyat-ul-Masjid before one sits down because one would not be asked to offer the Sunnah of Fajr again as one had already offered it before coming to the Masjid. So, one has to offer Tahiyat-ul-Masjid and sit down.



**146- Ruling on someone who abandoned the two Rak`ahs of the Sunnah of Fajr and Witr**

**Q: A questioner asks: Would there be any sin on the person who abandoned the two Rak`ahs (units of prayer) which should be offered before the obligatory Fajr (Dawn) Prayer and that of Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units)? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** There is no sin in abandoning any Sunnah (supererogatory Salah) like that of Fajr, `Asr (Noon), Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night) or Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayers because they are all Nafilahs (supererogatory) though offering them is preferable and recommended. This person missed a great reward but there is no sin in abandoning them whether they are Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) or not.





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**147- Ruling on someone who offers two Rak`ahs with the intention of the Sunnah of Fajr and that of Tahiyat-ul-Masjid**

**Q: What is the ruling on a person who offered two Rak`ahs (units of prayer) with the intention of the Sunnah (Supererogatory Salah) of Fajr (Dawn) and that of Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque)?**

**A:** If he intended to offer Tahiyat-ul-Masjid, those two Rak`ahs would be sufficient; hence, he does not need to offer four Rak`ahs but he should only offer two Rak`ahs with the intention of both Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) of Fajr and that of Tahiyat-ul-Masjid, because there would be nothing wrong with doing so, all praise be to Allah.



**148- Ruling on making up for the two Rak`ahs of the Sunnah of Fajr for one who came too late to join the congregational Prayer**

**Q: If someone missed Fajr (Dawn) congregational Prayer because they slept late or because of any other reason, when should they make up for the two Rak`ahs of the Sunnah of Fajr? Should they offer them before or after the obligatory Prayer?**

**A:** If someone missed the Fajr Prayer in congregation, they should offer Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) of Fajr first before offering the obligatory Prayer. Once, when the Prophet (peace be upon him) slept late and missed Fajr when he was on journey as they woke up because of the hot sun, he (peace be upon him) offered Sunnah Ratibah of Fajr before offering the obligatory two Rak`ahs of Fajr Prayer. Moreover, he (peace be upon him) ordered them to announce the Adhan (call to Prayer) and the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer) as usual. So, if someone missed Fajr Prayer for any reason,

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he should offer Sunnah Ratibah of Fajr first before offering Fajr obligatory Prayer. This is the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet). If he offered it after the obligatory prayer or after sunrise, there would be nothing wrong with that, though it is preferable and best to follow the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him) when he missed Fajr prayer when he was once on a journey. If someone came to the Masjid (mosque) late and found people performing congregational Prayer, he should join them instantly and offer Sunnah Ratibah of Fajr after finishing the obligatory Prayer if he likes or it is preferable if he offers it after sunrise, since it complies with the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him). So, he has more than one option; he could offer it after the obligatory Prayer in the Masjid or at home or after sunrise. All these options are correct and supported by a Hadith from the Prophet (peace be upon him).



**Q: What is the ruling on offering the Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer) of the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer if a person wakes up after sunrise? Which is to be given priority: offering the Sunnah or offering the Fajr Prayer at once before offering the Sunnah?**

**A:** The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to offer the Sunnah Qabliyyah of the Fajr Prayer at home first and then go to the Masjid (mosque), where one should join the Salah if the Salah has already started. However, if the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer) has not been announced yet, they should offer Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque).

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If a Muslim has not offered the Sunnah at home and went to the Masjid, they should offer the Sunnah Qabliyyah of the Fajr Prayer, which will be sufficient for Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (praise be to Allah). However, if a Muslim misses this Sunnah Prayer, because of, for example, waking up after sunrise, they should offer the Sunnah Qabliyyah of Fajr first. Likewise, if one misses the congregational Fajr Prayer, they should offer the Sunnah first, even if there is a group of people to form another congregation, and then offer the obligatory Fajr Prayer. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(If one forgets to perform a Salah \(during its prescribed time\) or misses it because of oversleeping, its expiation is only that he should observe it when he remembers it.\)](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) overslept during a travel and missed the Fajr Prayer at its due time waking up only because of the sun heat. After waking up, the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered the Adhan (call to Prayer) to be announced, offered the Sunnah of Fajr and then offered the obligatory Fajr Prayer. Actually, they did not omit the Sunnah Salah, which is the proper practice Muslims should do in such cases following the example of their Prophet (peace be upon him).



**149- Ruling on Sunnah Ratibah Qabliyyah for someone who enters the Masjid at the time of the Iqamah**

**Q: A questioner asks: I went to the Masjid (mosque) when the Muezzin had already finished the Adhan (call to Prayer) and the people had already offered Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis before an obligatory Prayer). Once I entered the Masjid, they started to offer the obligatory Prayer of Fajr. Should I offer Sunnah Qabliyyah of Fajr after finishing the obligatory Prayer or**

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**should I offer Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis after an obligatory Prayer) and I am not asked to offer Sunnah Qabliyyah?**

**A:** It is permissible for you to offer both after finishing the Fajr obligatory Prayer. If you came to the Masjid at the time of the Iqamah (call to start Prayer) for Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, you must join the congregation. After finishing the obligatory Prayer in congregation, you should offer the four Rak`ahs (units of prayer) of Sunnah Qabliyyah and the two Rak`ahs of Sunnah Ba`diyyah. This is what is permissible in this regard. Moreover, it was reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) by At-Tirmidhy through authentic Isnad (chain of narrators) that he sometimes did so; i.e. he (peace be upon him) did not offer Sunnah Qabliyyah till he had offered the obligatory Prayer.



**150- Ruling on leaving an interval between the obligatory Fajr Prayer and its Sunnah and their order**

**Q: A questioner asks about the period of time separating the obligatory Fajr (Dawn) Prayer and its Sunnah (supererogatory Salah), and whether there is any blame if the obligatory Prayer is offered before the Nafilah (supererogatory).**

**A:** The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to offer the Sunnah of Fajr first immediately after the Adhan (call to Prayer) of Fajr. There would be nothing wrong, however, if the separating period between them extends for a short or a long time as long as this is

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after announcing the Adhan of Fajr Prayer. So, the Sunnah is to offer the two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of the Sunnah of Fajr before offering the obligatory Prayer. If a person postponed it for any reason, he could offer it after the obligatory Prayer or after sunrise, though the Sunnah is to offer it before the obligatory Prayer following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him).





### 151- Ruling on making up for the Sunnah of Fajr if it is missed

**Q: When should I make up for the Sunnah (Supererogatory Salah) of Fajr (Dawn) if I missed it, and what is the time for making up for Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units)?**

**A:** If the Sunnah of Fajr is missed one should make up for it after the obligatory Salah in the Masjid (mosque) or at home, though it would be preferable if he postponed it until after sunrise because the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) supports all these practices as there would be nothing wrong if it is offered after the obligatory Salah whether in the Masjid or at home. Preferably, it should be offered after sunrise according to the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him).



**Q: If I missed the Sunnah (supererogatory Salah) of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, when should I make up for it?**

**A:** If the Sunnah of Fajr is missed, a Muslim has the option either to

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offer it after the obligatory Salah or to offer it after sunrise which is preferable. Both practices were reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him). It was reported from him (peace be upon him) that he saw someone offering a certain Salah after the obligatory Fajr Prayer. He (peace be upon him) rejected this person's action, and the man replied: "O Messenger of Allah! I am offering the Sunnah of Fajr". The Prophet (peace be upon him) kept silent. It was also reported that he (peace be upon him) ordered his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) to make up for it after sunrise. All these practices are acceptable, all praise be to Allah. So, whoever offered it after the obligatory Salah is right and those who postpone it until after sunrise are also right and they did what is preferable.



**Q: If someone did not manage to offer the Sunnah (supererogatory) Salah of Fajr because he was short of time, must it be offered after offering the obligatory Salah?**

**A:** If this person is a Munfarid (person offering Salah individually) or an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer), he should offer Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) first before offering the obligatory Salah but if he is a Ma'mum (person being led by an Imam in Prayer) and missed the obligatory Salah or when he entered the Masjid (mosque) the Imam had already started the obligatory Salah, he should join the congregation and after finishing the obligatory Salah, he should offer Sunnah Ratibah. If he likes, he could postpone it until after sunrise since all these options are supported by the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) though it is preferable to offer it after the sun rises high in the sky but it might be forgotten. So, if it is offered after the obligatory Salah, there would be no blame for that. It was authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that [\(he saw a man offering Salah after Fajr obligatory Prayer, and he asked the man: "Are you offering Fajr Prayer](#)

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[four Rak`ahs?\)](#) And, in another narration: [\(Are you offering Fajr Prayer twice"? The man replied: "I did not offer the two Rak`ahs of the Sunnah of Fajr when I offered Fajr obligatory Prayer, so I was offering them." The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) did not reproach him.\)](#) The Isnad (chain of narrators) of this Hadith is acceptable. It was also reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he offered it after the sun had risen high in the sky. In fine, both actions comply with the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

It is to be noted that if someone slept late for any reason like having no alarm clock or having nobody to awaken him till about sunrise, when he wakes up, he should first offer the Sunnah Ratibah before offering the obligatory Salah even if this took place after sunrise.

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So, if he wakes up after sunrise, he should offer the Sunnah of Fajr first before offering the obligatory Salah. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) slept late during one of his journeys till the sun had risen high in the sky, he (peace be upon him) ordered Bilal to announce the Adhan (call to Prayer) and the Prophet (peace be upon him) acted like his usual habit of offering Sunnah Ratibah first, then he (peace be upon him) offered the obligatory Salah in congregation. This is the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him). So, the Sunnah is to offer the Sunnah (supererogatory) Salah first then the obligatory Salah, if the person slept late.



**Q: A questioner from Al-Ras says: As for the Sunnah (supererogatory Salah) of Fajr (Dawn), Your Eminence Shaykh, I often miss it because of sleeping. I only wake up when people are about to go back home from the Masjid (mosque). I postpone the Sunnah and offer it with Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon). Is this permissible or should I offer the Sunnah of Fajr with the obligatory Salah even if I wake up late?**

**A:** Yes, the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to offer two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) before offering Fajr (Dawn) obligatory Prayer even if you are late or after people finish the congregation before sunrise because the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer it even when he slept late like what took place with him when he (peace be upon him) was on a journey with his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet), when they woke up after the sun had risen high in the sky. He (peace be upon him) ordered Bilal to announce the Adhan (call to Prayer) and they offered the two Rak`ahs of Sunnah of Fajr, then

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they offered Fajr obligatory Prayer. So, whenever you get up, perform your Wudu' (ablution) and offer the Sunnah of Fajr first then offer the obligatory Prayer before sunrise.



**Q: Should the two Rak`ahs of the Sunnah of Fajr be offered after sunrise?**

**A:** Any person who misses the Sunnah (supererogatory Salah) of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer has more than one option; if he likes to offer it after the obligatory Salah, he could do so. Moreover, if he likes to offer it after sunrise, he could also do so since both actions are supported by the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet), so, both actions are permissible and valid.





## 152- Clarifying Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib that should be made up for if missed

**Q: What are Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) that should be made up for if missed?**

**A:** Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib are the supererogatory Salahs that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet (peace be upon him). They are twelve Rak`ahs (units of prayer) for residents only since those who are on a journey are not asked to offer them: Four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, two by two, and two after it, two after Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, two after `Isha' (Night) Prayer and two before Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to observe these twelve Rak`ahs whenever he was not on a journey. He (peace be upon him) said

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: [\(Whoever observes the practice of performing four Rak`ahs before Al-Zuhr Prayer and four after it, Allah will shield him against the Fire \(of Hell\).\)](#) If someone offered four Raka`hs after Zhuhr, this would be better but they are not Sunnah Ratibah because Sunnah Ratibah is only two Rak`ahs but if someone offered four, this would be great.

It is desirable to offer four Rak`ahs before `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer but they are not Rawatib but desirable supported by what the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(May Allah have mercy on a man who performs four Rak`ahs before Salat al-`Asr.\)](#) One can also offer two Rak`ahs between the Adhan (call to Prayer) and Iqamah (call to start Prayer) of both Maghrib and `Isha' though they are not Rawatib. They are not those of Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque) because it should be offered immediately after entering the Masjid (mosque) even if it is before the Adhan. If someone enters the Masjid after the Adhan of Maghrib or `Isha', he should offer only two Rak`ahs substituting Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid and the two Rak`ahs after the Adhan. When someone is on a journey, the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is to offer the Sunnah (supererogatory) Salah of Fajr only, and Witr should be offered in the late hours of the night.

As for the Sunnah of Zhuhr, Maghrib and `Isha', it is better not to offer them while one is on a journey, but

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the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to observe the Sunnah of Fajr whether he was on a journey or not. So, if a person missed it, he should make up for it after finishing the obligatory Salah or after sunrise, but the other Rawatib of Zhuhr, `Asr, Maghrib and `Isha' should not be made up for when their time is overdue.

However, the Sunnah of Fajr should be made up for either after offering the obligatory congregational Fajr Prayer or preferably after sunrise. As for the Sunnah of Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) and Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer), they are permissible whether the person is on a journey or at home. Likewise, is the case with the Sunnah of Wudu' (ablution) since it is Mustahab (desirable) at any time and place. Moreover, one should offer two Rak`ahs of Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid whenever he enters a Masjid even if he is on a journey.

In fine, first: Rawatib are twelve Rak`ahs to be observed while one is not traveling; four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr offered two by two, two Rak`ahs after Zhuhr, two Rak`ahs after Maghrib, two Rak`ahs after `Isha' and two Rak`ahs before Fajr Prayer after the break of dawn. These are the Rawatib which the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to observe throughout his life. The Sunnah of Fajr is the only Ratibah which should be made up for if it is missed either after offering the obligatory Fajr congregational Prayer or after the sun rises high in the sky. One can also make up for the Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer) of Zhuhr after offering Zhuhr congregational Prayer.

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Then he should offer the two Rak`ahs of Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed after an obligatory Prayer).



**Q: Ruling on the person who missed offering the Sunnah Qabliyyah May Your Eminence explain for us the Sunnan Ratibah? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** If a person missed, for example, the Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer) of Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, it would be permissible for him to offer it after offering Zhuhr congregational Prayer before offering the Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed after an obligatory Prayer). Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) of Zhuhr consists of four Rak`ahs (units of prayer) before offering the obligatory Zhuhr Prayer and two Rak`ahs after it like what the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do. If a person offered four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr obligatory Prayer and four Rak`ahs after it, this would be great and doing so is supported by what the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whoever observes the practice of performing four Rak`ahs before Al-Zuhr Prayer and four after it, Allah will shield him against the Fire \(of Hell\).\)](#) Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) are twelve Rak`ahs: Two Rak`ahs before Fajr; a Sunnah Ratibah which should be made up for after Fajr obligatory Prayer or after sunrise if it is missed, four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr, two Rak`ahs after it, two Rak`ahs after Maghrib and two Rak`ahs after `Isha'. These are known as Rawatib, and there is an authentic Hadith on them reported by Um Habibah (may Allah be pleased with her) from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he said: [\(If any Muslim servant \(of Allah\) prays for the sake of Allah twelve](#)

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[Rak`ahs \(of Sunan\) every day, over and above the obligatory ones, Allah will build for them a house in Paradise, or a house will be built for them in Paradise" in another narration: voluntary Rak`ahs.\)](#) (Related by Muslim in the Sahih) In another narration by Al-Tirmidhy and others who explained these Rawatib in detail: [\(Four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr, two Rak`ahs after it, two Rak`ahs after Maghrib, two Rak`ahs after `Isha' and two Rak`ahs before Fajr Prayer.\)](#) These are known as Rawatib: they are stressed Sunnah. It is Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) for a Mu'min (believer) to offer two Rak`ahs of Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon). If he offered more than only two, this would be great because the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer it four Rak`ahs and sometimes he used to offer more than four. This is narrated by Muslim in his Sahih from `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered Salat-ul-Duha in the day of the peaceful victory of Makkah with eight Rak`ahs. He (peace be upon him) said: [\(The prayer of those who are penitent is observed when your weaned camels feel the heat of the sun.\)](#) Thus it is better to offer it an hour or an hour and a half before offering Zhuhr Prayer.

Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) is Nafilah (supererogatory). Part of Tahajjud is offering one Rak`ah Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) after `Isha' whether before sleeping or in the middle of the night or in the dead of night preceding the break of dawn, though it is preferable to offer it in the late night hours if one can do so.

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But if a person fears that he will miss Tahajjud, he could offer it after offering `Isha' three, five,



seven, nine, eleven, thirteen Rak`ahs or more than that. The Prophet (peace be upon him) often used to offer it eleven Rak`ahs; offering them two by two and finishing with Witr. If a person offered Witr with only one Rak`ah at any part of the night, it would be enough, though it is preferable to offer more than only one. The best is to offer eleven Rak`ahs following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Moreover, whoever offered more than this number such as offering twenty-three Rak`ahs in Ramadan or in other months, there would be no blame on him but what is best and preferable is eleven or thirteen because it is what is reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him), offering them two by two and an odd one at the end. The best time is the late night hours though it is acceptable if it is offered early at night. If a person fears that he may not be able to get up and offer Tahajjud late at night, it is preferable for him to offer it early after offering `Isha' Prayer. It is Sunnah in Ramadan to offer Tarawih (special supererogatory night Prayer in Ramadan) in the first early hours of the night since people are supposed to be more active and they may not be able to get up to offer it late at night. So, if they offered it early, this would be better like what the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) used to do and like what the Prophet himself (peace be upon him) used to do on some nights though he (peace be upon him) abandoned it for fear that it might be thought Wajib (obligatory). It is reported that he (peace be upon him) led them as an Imam one night till the first one-third of the night, on another night

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to the middle of it and on third night to the late hours of the night. Then he (peace be upon him) abandoned it for fear that it may be thought as Wajib. He (peace be upon him) said: ["If a man prays with an imam until he goes he is reckoned as having spent a whole night in Salah."](#) This is a great bounty of Allah. It is desirable to pray with the Imam till he finishes Tarawih, especially in the last ten days of Ramadan, and one should not miss this great reward. The Sunnah for women is to offer Tahajjud at home because their Salah in their houses is better than that in the Masjid (mosque), though if they went to the Masjid, there would be no blame on them as long as they adhered to the Islamic code of dressing without applying any perfume but it is still preferable for them to offer it at home. It is better for them to go to the Masjid to refresh themselves or to attend religious sermons. This is great if it is done carefully without causing Fitnah (temptation) and without them applying perfume which is also a source of Fitnah. For this reason the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [Do not prevent women](#)

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[from going to Masjids](#) [\(and their houses are better for them.\)](#)



**Q: Is it Wajib (obligatory) to make up for Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) that were missed because of any reasons which may happen to someone preventing him from offering them at their due time?**

**A:** It is not Mustahab (desirable) to make up for the Rawatib when missed, if their time is over. They should not be made up except the Sunnah (Supererogatory Salah) of Fajr (Dawn) if it is missed before offering the Fajr obligatory Prayer. The Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to offer it after the obligatory Salah or after sunrise because the Prophet (peace be upon him) was reported to have said so and when he (peace be upon him) once slept late he did not pray the Fajr Prayer till the sun had risen high in the sky. In this case, he (peace be upon him) offered both the obligatory Salah and Sunnah of Fajr. But the Sunnah of Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, if it is missed is not to be made up for after its time is over. However, if someone missed the Sunnah Ratibah before Zhuhr, he could make up for it after offering Zhuhr obligatory Prayer, all praise be to Allah, likewise is the Sunnah of `Isha' (Night) Prayer.

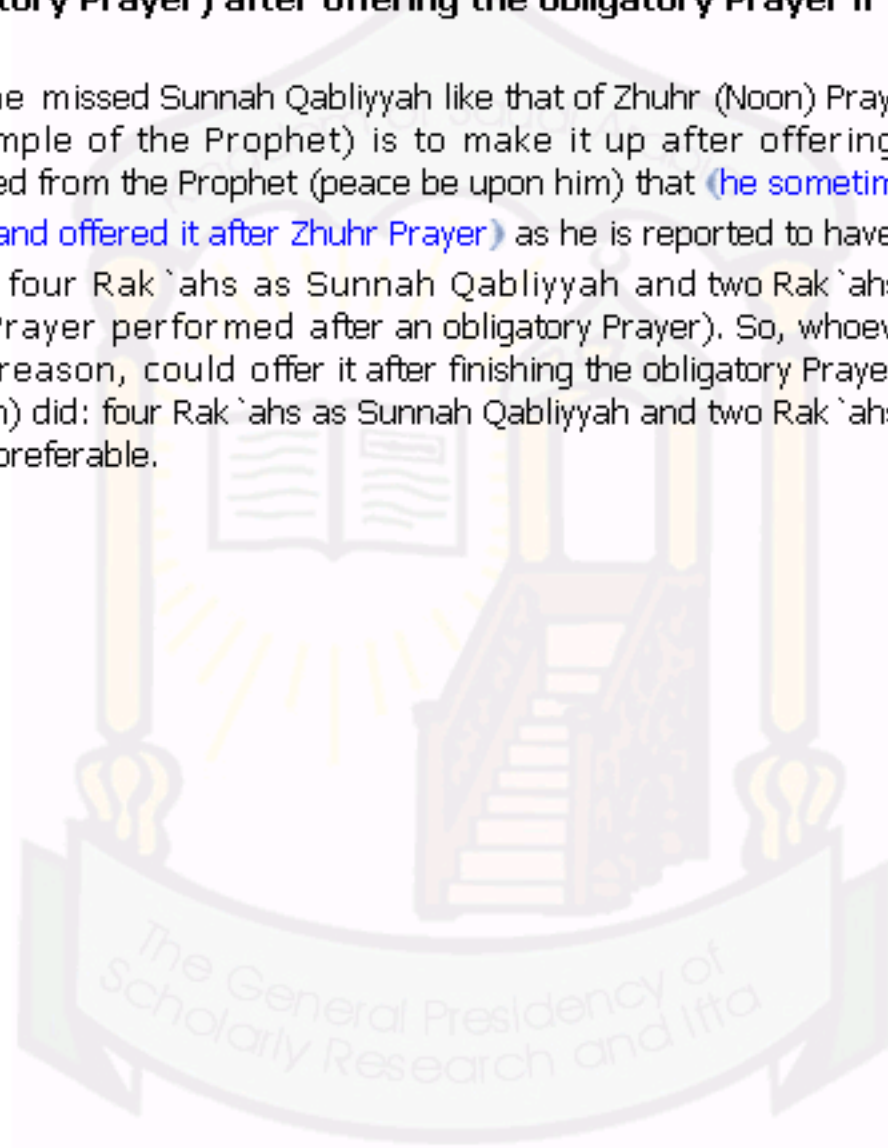
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If it is missed till the break of dawn, it should not be made up for. This is also the case with the Sunnah of Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer; if it is missed till twilight, it should not be made up for.



**Q: Is it permissible to make up for Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer) after offering the obligatory Prayer if we missed it for any reason?**

**A:** Yes, if someone missed Sunnah Qabliyyah like that of Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to make it up after offering Zhuhr Prayer. It was authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that [\(he sometimes missed the Sunnah Qabliyyah of Zhuhr and offered it after Zhuhr Prayer\)](#) as he is reported to have offered it six Rak`ahs (units of prayer): four Rak`ahs as Sunnah Qabliyyah and two Rak`ahs as Sunnah Ba`diyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed after an obligatory Prayer). So, whoever missed any Sunnah Qabliyyah for any reason, could offer it after finishing the obligatory Prayer like what the Prophet (peace be upon him) did: four Rak`ahs as Sunnah Qabliyyah and two Rak`ahs as Sunnah Ba`diyyah since this is what is preferable.





### 153- Ruling on neglecting the Sunnah Ratibah

**Q: Will a person be sinning if they neglect offering the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory prayer performed before or after Prayer)?**

**A:** A person will not be sinful if they neglect it. The Sunnah Ratibah is a Nafilah (supererogatory) Prayer that is offered with the obligatory Prayers: Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer,

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`Isha' (Night) Prayer, `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, and Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. All Prayers offered with these obligatory Prayers are Nafilah. The obligatory Prayers are only five: Fajr which consists of two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), Zhuhr which consists of four Rak`ahs for a resident, `Asr which consists of four Rak`ahs for a resident, Maghrib which consists of three Rak`ahs for both a resident and a traveler, `Isha' which consists of four Rak`ahs for a resident and two for a traveler, and Fajr which consists of two Rak`ahs for both the resident and the traveler. All Prayer attached to these obligatory ones are Nafilah. The Zhuhr has four Rak`ahs before it as Nafilah and two after it, and it is better to offer four after it instead of two. Four Rak`ahs are offered before the `Asr Prayer, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(May Allah have mercy on a man who performs four \(Rak`ahs\) before the `Asr Prayer.\)](#) They are offered with two Taslims (salutations of peace ending the Prayer). Between the Adhan (call to prayer) and Iqamah (call to prayer start) of the Maghrib Prayer, there are two Rak`ahs as Nafilah while the Sunnah Ratibah consists of two Rak`ahs after the Maghrib Prayer. The Sunnah Ratibah of the `Isha' Prayer is two Rak`ahs after it. Prayers offered between the two Adhans are called Sunnah. All these are Nafilah. Whoever offers them is rewarded but is not sinful for neglecting them.



#### 154- Non- observance of supererogatory prayers

**Q: What is the opinion of Your Eminence on a person who does not observe the supererogatory prayers and most often does not perform such supererogatory prayers?**

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**A:** If such person performs the obligatory acts of worship and shuns all forbidden things, Alhamdu lillah [All praise is due to Allah]. In this case, the person is regarded as a dutiful person and a Mu`min (believer), but they truly miss the virtue of hastening towards good deeds and commendable acts. There is a virtue of vying with one another in hastening towards good deeds. Undoubtedly, such person is dutiful and considered among the people of the right, but they are not of the foremost in performing righteous deeds until they have the drive and enthusiasm to seek commendable deeds and hasten towards the performance of good deeds.



**Q: It is noticeable that some worshipers leave the mosque after performing the obligatory Prayer without offering two Rak`ahs (unit of Prayer) and consider the performance of such two Rak`ahs as unimportant or an unessential part of Salah (Prayer); what is the ruling on this practice?**

**A:** It should first be mentioned that not all prayers are followed by two supererogatory Rak`ahs, as this is prescribed only after the Zhuhr (Noon), Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) Prayers. It is prescribed for worshipers to offer two supererogatory Rak`ahs after these three prayers. If one leaves the mosque without offering the two Rak`ahs and offers them at home, it is better and in fact preferable as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer these supererogatory prayers at home and say: [\(You should pray in your homes, for the best prayer of a worshiper is that which they offer at home except the obligatory prayers.\)](#) Therefore, if one leaves the mosque without offering supererogatory prayers and performs them at home, it is better. However, if a worshiper does not observe such supererogatory prayers at all, they leave a prayer that is not obligatory and consequently incur no sin. Such person gives up the virtue of vying with others in hastening towards

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good deeds and forsakes supererogatory prayers which the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to observe. It is prescribed for a Mu'min (believer) to observe supererogatory prayers either in the mosque or at home, but they are best offered at home. As for totally abandoning supererogatory prayers, it is not permissible for a Mu'min; rather, it is prescribed and preferable to observe these stressed supererogatory prayers as did the Prophet (peace be upon him). Moreover, it is preferable for a Mu'min to perform four Rak`ahs after the Zhuhr Prayer and two Rak`ahs after the Maghrib and the `Isha' Prayers and it is best to do so offered at home as mentioned above.



### 155- Explanation of the sufficient amount of recitation in the supererogatory Prayers

**Q: Our Muslim sister from Sana`a, Yemen, says: I am used to offering two Rak`ahs (unit of Prayer) as a supererogatory prayer after each obligatory prayer. Some people told me that it is obligatory for me to recite certain Ayahs (Qur'anicverses) such as Surah Al-Qafirun and some other particular Surahs in the supererogatory Prayers offered after the obligatory Prayers. I would like Your Eminence to tell me the conditions for the validity of supererogatory prayers and the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) Prayer as I am keen to observe such supererogatory Prayers. May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** After the five obligatory Prayers, it is prescribed for the Mu'min (believer) to offer twelve

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Rak`ahs that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to observe; four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer each two of which are offered alone, two Rak`ahs after the Zhuhr Prayer, two Rak`ahs after the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, two Rak`ahs after the `Isha' (Night) Prayer, and two Rak`ahs before the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. These are the supererogatory Prayers that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer on a regular basis whenever he was resident in Medina. It is prescribed for all Mu'mins to observe these supererogatory Prayers; four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer each two of which should be offered alone, two Rak`ahs after the Zhuhr Prayer, two Rak`ahs after the Maghrib Prayer, two Rak`ahs after the `Isha' Prayer, and two Rak`ahs before the Fajr Prayer. It is better to offer these supererogatory Prayers at home but it is permissible to offer them in the mosque. If a Mu'min offers four Rak`ahs after the Zhuhr Prayer, it is more preferable but the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not use to observe them regularly. The Prophet (peace be upon him) is reported to have said about these four Rak`ahs: [\(Whoever observes the performance of four Rak`ahs before the Zhuhr Prayer and four Rak`ahs after it, Allah keeps them away from the Hellfire\)](#)

Therefore, it is more preferable for a Muslim to offer four Rak`ahs after the Zhuhr Prayer and four Rak`ahs before the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer; each two Rak`ahs performed alone, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(May Allah be Merciful to a person who offers four Rak`ahs before the `Asr Prayer\)](#) However, it is worthy to mention that the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not observe these four Rak`ahs on a regular basis, but it is desirable for a Muslim to offer them; each two Rak`ahs are performed separately. During these supererogatory Prayers, a praying person can recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and other Ayahs of the Qur'an as much as may be easy for them. No particular recitation is required in the supererogatory Prayers as it is sufficient to recite Al-Fatihah and other Ayahs and short Surahs of the Qur'an. Allah

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says: [\(So, recite you of the Quran as much as may be easy for you. He knows that there will be some among you sick, others travelling through the land, seeking of Allah's Bounty; yet others fighting in Allah's Cause. So recite as much of the Quran as may be easy \(for you\).\)](#) It is worth

mentioning that recitation of Al-Fatihah is obligatory, while the following recitation is supererogatory. It is not permissible for a praying person to offer any prayer after the `Asr Prayer or the Fajr Prayer. You, the questioner, should not offer any Prayers after the `Asr Prayer or the Fajr Prayer as it is a time when a Muslim is forbidden to offer any supererogatory Prayers. These supererogatory Prayers performed on a regular basis are not observed in travel; consequently, it is better for a traveling person not to offer them with the exception of the supererogatory Prayer performed before the Fajr Prayer as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer it both in his travels and when he was resident. The supererogatory Prayer performed before the Fajr Prayer is two Rak`ahs only. The same applies to the Witr as the Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) is to offer it in travel or when one is resident because the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer it both in his travels and when he was resident as one Rak`ah at least and sometimes three, five or more odd number of Rak`ahs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) would often offer eleven Rak`ahs; each two Rak`ahs performed separately and one Rak`ah performed as the Witr and would sometimes offer thirteen Rak`ahs; each two Rak`ahs performed separately and one Rak`ah performed as the Witr. However, it is permissible for a Muslim to offer

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more or fewer Rak`ahs. Also, the Sunnah is to offer Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) during travel or while one is resident as two Rak`ahs or more as the Prophet (peace be upon him) sometimes offered it and advised some of his Companions to offer it. Salat-ul-Duha is a supererogatory Prayer and its due time extends from sunrise until a while before noon. It is better for Salat-ul-Duha to be offered when the sun rises high in the horizon. It is worth mentioning that this Prayer is well known as the Prayer of those who are ever oft-returning in all matters and in repentance toward Allah. May Allah grant all Muslims success!





### 156- Ruling on separating Fard and Nafilah Salah

**Q: I offer Fard (obligatory) Salah (Prayer) and Sunnah (supererogatory) Salah. Once I finish each Fard Salah, I offer four Rak'ahs (units of Prayer) or more as Sunnah Salah. Is it correct to offer Nafilah (supererogatory) Salah directly after performing Fard Salah, taking into account that it is stated in the book entitled 'Fiqh-ul-Sunnah' [Jurisprudence of the Sunnah (acts, sayings or approvals of the Prophet)] that it is Mustahab (desirable) to separate Fard and Nafilah Salah with period of time equal to the time the worshipper takes to recite the formulas of Dhikr (remembrance of Allah) after Salah?**

**A:** The Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is to separate Nafilah from Fard Salah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whenever one of you performs \(Fard\) Salah, they should not offer \(Nafilah\) Salah until they speak or go out.\)](#)

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Therefore, it is better for the Muslim to say after Fard Salah: 'Astaghfir Allah [I seek forgiveness from Allah]' thrice, 'Allahumma anta a-Salam wa minka a-Salam. Tabarakta ya dhal-Jalal wal-Ikram [O Allah! You are the (Giver of) Peace, and peace comes from You. Blessed be You, You are The Owner of Majesty and Bounty.]' The person can then recite some prescribed formulas of Dhikr such as: 'La ilaha illa Allah wahdahu la sharika lahu, la hul-mulku wa la hul-hamdu wa huwa `ala kulli shai'in qadir (There is no god but Allah, Alone, with no partner or associate; to Him belongs Sovereignty and Praise and He has power over all things); 'La hawla wala quwwata illa billah' (There is neither might nor power except with Allah!); 'La ilaha illa Allah, wala na`budu illa iyyah, lahu an-ni`mah wa lahu al-fadl wa lahu a-thana' al-hassan (There is no god but Allah. We worship Him Alone. He has all the Grace and Bliss and the best praise is due to Him); 'La ilaha illa allah mukhlisin lahu al-din wa lau kariha al-kafirun. Allahumma la mani`a lima a`taita, wa la mu`tiya lima mana`ta, wa la yanfa`u dhal-jaddi minka l-jadd (There is no god but Allah. We worship Him sincerely even if the Kafirs [disbelievers] hate this. O Allah! Nobody can hold back what You give or give what You hold back, and no one's status or power can benefit them against You).' This is Mustahab for both men and women after the Five Obligatory Prayers: Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon), Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night) and Fajr (Dawn).

It is also Mustahab to say: 'La ilaha illa Allah wahdahu la sharika lahu, la hul-mulku wa la hul-hamdu wa huwa `ala kulli shai'in qadir' ten times after Fajr and Maghrib Prayers. This is a special addition exclusive to these two Prayers. After that, it is Mustahab for the worshipper after the Five Obligatory Prayers to say: 'Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]' thirty-three times, 'Al-Hamdu lillah [All praise be to Allah]' thirty-three times and 'Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]' thirty-three times and complete the one hundred by saying: 'La ilaha illa Allah wahdahu la sharika lahu, la hul-mulku wa la hul-hamdu wa huwa `ala kulli shai'in qadir' only once.

It is reported in one Hadith that the worshipper who recites such formulas of Dhikr shall have their sins forgiven even if they were as much as

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the foam of the sea. There is no doubt that this is a great reward and therefore the Mu'minun (believers) should observe this all the time. It is Mustahab for the worshipper to follow this with reciting Ayat-ul-Kursy (the Qur'anic Verse of Allah's Chair, Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:255) in which Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴿Allâh! Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), Al-Hayyul-Qayyum (the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists). Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him except with His Permission? He knows what happens to them (His creatures) in this world, and what will happen to them in the Hereafter. And they will never compass anything of His Knowledge except that which He wills. His Kursî extends over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them. And He is the Most High, the Most Great. [This Verse 2:255 is called Ayat-ul-Kursî ]﴾

This is one Ayah (Qur'anic verse) which is desirable for the Mu'minun to recite after each Salah. It is also Mustahab to recite Surat (Qur'anic chapter) Al-Ikhlâs: ﴿Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.﴾ and the two Surahs of Al-Falaq and An-Nas only once after Zhuhr, `Asr and `Isha' Prayers and thrice after Maghrib and Fajr Prayers. It is also Mustahab to recite these three Surahs thrice upon going to bed along with pronouncing Tasbih thirty-three times, Tahmid thirty-three times and Takbir thirty-four times to complete them one hundred. However, after Fard Salah, the completion of the one hundred would be by saying: 'La Ilah illa Allah'. There is nothing wrong if the worshipper offers Nafilah Salah after Dhikr. In other words, the worshipper should not stand directly after finishing Fard Salah to perform any Nafilah Salah. It is better

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to perform four Rak`ahs after Zhuhr Prayer but only two as Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) will suffice. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Whoever observes four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr (Prayer) and four after it, Allah will keep them away from the Hellfire.﴾ There is no doubt that this is a great reward. The Sunnah Ratibah of Zhuhr Prayer is four Rak`ahs, each two are performed separately before Zhuhr, and two Rak`ahs after. These are called Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) because the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to observe them whenever he was at home. It is a great merit for the worshipper to perform four Rak`ahs after Zhuhr Prayer, each two separately because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Whoever observes four Rak`ahs before Zhuhr (Prayer) and four after it, Allah will keep them away from the Hellfire.﴾ This Hadith is related by Ahl-ul-Sunan (authors of Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes) through a sound chain of narrators on the authority of Umm Habibah (may Allah be pleased with her). As for `Asr and Fajr Prayers, there are no Nafilah Salah neither before or after them because it is impermissible to offer supererogatory Salah at these times.

As for Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers, the Sunnah Ratibah is two Rak`ahs after each of them. However, it may be more than two Rak`ahs. These are Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib

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which the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to observe even though it is permissible for the Muslim to perform more than two Rak`ahs after Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers as the matter is open to choice, and Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah). The worshipper can perform any number of Nafilah Rak`ahs they like but Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib of Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers are two Rak`ahs for each. It is also beneficial to perform as many Nafilah Rak`ahs between Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers as the worshipper can. It is also advisable to perform as many Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) Rak`ahs after `Isha' Prayer. However, the Sunnah Ratibah of `Isha' Prayer is two Rak`ahs. The

number of Rak`ahs of the Five Obligatory Prayers: Zhuhr, `Asr, Maghrib, `Isha' and Fajr Prayers, is four Rak`ahs for Zhuhr, `Asr, and `Isha' Prayers for the resident and two Rak`ahs for the traveler; three for Maghrib Prayer for both the resident and the traveler; and two for Fajr Prayer for both the resident and the traveler. For Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer, it is two Rak`ahs for both the resident and the traveler. As for Nafilah Salah, it is countless. However, Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib prescribed for the Muslim are twelve Rak`ahs the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to observe whenever he was resident: four before Zhuhr Prayer, two after Zhuhr, two after Maghrib, two after `Isha' and two before Fajr.

When the Prophet (peace be upon him) was traveling, he would not perform Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib with the exception of the Sunnah Ratibah of Fajr Prayer.

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He (peace be upon him) would not observe Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib of Zhuhr, Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers, but he would observe the Sunnah Ratibah of Fajr Prayer whether he was resident or traveling. Offering four Rak`ahs before `Asr Prayer is Mustahab but these four Rak`ahs are not among Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [﴿May Allah be Merciful to whoever performs four Rak`ahs before `Asr Prayer.﴾](#) It is also Mustahab for the worshipper to perform two Rak`ahs before Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [﴿There is Salah between each two Adhans \(that is, the Adhan \[call to Prayer\] and the Iqamah \[call to start the Prayer\]\).﴾](#) It is Mustahab for the worshipper to perform two or more Nafilah Rak`ahs after the Adhans of Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers, but these are not among Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib.



### 157- Ruling on reciting the Tashahhud in Nafilah Prayer

**Q: A questioner asks: When I perform a Sunnah (supererogatory) Salah, should I recite the formula recited in the last Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the last unit of Prayer) or does the formula recited in the first Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second unit of Prayer) suffice for this purpose? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** You should recite the formula of the last Tashahhud by reading the formula of Tahiyyat (at-Tahiyatu lil-lahi was-salawatu wat-taiyibat. As-salamu `alayika ayyuha n-Nabiyu wa rahmatul-lahi wa barakatuh. As-salamu `alayna wa `ala `ibadil-lahi s-salihin. Ash-hadu al-la ilaha illa Allah, wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan `Abduhu wa Rasuluh [All the compliments, prayers and good things are due to Allah; peace be on you, O Prophet, and Allah's Mercy and Blessings [be on you]. Peace be on us and on the pious subjects of Allah. I testify that there is no Deity [worthy of worship] but Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is His Slave and His Messenger]) and invoking peace and blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him), and following this with reciting the Du`a' (supplication) reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) in this regard. It is obligatory for the praying person to recite the formula pronounced in the first Tashahhud and follow it with invoking peace and blessings upon the Prophet

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(peace be upon him), but the Du`a' reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) in this regard is a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) though it is better to recite such Du`a' saying: "Allahumma inni a`udhu bika min `adhabi-jahannam, wa min `adhabi-l-Qabr, wa min fitnati-l-mahya wa-lmamat, wa min fitnati-l-masih ad-dajjal. (O Allah! I seek refuge with You from the punishment in Hellfire and from the punishment in the grave and from the afflictions of life and death, and the afflictions of Al-Masih Ad-Dajjal [the Antichrist])." Also, the praying person can invoke the good of both this life and the Hereafter. The praying person can also supplicate to Allah (Exalted be He) saying, "O Allah! Help me remember You, praise You and worship You very well." This makes the supererogatory prayer as perfect as the obligatory one. It is worth mentioning that invoking peace and blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him) is regarded by some Muslim scholars as a Rukn (integral pillar), while it is counted by some scholars as Wajib (obligatory) [based on a speculative text, according to the Hanafy School of Jurisprudence] and third group of scholars consider it a Sunnah. Therefore, you should recite the formula of invoking peace and blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him) in the last Tashahhud of the obligatory prayers and the Tashahhud of the supererogatory prayers. As for the supererogatory prayers, the formula of invoking peace and blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him) is recited after the Tahiyyat in the second Rak`ah according to most Hadiths reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) in this respect.



### 158- Ruling on separating obligatory Prayer and Sunnah Ratibah

**Q: Our Muslim sister from Riyadh asks: What is your opinion on separating the obligatory prayer and Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) for a period of time that may exceed half an hour for the purpose of reciting some formulas of Dhikr (remembrance of Allah) or fulfilling some needs of one's parents?**

**A:** There is nothing wrong if a man or a woman separate the obligatory prayer and the supererogatory prayer, whether the supererogatory prayer is offered before or after the obligatory prayer, as it is not a condition for the supererogatory prayer and the obligatory prayer to be performed

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one after the other without interruption. For example, if a person performs the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer and delays the regular supererogatory prayer offered after it for half an hour or for an hour, this is permissible as long as the due time of the Zhuhr Prayer is not over. The same applies to a worshipper who offers the supererogatory prayer before the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer and after the Adhan (call to Prayer), and then goes to satisfy some needs, and after that performs the Fajr Prayer some time later at home, for women and sick persons. As for men, it is obligatory for them to go to the Masjid (mosque) - after offering the supererogatory prayer at home - and observe the congregational prayer there, if the supererogatory prayer is offered before the obligatory prayer, such as the regular supererogatory prayer offered before the Zhuhr Prayer, so as not to be late for the congregational prayer. If they offer the supererogatory prayer at home, it is not permissible for them to be so late that they miss the congregational prayer. It is permissible for them, however, to perform the supererogatory prayer at home or in the Masjid as the matter is open to choice. But it is not permissible for them to be late for or miss the congregational prayer. It is also impermissible for women and sick persons, who offer the obligatory prayers at home, to delay the obligatory prayer until its due time is over. If their delaying an obligatory prayer does not mean offering it after its due time, then doing so is permissible as long as the due time of this obligatory prayer is not over.



### 159- Ruling on changing place to offer supererogatory prayer

**Q: Is there any clear evidence regarding the desirability of changing place to perform a supererogatory prayer?**

**A:** Nothing was authentically reported in this regard, but there is a Hadith Da`if (a Hadith that fails to reach the status of Hasan, due to a weakness in the chain of narration or one of the narrators) denoting the virtue of

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changing places to perform supererogatory prayer after the obligatory prayer. This Hadith is considered as Da`if by Abu Dawud, but some of the Salaf (righteous predecessors, may Allah be merciful to them) observed such practice. Also, Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with both him and his father) used to change places for the supererogatory prayer after performing the obligatory prayer and command people to do the same. Therefore, it is permissible to either change places to perform a supererogatory prayer after an obligatory prayer, or remain in the same place as the matter is open to choice, Alhamdu lillah [All praise is due to Allah]. Finally, one may offer Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) in the same place where one has just performed the obligatory prayer and one may change the place for the supererogatory prayer after the obligatory prayer as both practices are good.



**Q: Is it true that changing place to offer supererogatory prayer after performing the obligatory one is an act of Sunnah (an action following the teachings of the Prophet)?**

**A:** There is only a Hadith Da`if (a Hadith that fails to reach the status of Hasan, due to a weakness in the chain of narration or one of the narrators) regarding this practice which is reported to have been done by Ibn `Umar. Thus, this matter is open to choice; there is nothing wrong with doing or abandoning it. The matter is open to choice, Alhamdu lillah [All praise is due to Allah]").





**Q: Our Muslim sister from Jordan asks: Some people change places after performing the obligatory prayer in order to offer supererogatory one, claiming that**

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**such place of the earth will witness in their favor on the Day of Resurrection, is this practice right?**

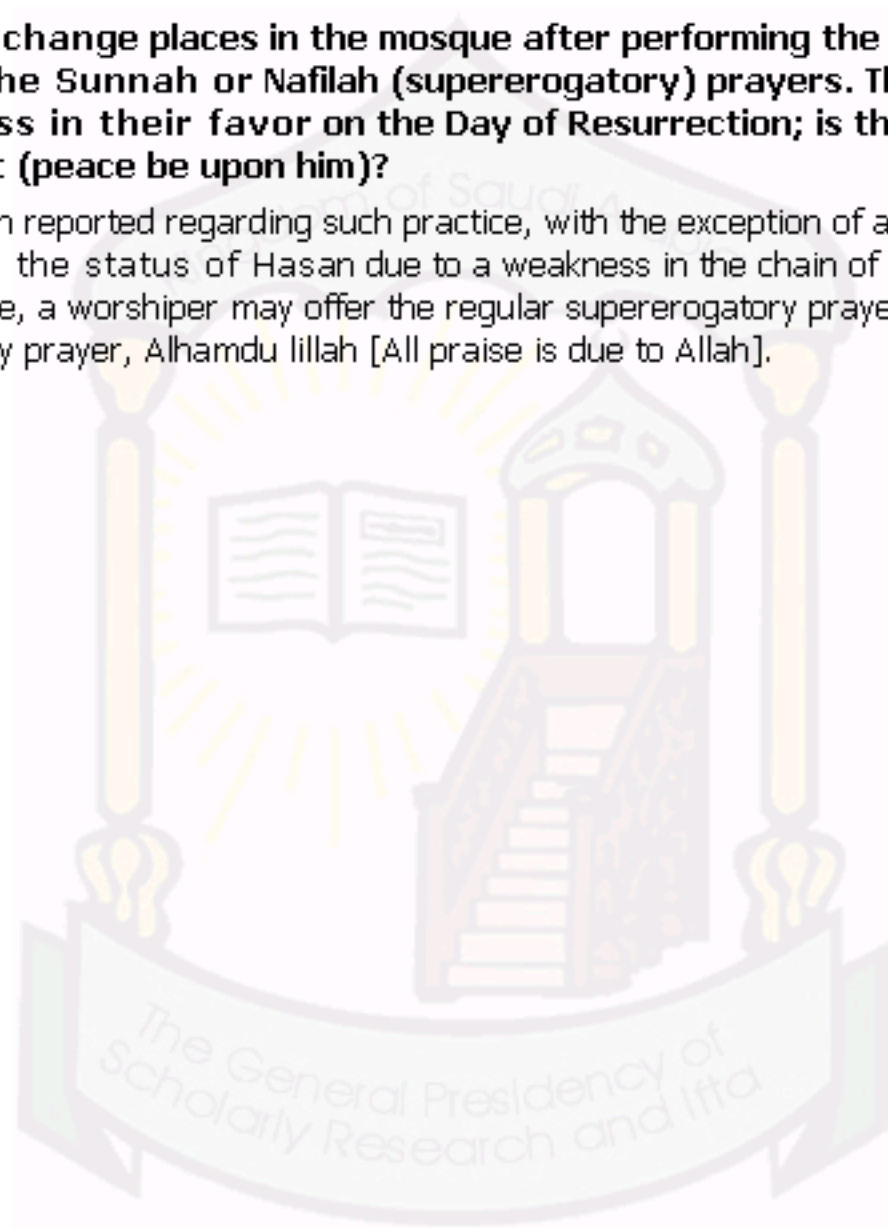
**A:** This is better if possible, but it is not necessary. It is permissible to offer the supererogatory prayer in the same place where one has just performed the obligatory prayer, Alhamdu lillah [All praise is due to Allah]. Nothing has been reported about the Prophet (peace be upon him) with regard to the virtue of changing places for a supererogatory prayer after an obligatory one, but there is nothing wrong with doing so.





**Q: Some people change places in the mosque after performing the obligatory prayer in order to offer the Sunnah or Nafilah (supererogatory) prayers. They believe that the earth will witness in their favor on the Day of Resurrection; is this practice reported about the Prophet (peace be upon him)?**

**A:** Nothing has been reported regarding such practice, with the exception of a Hadith Da`if (a Hadith that fails to reach the status of Hasan due to a weakness in the chain of narration or one of the narrators). Therefore, a worshiper may offer the regular supererogatory prayers wherever they have offered the obligatory prayer, Alhamdu lillah [All praise is due to Allah].





## 160- The legal ruling on offering supererogatory Prayers in congregation

**Q: Is it lawful to offer supererogatory Prayers in congregation?**

**A:** Yes, it is permissible to offer supererogatory Prayers sometimes in congregation. The Prophet

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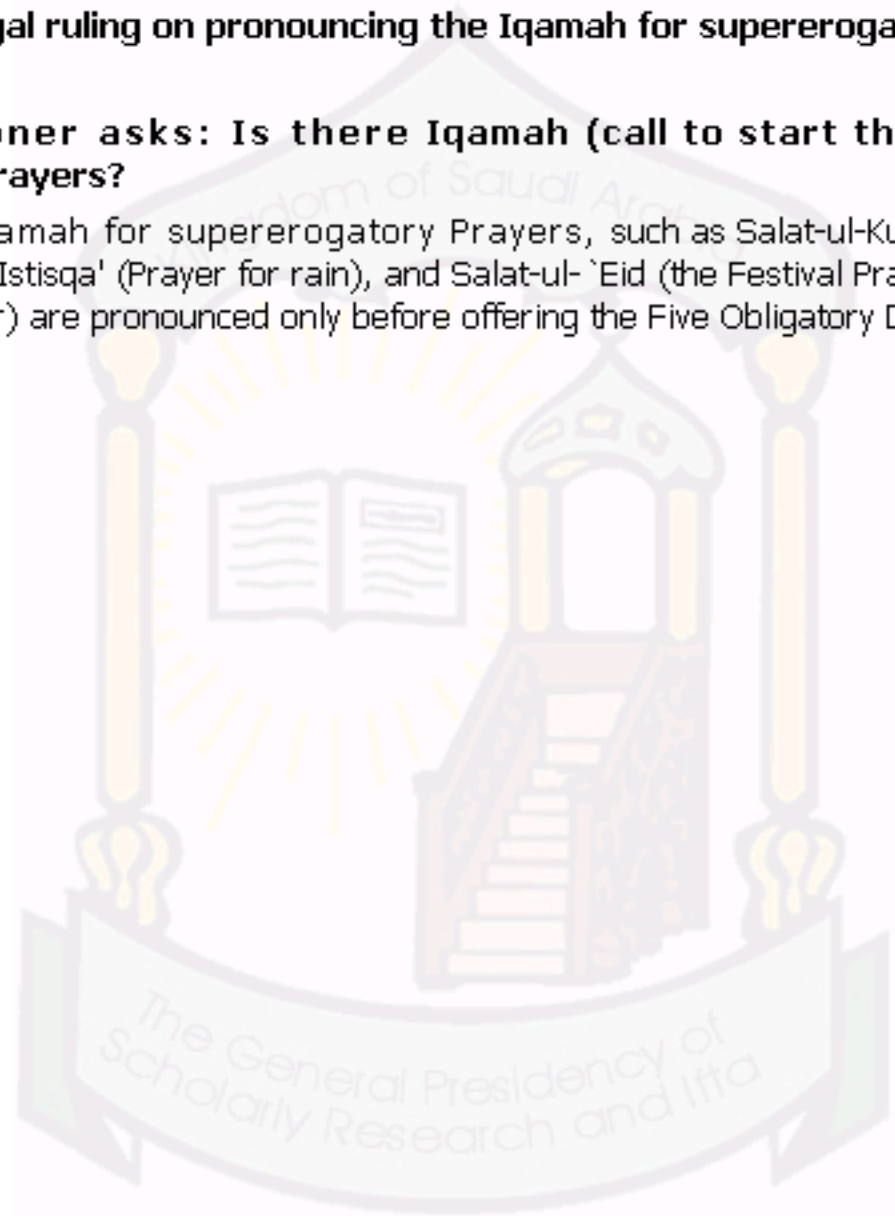
(peace be upon him) visited some of his Companions and led them in supererogatory Prayers. Accordingly, there is no problem if one visits his fellow Muslims and offers and with them a supererogatory Prayer like Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), for example. However, one should not do this on a regular basis.



### 161. The legal ruling on pronouncing the Iqamah for supererogatory Prayers

**Q: The questioner asks: Is there Iqamah (call to start the Prayer) for the supererogatory Prayers?**

**A:** There is no Iqamah for supererogatory Prayers, such as Salat-ul-Kusuf (Prayer on a solar eclipse), Salat-ul-Istisqa' (Prayer for rain), and Salat-ul-`Eid (the Festival Prayer), etc. Iqamah and Adhan (call to Prayer) are pronounced only before offering the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers.





### 162. Taking acts of worship as a habit

**Q: I read the following statement in a book: 'Do not make worshipping Allah as a habit.' How does a Muslim worship Allah for His Sake, and not as a habit observed ritualistically? May Allah reward you with the best.**

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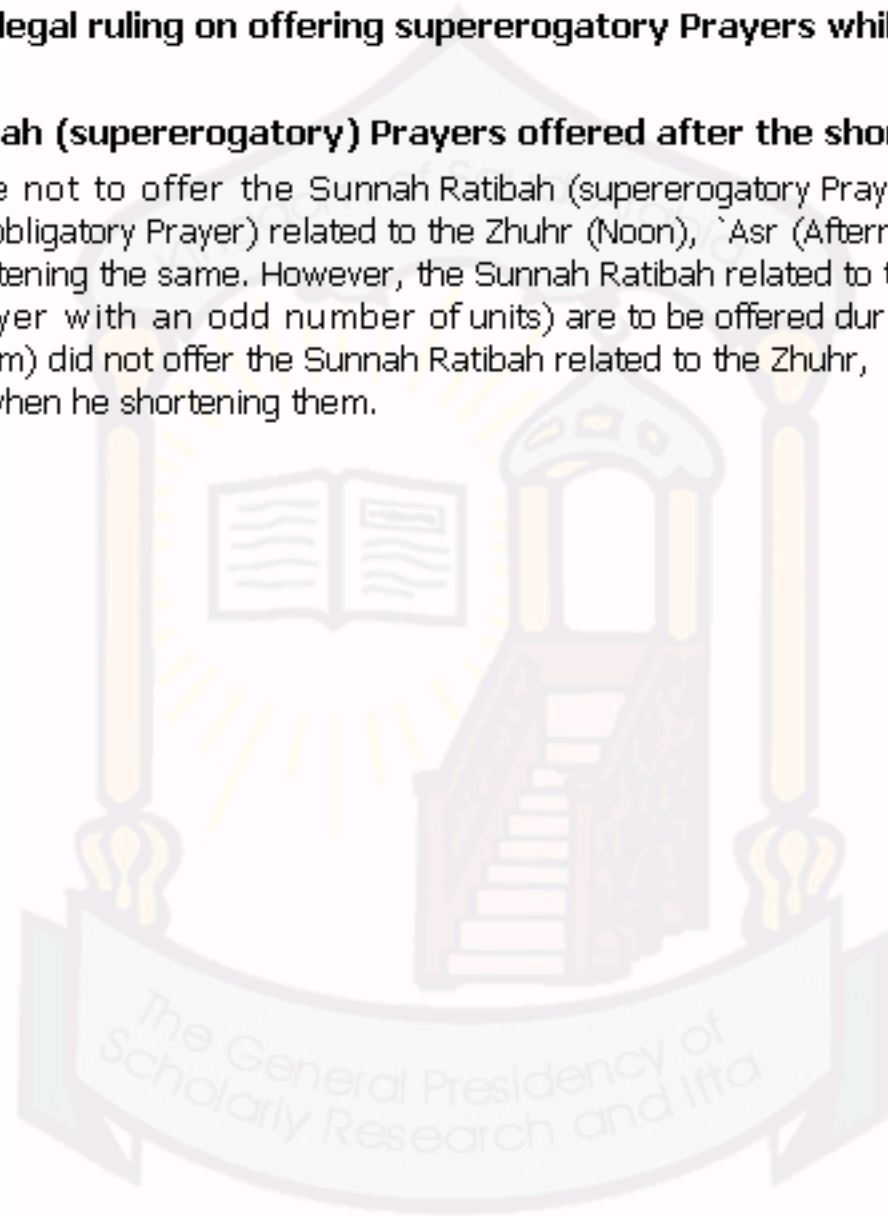
**A:** This statement suggests that Muslims are not to perform Prayers as mere rituals; rather, they are to offer Prayers as an act that draws them closer to Allah, and not as a commonplace task. That is, when you offer Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), for example, do so to get closer to Allah, not because you are accustomed to observing it. So is the case with offering Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer). Offer these acts of worship to show obedience to Allah, not as a routine or because you follow your parents in doing this! Observe Salat-ul-Duha, the late night Prayer, and other supererogatory Prayers as a means of bringing you nearer to Allah, and to show dutifulness and obedience for His Sake!



### 163. The legal ruling on offering supererogatory Prayers while traveling

**Q: Are there Sunnah (supererogatory) Prayers offered after the shortened Prayers?**

**A:** It is preferable not to offer the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed regularly before or after an obligatory Prayer) related to the Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon), or `Isha' (Night) Prayers when shortening the same. However, the Sunnah Ratibah related to the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer and the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) are to be offered during travel. The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not offer the Sunnah Ratibah related to the Zhuhr, `Asr, Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' Prayers when he shortening them.





**Q: Are we exempted from offering Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) during travel, except those related to the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer and the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units)? I prefer to perform them during my travels,**

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**is there anything wrong with my doing so?**

**A:** It is preferable not to offer Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib except that which is related to the Fajr Prayer, following the teachings of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in this respect. Accordingly, one may offer the supererogatory prayer before the Fajr Prayer, and refrain from performing those related to the Zuhur (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon), Maghrib (Sunset), and `Isha' Prayers. This is because Allah has permitted shortening the obligatory Prayers for travelers by half as an ease, so they in turn should give up performing the supererogatory Prayers related to these Prayers. As for Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), the supererogatory Prayer after ablution, or Tahajud (optional late night Prayer), these are preferable to be observed by travelers as well as residents. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer Tahajud and Salat-ul-Duha while traveling. Regarding the regular supererogatory Prayers to be offered before and after the Zuhur Prayer, before the `Asr Prayer, after the Maghrib Prayer, and after the `Isha' Prayer, these are not to be offered during journeys of a distance equal to eighty kilometers or more.



**164. The legal ruling on offering the Sunnah Ratibah by travelers when they are led in the obligatory Prayer by a resident**

**Q: Should a traveler offer the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed regularly before or after the obligatory prayers) if he or she has performed the regular obligatory Prayer with a congregation of residents?**

**A:** If a traveler offers an obligatory Prayer with a congregation of residents, it is preferable for them to offer the related Sunnah Ratibah, as in this case they take the ruling related to residents. Accordingly, if travelers have not shortened the obligatory Prayers, they are preferably to offer the relative Sunnah Ratibah; but if they have not done this, there is no problem.

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So, if they are to shorten the obligatory Prayers, it is preferable for them not to offer the relative Sunnah Ratibah except in the case of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer; as the Sunnah Ratibah related to it is to be observed in residence or during travel. The Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) is also to be observed by travelers. The Sunnah Ratibah related to the other obligatory Prayers, the Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon), Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night) Prayers are preferably not to be offered by travelers when they shorten these obligatory Prayers.



### 165. The meaning of Tatawu` Prayer

#### **Q: What is the difference between Tatawu`, Nafilah, and Ratibah Prayers?**

**A:** In general, they are all Tatawu`, meaning voluntary. Al-Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) are the supererogatory Prayers to be performed on a regular basis before or after the Obligatory Prayers like these acts relative to the Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon), Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers, and also the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). These supererogatory Prayers are called Rawatib and Tatawu`. Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), and Salat-ul-wudu' - supererogatory Prayer offered after performing ablution - are also Tatawu`. All these Prayers are also called Nafilahs, meaning supererogatory. All Prayers other than the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers are Tatawu`. That is why when a person asked the Prophet (peace be upon him) about the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers saying: [\('Am I obliged to pray anything else besides this?' He \(the Prophet\) said: 'No, except that which you pray as tatawu` \(voluntarily\).'\)](#) So Tatawu` is the same as Nafilah, with both referring to the Prayers offered voluntarily in addition to the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers, i.e., the Zhuhr, `Asr, Maghrib,

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`Isha', and Fajr Prayers. These voluntary Prayers are called Tatawu`. Salat-ul-Duha, Al-Rawatib before or after the Obligatory Prayers, Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque), the optional late night Prayer, and the Witr are all Tatawu`. Salat-ul-`Eid (the Festival Prayer) takes the ruling of the Obligatory Prayers as they are considered to be obligatory, according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars. Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer is also one of the Five Obligatory Prayers on Friday. As for Salat-ul-Istisqa' (Prayer for rain), and Salat-ul-Istighatha (Prayer for help), they are Tatawu`. The Janazah (Funeral) Prayer is a collective obligation, which if offered by a group of Muslims, or even one Muslim, the other Muslims will be exempted from performing the same.





### 166. The meaning of Sunnah Ratibah

**Q: What is the difference between these terms: Ratibah, Nafilah, and Mu'akadah?**

**A:** Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) is the supererogatory Prayer which the Prophet (peace be upon him) urged his companions to offer regularly, or that he used to perform on a regular basis; such as the supererogatory Prayers performed regularly with the Zhuhr (Noon), Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), Fajr (Dawn) Prayers, and Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayers. These supererogatory Prayers are called Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) because Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) used to perform them regularly. Nafilah refers to non- obligatory acts of worship in general, like Prayer, Sawm (Fast),

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voluntary charity, etc. Such optional acts of worship are called Nafilah. The supererogatory Prayers performed before noon (Salat-ul-Duha), the regular supererogatory Prayers performed with the obligatory ones (Al-Rawatib), the Prayer with an odd number of units (Al-Witr), fasting on Mondays and Thursdays, fasting six days of Shawwal, and voluntary charity are all called Nafilahs. As for the stressed Sunnah, it refers to specific stressed supererogatory acts of worship such as Al-Rawatib, Al-Witr, and Salat-ul-Duha.



## 167. The difference between the Fard and Nafilah Prayers

### Q: Are there differences between the Fard and Nafilah Prayers ?

**A:** Yes, there are differences. The Nafilah is a desirable supererogatory act, while the Fard is obligatory, based on a definitive text. If one does not offer the Nafilah Prayer, such as Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), Al-Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), or the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) related to the the Zhuhr (Noon), Fajr (Dawn), Maghrib (Sunset), and `Isha' (Night) Prayers, one is not regarded as sinful for this. On the other hand, if one gives up the the Fard Prayers, one is sinful and may even be considered a disbeliever if one does so intentionally. The Nafilah Prayer may be offered while sitting, even if the person performing it is healthy, while the Fard Prayer cannot be performed while sitting unless the person offering it has a reason for this; such as being sick or disabled. The Prophet (peace be upon him) would sometimes offer the optional late night Prayer while sitting, and he (peace be upon him) said: [Whoever prays while standing will get greater reward;](#)

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[one who prays while sitting will get half of the reward of the person praying while standing; and one who prays laying will get half of the reward of the person who prays sitting.](#) Peace and blessings be upon the Prophet. So, it is permissible in general to pray the Nafilah during the night or day while sitting. However, this is not the case with the Fard Prayer. The latter must be offered while standing, as the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said to `Imran: [Offer Prayer while standing.](#) He said to `Imran ibn Al-Husain (may Allah be pleased with him): [Pray while standing and if you cannot, pray while sitting, and if you cannot do even that, then pray lying on your side.](#) [If you cannot do even that, you can pray lying on your back.](#) This Hadith is about the Fard; as for the Nafilah, there is no problem if one performs it while sitting; if he or she finds himself or herself too tired to stand while praying the same, they may sit.



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### 168. Issue on the difference between Nafilah and Sunnah

**Q: The questioner asks: What is the difference between Sunnah and Nafilah (supererogatory act) as there is some confusion regarding their meanings in the minds of many Muslims?**

**A:** Nafilah refers to supererogatory acts of worship which Allah has not ordained like Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), Al-Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units), Al-Rawatib Prayers (the supererogatory Prayers performed on a regular basis before or after the Obligatory Prayers), and Salat-ul-wudu'- supererogatory Prayer offered after performing ablution. All these Prayers are called Nafilahs. As for Al- Zhuhr (Noon), Al- `Asr (Afternoon), Al- Maghrib (Sunset) Prayers. For example, these are obligatory Prayers called Fard (obligatory, based on a definitive text). The Hajj performed by Muslims for the first time their life is called Fard, while the second Hajj performed by the same person is called Nafilah. Fasting Ramadan is Fard, and so on. As for the Sunnah, this is a term with a wide range of meanings. It refers to the sayings, acts, and approval practices of the Prophet. It also refers to a Nafilah an act of worship; and in this sense, Salat-ul-Duha, for example, is called Sunnah. So it is sometimes used synonymously with Nafilah to refer to a non-obligatory act of worship like Salat-ul-Duha and Witr; and sometimes refers to the acts, statements and biography of the Prophet (peace be upon him). It also refers to what contrasts Bid`ah (innovation in religion); for instance, fasting on Mondays and Thursdays is Sunnah in contrast to offering supererogatory Fast in the month of Rajab on Fridays in particular, which is Bid`ah.

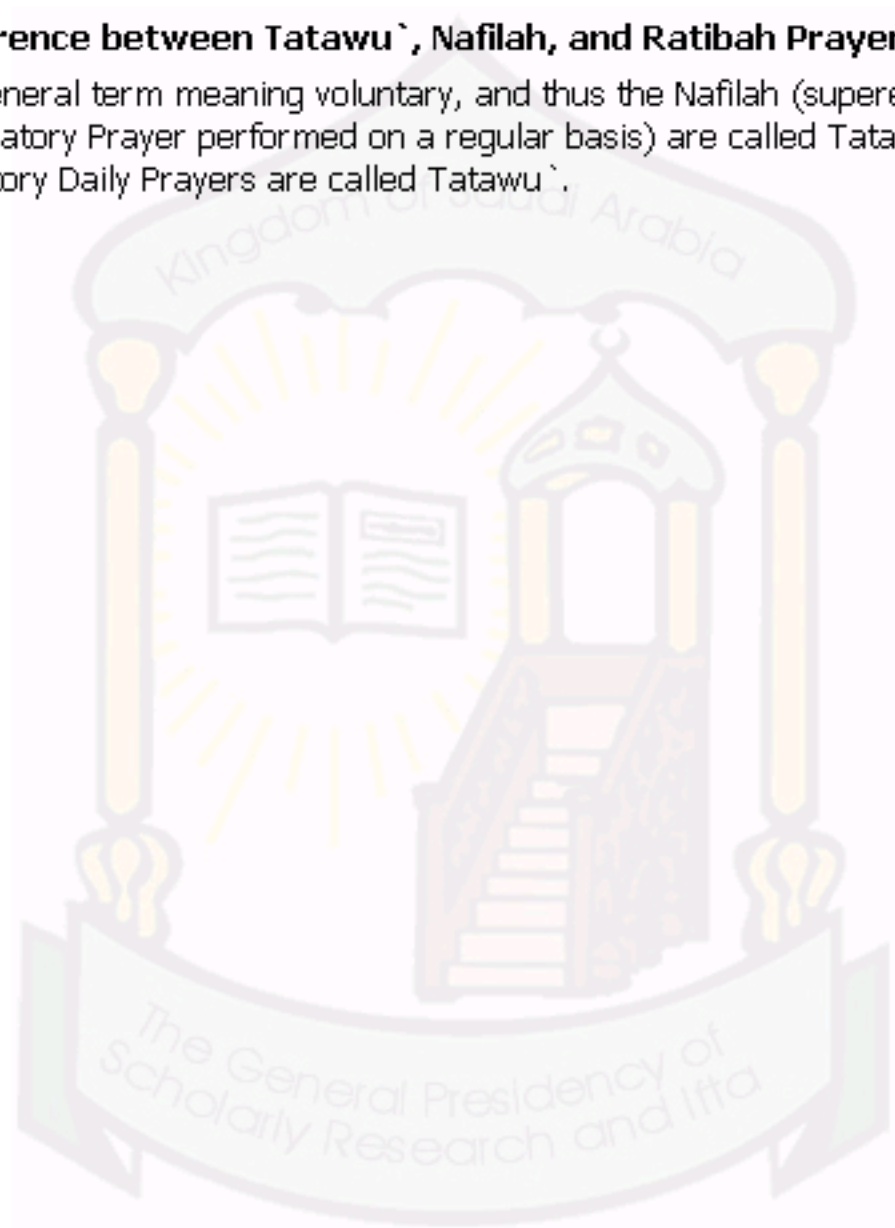
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Fasting the whole year is Bid`ah. Allah's Messenger forbade doing so and said: [\(He has not really fasted who has fasted continuously.\)](#) Accordingly, fasting three days per month and fasting on Mondays and Thursdays is Sunnah. So Sunnah refers to Nafilah, non-obligatory acts, and acts contradicting what is Bid`ah.



**Q: Is there a difference between Tatawu`, Nafilah, and Ratibah Prayers?**

**A:** Tatawu' is a general term meaning voluntary, and thus the Nafilah (supererogatory) Prayer, and Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) are called Tatawu`. All Prayers other than the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers are called Tatawu`.





**169. The legal ruling on offering the same obligatory Prayer twice in two congregations.**

**Q: Is it lawful to offer a certain obligatory Prayer twice in two congregations?**

**A:** The first Prayer will be considered the obligatory Prayer, and the second will be counted as Nafilah (supererogatory). If one performs a certain obligatory Prayer

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with a congregation; then another congregation comes to offer the same Prayer and one prays with them, the second Prayer here is considered Nafilah and the first is counted as the obligatory one relating to the time in question.



### 170. The legal ruling on drinking sipping water during the Nafilah Prayer

**Q: A questioner from Al-Jawf asks: What is the legal ruling on sipping water during the Nafilah (supererogatory) Prayer? Please, provide evidences for this issue.**

**A:** Drinking water during the obligatory Prayers is forbidden, and so is eating, because Prayer is an act that preoccupies the person performing it and so is not to include eating, drinking or speaking to others. It is obligatory to attain serenity while praying and to enter the same devoutly. As for the Nafilah Prayer, some scholars consider it lawful to do so, while others have forbidden it. It was reported that `Abdullah ibn Al-Zubayr (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) used to drink water during the Nafilah Prayer, as he would prolong it, especially Tahajud (optional late night Prayer). I do not know a clear proof indicating the lawfulness of drinking during Prayer. Prayer is a preoccupying act, and so the opinion that seems correct to me - and Allah knows best - is that abstaining from this is preferable as it keeps the person on the safe side with regard to the Nafilah Prayer. This is to be done based on the obligatory Prayers, as the Nafilah Prayer takes the rulings of the obligatory one unless there is evidence indicating otherwise, and I know of no clear proof from Allah's Book or the Sunnah (sayings, acts, or approvals of the Prophet) that indicates the lawfulness of drinking water during the Nafilah Prayer. So the opinion that seems correct to me is to abstain from this as is the case with the obligatory Prayers. Allah (Exalted and Glorified be He) knows best!



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171. What the praying person should do when one of their parents calls out to them

**Q: If I have entered into the Nafilah (supererogatory) Prayer and my father or mother call me, should I answer them or continue my Prayer?**

**A:** You are to say: 'Subhan Allah (Glory be to Allah)', as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(He who doubts something \(and wants to draw the attention of others to the same\) while he is praying, let him glorify Allah. If he glorifies Allah, others would turn toward him; clapping the hands is for women.\)](#) It is related in a previous Shari`ah (Divine Law) that Jurayh was punished when his mother called him while he was praying and he did not answer her. As for our Shari`ah, Allah (Exalted and Glorified be He), as the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) told us, has permitted males to say: 'Subhan Allah' (Glory be to Allah) and females to clap while praying. So you can say: 'Subhan Allah' so that your father or others know that you are praying and thus excuse you. Should there be an accident that necessitates interrupting the Prayer, you can interrupt it to save them from something dangerous like fire or death. In such cases, you are permitted to interrupt the Prayer even if it is an obligatory; save them and then go back to perform the Prayer. But if there is no danger, you can say 'Subhan Allah'. All praise be to Allah!



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**172. The legal ruling on praying after sunrise in another place of the mosque other than that in which the one has offered the Fajr Prayer**

**Q:** There is a Hadith to the effect that one who observes the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer in congregation and then sits in his place remembering Allah until the sun rises, and then offers two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), will be rewarded as the reward of a complete Hajj and `Umrah (lesser Pilgrimage). Does this mean that one who changes places in the same mosque, seeking a more comfortable and tranquil place would be prevented from this blessing?

**A:** The opinion that seems correct here is that changing one's place in the same mosque does not prevent one from attaining this blessing, as the entire mosque is a place of Prayer. So, there is no problem if a person moves from one place to another inside the same mosque to rest on a pillar, etc., or to seek a more comfortable and tranquil place away from some people who raise their voices in recitation so that they are distracted by them. They will attain this bounty In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills).





**Q: A Muslim brother asks: His Eminence Shaykh! If a person observes the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer in congregation and then sits in his place remembering Allah until sunrise, and then offers two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), is this rewarded as the reward of one Hajj and `Umrah (lesser Pilgrimage)?**

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**A:** Yes, there is a Hadith with a good chain of narrators indicating this meaning. According to this Hadith, if a person observes the Fajr Prayer in congregation and then sits in his place until the sun rises and then he or she offers two Rak`ahs, this will be counted as a complete Hajj and `Umrah for them.



### 173. The legal ruling on keeping constantly reciting Surah Al- Kafirun in supererogatory Prayers

**Q: An Egyptian Muslim residing in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia asks: "I often like to read Surah Al Kafirun, especially in the Sunnah (supererogatory) Prayers and Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon). I do this most of the time, not always. I feel an increase in faith when reciting it and that I am free of disbelief. Is this lawful or not?"**

**A:** This is permissible- all praise be to Allah. You may recite it whenever you want together with Surah Al-Ikhlâs. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) used to recite Surah Al-Kafirun with Surah Al- Ikhlas which begins with: **(Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.)** in the Sunnah Prayer after the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, the Sunnah Prayer after the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, and the Sunnah Prayer after Tawaf (two-unit-Prayer performed after circumambulating the Ka`bah). During these Prayers, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) would recite the Surah which begins with: **(Say: (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to these Mushrikûn and Kâfirûn): "O Al-Kafirûn (disbelievers in Allâh, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar)!)** and that starting with: **(Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One.)** in the second Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) after reciting Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an). Surah Al- Kafirun is a great Surah, and there is no problem in reciting it frequently.



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#### 174. The legal ruling on Salat-ul-Duha

**Q: What is the legal ruling on Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon)? I have asked some scholars about it and they have given me different answers. Some say the Hadiths mentioning it are not Sahih (authentic) and so it should be given up. Some say it should be observed; and others say whoever desires to pray it can do so whenever he or she desires praying any number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) one wishes. Some others said it can be offered every other day. So I referred to the 'Light on the Way' Program for a definite answer; may Allah enlighten the way for us. I hope I do not need to seek the answer at any other place. May Allah grant you success!**

**A:** Salat-ul-Duha is a stressed Sunnah; the least number of units that can be performed is two, while the best number is eight. One may also increase this number, offering ten, twelve, or more. All this is permissible. It has been authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) [\(offered it in eight rak`ahs \(units of prayer\) on the Day of Conquest \(of Makkah\).\)](#) It is also reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) recommended offering Salat-ul-Duha to Abu Al-Darda' and Abu Hurayrah. In this regard, it was authentically related that the Prophet (peace and be upon him) recommended to Abu Hurayrah and

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Abu Al-Darda' three things: Salat-ul-Duha, fasting three days per month, and offering Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) Prayer before going to bed. It was also authentically reported on the authority of Abu Dhar (may Allah be pleased with him) that when some poor Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) asked him about the charity paid by the wealthy and that the later received greater rewards for this, he said: [\(Do you not see that Allah has granted you something to give as charity?! Every tasbihah \(saying: 'Glory be to Allah'\) is counted as charity, every Tahlilah \(saying: 'There is no god but Allah\) is counted as a charity, every tahmidah \(saying: 'All Praise be to Allah'\) is counted as a charity; every takbirah \(saying: 'Allah is Great'\) is counted as a charity; Propagation of Virtue is counted as a charity, and Prevention of Vice is counted as a charity.\)](#) In another narration: [\(All this can be attained by two units of Prayer offered before noon.\)](#) This indicates that offering two supererogatory units of Prayer before noon takes the place of paying Sadaqahs (voluntary charity) for every joint and limb of the person's body. This indicates its being stressed and that it is a great Prayer which carries a great deal of reward. It is desirable to offer it every day. Some Salaf (righteous predecessors) said that it is to be offered every other day, but the correct opinion is to offer it daily. The Prophet (peace be upon him) recommended offering it and urged his Companions to do so; therefore, this indicates that it is a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) that is offered daily whenever possible. It is not obligatory; so one may miss it occasionally. However,

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if given up completely, there is be no problem. This is because it is a stressed Sunnah like Witr and Al-Rawatib (supererogatory Prayers that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) with the Obligatory Prayers such as the Sunnah Prayers performed with the Zhuhr (Noon), Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers. All these Prayers are Sunan (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) and Nafilahs (supererogatory acts), which if given up will not cause one to be sinful. But it is preferable, with all the more reason, to observe these Sunan regularly as they carry great rewards and make up for the shortcomings of the obligatory Prayers. Salat-ul-Duha is classified under the Sunan as it is a stressed Sunnah. As for the fact that the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not observe it on a regular basis, he may have done so in order that it would not become difficult for his followers to perform regularly. Had he offered it on a regular basis, its emphasis would have been stressed further and it might have been difficult for some Muslims to observe it consistently, and also he (peace be upon him) was always extremely busy. In order for an act to be regarded as a Sunnah, it needs to be proved by one or more of three ways: being stated, practiced, or approved by the Prophet (peace be upon him). From this perspective, the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered Salat-ul-Duha, approved its performance and recommended it for his Companions. He offered it on day of the Opening of Makkah and on some other days. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) would offer four Rak`ahs \(units of Prayer\) of Salat-ul-Duha \(at the forenoon\) and would add to them whatever Allah willed.\)](#) (Related by Muslim) The Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) also observed it. This indicates that Salat-ul-Duha is a stressed Sunnah which the Prophet (peace be upon him) approved, recommended and offered it himself.



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**Q: What is the legal ruling on Salat-ul-Duha, is it a supererogatory or an obligatory Prayer?**

**A:** Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) is supererogatory, not obligatory. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) was asked about the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers, i.e., the Zhuhr (Noon), `Asr (Afternoon) Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers, the questioner said: ['Am I obliged to pray anything else besides this?' He \(the Prophet\) said: 'No, except that which you pray as Tatawu` \(voluntarily\).'](#) So one is not obliged to offer Prayers other than the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers, unless he or she does so voluntarily. Accordingly, Salat-ul-Duha, Al-Rawatib (supererogatory Prayers that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) performed before or after the Five Obligatory Prayers, the optional late night Prayer are all desirable to be offered. Even Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) is desirable, according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars. According to the Jumhur (dominant majority of scholars), it is a stressed Sunnah, and not obligatory.



### 175. The legal ruling on observing Salat-ul-Duha regularly and its proper time

**Q: Should Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) be observed every day? Is it classified as Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory Prayers that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) or not?**

**A:** Salat-ul-Duha is a stressed Sunnah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) recommended offering it to some of his Companions. He advised Abu Hurayrah and Abu Al-Darda' (may Allah be pleased with both of them)

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to offer Salat-ul-Duha. The Prophet (peace be upon him) also observed it occasionally. So, it is a stressed Sunnah recommended by the Prophet (peace be upon him). Accordingly, if it is easy for believers to observe it regularly, this will bring them a great deal of reward, but it is not obligatory; therefore, there is no problem to offer it occasionally and miss it some other times, or to give it up completely. It should be noted that it is a stressed Sunnah like the Sunnah (supererogatory) Prayers related to Fajr (Dawn), Zhuhr (Noon), Maghrib (Sunset), and `Isha' (Night) Prayers. All these supererogatory Prayers are stressed and carry great rewards, but they are not obligatory. Hence, if one has not observed them, he or she is not considered sinful. The preferable time for Salat-ul-Duha is when the sun has risen high and the day has become hot, until half an hour before the sun reaches its meridian. The Muslim may also offer it early, when the sun is about a spear's length above the horizon, but it is best to delay it until the sun has risen high. It may be offered in two, four, six, or eight Rak`ahs (units of Prayer). It has no maximum limit of units; its minimum is two Rak`ahs and it may be offered with more.



### 176- Salat-ul-Duha termed as Salat-ul-Awabin

**Q: What is Salat-ul-Awabin (Prayer of the oft-repentant)? Did the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) use to observe it? What did he use to recite in it?**

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**A:** Salat-ul-Awabin is Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon). It is offered at the peak of the forenoon time. At this time, it is recommended to offer Salat-ul-Duha in two or more Rak`ahs (units of Prayer). The Prophet (peace be upon him) recommended Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) and Abu Al-Darda' (may Allah be pleased with him) to observe Salat-ul-Duha. He (peace be upon him) said: **(Sadaqah (voluntary charity) is required from every part of your body daily. Every saying of Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]") is Sadaqah. Every saying of Tahlil (saying: "La ilaha illa Allah [There is no god except Allah]") is Sadaqah. Every saying of Tahmid (saying: "Alhamdu lillah [All praise is due to Allah]") is Sadaqah. Ordering the good is Sadaqah. Eradicating the evil is Sadaqah. And what suffices for that (as a Sadaqah) are the two Rak`ahs of Duha.)** The Prophet (peace be upon him) made two Rak`ahs equivalent to such Sadaqahs just as Tasbih and Takbir. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer Salat-ul-Duha as four Rak`ahs and sometimes eight Rak`ahs. On the day of the Liberation of Makkah, he (peace be upon him) offered eight Rak`ahs with four Taslims (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). `Aishah said: **(He used to offer four Rak`ahs and sometimes more as Allah willed.)** Hence, he (peace be upon him) sometimes offered it. But he did not always observe it so that he would not cause hardship to his Ummah (nation based on one creed). Sometimes, he would not observe some deed though he liked to do for fear of causing hardship to his Ummah. However, the Hadiths indicate that observing it is a stressed Sunnah.

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So observing Salat-ul-Duha is a stressed Sunnah recommended by the Prophet (peace be upon him).



### 177- The merit of Salat-ul-Duha and it being an act of Sunnah

**A woman asks: "I read in a book entitled (Zad Al-Mi`ad fi Huda Khayr Al-`Ibad) that Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) is a matter of controversy among the scholars. Is it actually a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) or not? Some of the scholars have said that it is Bid`ah (innovation in religion); which is the more likely opinion? Is it preferable to offer it daily or occasionally? May Allah reward you with the best."**

**A:** Salat-ul-Duha is a stressed Sunnah, and the Prophet (peace be upon him) advised Abu Hurayrah and Abu Al-Darda' (may Allah be pleased with them) to perform it; he (peace be upon him) also sometimes offered it. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) used to offer Salat-ul-Duha, consisting of four Rak`ahs \(units of Prayer\) or more, as he wished.\)](#) (Related by Muslim in his Sahih) On the day when Makkah was liberated, he (peace be upon him) offered Salat-ul-Duha in eight Rak`ahs, saying Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) at the end of every two Rak`ahs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Sadaqah \(voluntary charity\) is required from every part of your body daily.](#)

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Every saying of Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]") is Sadaqah. Every saying of Tahlil (saying: "La ilaha illa Allah [There is no god except Allah]") is Sadaqah. Every saying of Tahmid (saying: "Alhamdu lillah [All praise is due to Allah]") is Sadaqah. Enjoining the good is Sadaqah and forbidding the evil is Sadaqah. And what suffices for that (as a Sadaqah) are the two Rak`ahs of Duha.) This is regarded as a great grace, as the two Rakahs of Salat-ul-Duha suffice for these Sadaqahs. Thus, Salat-ul-Duha is a stressed Sunnah, and it is wrong to say that it is Bid`ah, or that it should be performed at certain times. The correct opinion is that it is Sunnah, and it is preferable to be performed at home. The minimum number of its Rak`ahs is two; however, a person may pray it by offering four, six, eight, or more Rak`ahs. All of these options are pleasing. If a person wishes to offer more than two Rak`ahs, they say Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) at the end of every two Rak`ahs. It is authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he prayed it by offering four Rak`ahs and eight Rak`ahs, saying Taslim at the end of every two Rak`ahs. It is prescribed for the believers to maintain Salat-ul-Duha, following the Sunnah. The best time to offer it is the time when the heat of the sun becomes extremely intense, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Salat al-Awwabeen is when the young camels lift up their feet \(because of the heat of the sand\).\)](#) Al-Awwabeen means the oft-repentant to Allah, who performs Salah at the time when the heat of the sun becomes extremely intense, and when the sun has risen high in the sky. Also, it is the time when young camels feel the heat of the sand.

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The preferable time is one and a half, two, or three hours before noon. Its time begins when the sun has risen in the sky. If a person offers it at the time when the sun has risen in the sky, the intention is realized. If they offer it at the time when the heat of the sun becomes extremely intense, this is



better. If they offer it at any other time, this is pleasing and good.



### 178- The starting and ending time for Salat-ul-Duha

**Q: When do the times for Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) and Qiyam-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) begin and end? Please advise the exact time.**

**A:** The time for Salat-ul-Duha begins when the sun rises above the horizon to the height of a spear and continues until the sun is near its zenith. It is preferable to delay it until the peak of the forenoon time. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was reported to have said: [\(The Salah \(Prayer\) of those who are penitent is observed when your weaned camels feel the heat of the sun.\)](#) This means that the best time for Salat-ul-Duha is when the heat of the sun becomes extreme. However, a person still fulfils the Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) if they offer Salat-ul-Duha early, when the sun rises above the horizon to the height of a spear. But when the sun is directly overhead at its zenith, a person is forbidden from offering any supererogatory Salah (Prayer), as this is the period in which the Hellfire is blazed, as reported by the Prophet (peace be upon him).

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It is a short period estimated to be about fifteen or twenty minutes before Zawal (midday) and before the sun goes past the meridian to the west. In conclusion, during this time a person is not permitted to offer supererogatory Salah until the sun has passed its zenith.



**Q: One asks about the exact time of Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) and Salat-ul-Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer). Could you clarify this please?**

**A:** It depends; the night and day differ. The time of Salat-ul-Duha begins fifteen minutes after sunrise. When half an hour remains before the due time of the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, Salat-ul-Duha should not be performed. As for the night, the due time of the `Isha` (Night) Prayer enters and the time of the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer finishes, when the red twilight disappears. After a person performs the `Isha` Prayer, even if in combination with the Maghrib Prayer as in case of travel and sickness, the time of Salat-ul-Tahajjud enters and lasts up until the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer enters.

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When a person performs the `Isha` Prayer in its due time and then performs its two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis), the time of Salat-ul-Tajjahud enters at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of the night. However, it is better to perform Salat-ul-Tajjahud at the end of the night (the last third of the night) because it is the time when Allah descends to the nearest of the heavens.



**Q: What is the end time for Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer)?**

**A:** : The time for Tahajjud ends with the break of dawn. However, if a person misses it, they are permitted to offer it during the daytime in the forenoon but with Shaf` (Prayer with an even number of units) rather than with Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). If a person is used to offering three Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), they should perform four in the forenoon with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs, and if they are used to offering five Rak`ahs, they should perform six with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs. This means that one ends one's Salah with an even number of Rak`ahs. It was authentically reported on the authority of `A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) that she said: [\(Whenever the Prophet missed the night Prayer due to illness etc., he used to offer it in the daytime with twelve Rak`ahs.\)](#) He (peace be upon him) used to offer eleven Rak`ahs during the night, but if he missed them, he would make up for it with twelve Rak`ahs because no Witr should be offered during the daytime.



**Q: A Muslim sister from Egypt asks: What is the time limit**

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**for offering Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer after sunrise)?**

**A:** The time limit for offering Salat-ul-Duha starts when the sun rises above the horizon to the distance of a spear till it reaches the meridian. This is the time of Salat-ul-Duha. It is better to offer Salat-ul-Duha when the heat of the sun has intensified. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The Salah of those who are penitent is observed when your weaned camels feel the heat of the sun.\)](#)

The Hadith refers to the time when the heat of the sun heightens to the extent that young camels feel its heat. If a person offers Salat-ul-Duha at the earlier time after sunrise, it is acceptable. It is also permissible to offer it after sunrise till the sun reaches the meridian, approximately when it is about half an hour before noon. The meridian is the highest point reached by the sun, when seen from a point on the Earth's surface. However, it is not permissible for a Muslim to perform optional prayer other than the prayers that have causes such as Salat-ul-Kusuf (Prayer on a solar eclipse), Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque) and Salat-ul-Tawaf (two-unit Prayer performed after circumambulating the Ka`bah) in Makkah. Such and like Prayers have causes and there is nothing wrong with offering them at times when it is forbidden to offer Salah (prayer), according to the more correct of the two opinions maintained by scholars. If a person performs Tawaf after `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer at the honorable

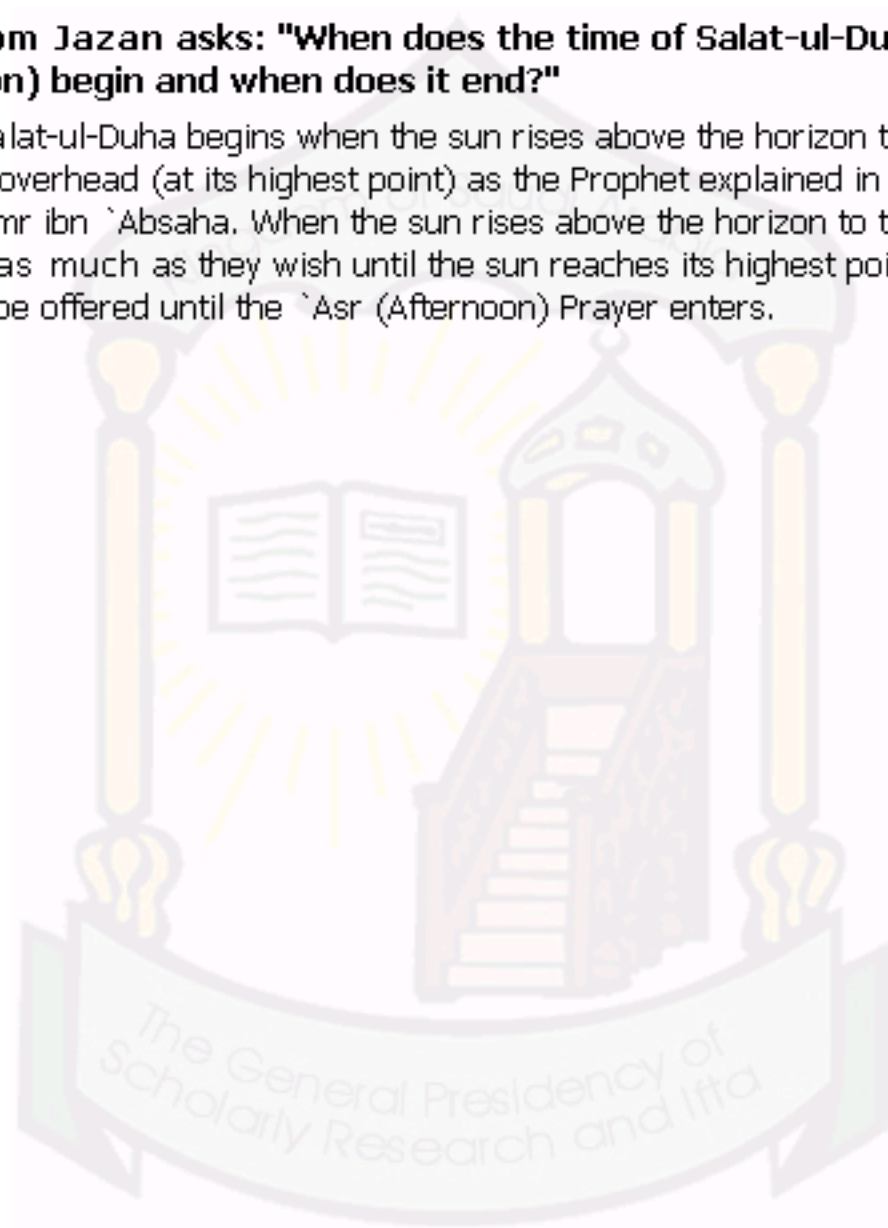
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Ka`bah or in the morning before sunrise, there is nothing wrong with offering two Rak`ahs. Likewise, if a sun eclipse occurs after `Asr Prayer, it will be permissible for Muslims to offer Salat-ul-Kusuf according to the more correct of the two opinions maintained by scholars. The same is true when a person enters the Masjid after Fajr (Dawn) Prayer or after `Asr Prayer in order to sit in the Masjid, study knowledge or anything else, in which a case it is Sunnah to offer two Rak`ahs before sitting, for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(When anyone among you enters the mosque, he should not sit till he has observed two Rak'ahs.\)](#) As the Hadith indicates, the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not specify a time to the exclusion of another for doing so, which is the preponderant opinion. May Allah grant us success!



**Q: A listener from Jazan asks: "When does the time of Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) begin and when does it end?"**

**A:** The time of Salat-ul-Duha begins when the sun rises above the horizon to the height of a spear up until it is directly overhead (at its highest point) as the Prophet explained in the Hadith narrated on the authority of `Amr ibn `Absaha. When the sun rises above the horizon to the height of a spear, a person may pray as much as they wish until the sun reaches its highest point. When the sun sets, Salah (Prayer) may be offered until the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer enters.





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**Q: Your Eminence Shaykh! I hope you can define for me the time of Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon).**

**A:** The time for Salat-ul-Duha begins fifteen minutes after the sun has risen to the height of a spear above the horizon. It ends when the sun is directly overhead (at its highest point). If the sun is at its highest point in the middle of the sky and has not yet set in the west, it is forbidden to offer supererogatory Salah (Prayer) because this is the time when the Hell-fire is intensified, as reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him). Generally speaking, Salah is forbidden in this period. However, it is preferred to offer Salat-ul-Duha when the heat of sun becomes extreme. If a person is sitting in the Masjid (mosque) until sunrise, it is better to offer two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) as Salat-ul-Duha after the sun has risen high in the sky before leaving the Masjid. Similarly, if a person is at home after offering the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, they may pray two Rak`ahs as Salat-ul-Duha after the sun rises. However, if one delays it until the sun has risen up high, this will be better.



**Q: What is the time for Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon)? Are there specific Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) the Prophet used to recite while offering it?**

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**A:** Salat-ul-Duha begins after the sun rises to the height of a spear above the horizon up until the time it is directly overhead, shortly before the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer. All the time in between is the time when Salat-ul-Duha may be performed; if a person offers it shortly after sunrise, they perform Salat-ul-Duha early. However, it is preferable to perform it during the peak of the forenoon, i.e. one and a half to two hours before the Zhuhr Prayer. If a person sits in the Masjid (mosque) until the sun rises high and then performs Salat-ul-Duha, they perform it early. Likewise, if a person performs it at home after the sun rises high, this is also good.





### 179- Clarifying the best time to offer Salat-ul-Duha and the number of its Rak`ahs

**Q: A questioner asks: "What is the time of offering Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) exactly? What is the number of its Rak`ahs? Is there any specific Du`a' (supplication) that is recited in it?"**

**A:** Salat-ul-Duha is Mustahab (desirable), and its time begins fifteen minutes after the sun has risen high in the sky till the sun is directly overhead (at its zenith). The best time is when the heat of the sun becomes intense, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The prayer of those who are penitent is observed when your weaned camels feel the heat of the sun.\)](#) It is preferable to offer it, when the heat of the sun is most intense, one or

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two hours before noon. If a worshiper offers it fifteen minutes after the sun has risen high in the sky or at any other time before noon, this is a good deed, all praise be to Allah. The least number of Rak`ahs that can be offered for Salat-ul-Duha is two Rak`ahs, and there is no limit to the number of Rak`ahs that can be offered for it. Some scholars held that the maximum number of Rak`ahs that can be offered for it is eight Rak`ahs, but there is no evidence for this. If one offers eight Rak`ahs or more or less, there is nothing wrong with that, all praise be to Allah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) offered eight Rak`ahs as Salat-ul-Duha on the day of the Liberation of Makkah. He would offer two Rak`ahs as Salat-ul-Duha when visiting Quba' (a town near Madinah where the Prophet established the first mosque) on Saturdays. There is no limit to the number of Rak`ahs that can be offered as Salat-ul-Duha. A worshiper may offer eight Rak`ahs as Salat-ul-Duha, pronouncing Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) at the end of each two Rak`ahs. This is a good deed, as it is in accordance with what the Prophet (peace be upon him) did in Makkah al-Mukarramah on the day of the Liberation of Makkah. If one offers twelve or twenty Rak`ahs or more, one should pronounce Taslim at the end of each two Rak`ahs, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) Salah during the night or day should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs.\)](#) (Narrated by Ahmad and Ahl-ul-Sunan (authors of Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes) through authentic Isnad (chain of narrators) of the narration of Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) Salat-ul-Duha is prescribed and an act of Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the teachings of the Prophet). Also, it is a great deed by which one approaches the Path of Allah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) advised some of his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) to offer it. It is a stressed Sunnah that is performed fifteen minutes after the sun has risen high in the sky

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till the sun is directly overhead (at its zenith), i.e., approximately twenty or thirty minutes before noon.



### 180- The time of Zawal

**Q: The questioner Um `Abdul-Razzaq asks: What is the exact time of Zawal (midday)? Is it correct that Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before the noon) consists of twelve Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) and that the time it should be performed lasts until it is fifteen minutes before the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer?**

**A:** The Zawal is the direction of the sun towards the West, as the sun moves from East to West. The Zawal is the time when the sun moves towards the West. When the sun is directly overhead (at its zenith) is time when it is not permissible to offer supererogatory Salah. The minimum number of Rak`ahs that should be offered as Salat-ul-Duha is two Rak`ahs, and there is no limit to the number of the Rak`ahs that may be offered. It can be offered during the time that occurs between when the sun starts to rise until it is directly overhead (at its zenith). The Prophet (peace be upon him) advised Abu Hurayrah and Abu Al-Darda' to offer the two Rak`ahs of Salat-ul-Duha. On the day of the liberation of Makkah he (peace be upon him) offered eight Rak`ahs.



### 181- Salat-ul-Duha and the Number of its Rak`ahs

**Q: We are asking about Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), its time, and the number of its Rak`ahs (units of Prayer). May Allah reward you**

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**with the best.**

**A:** Salat-ul-Duha is a stressed Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) and the Prophet (peace be upon him) recommended a group of his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) to perform it. He (peace be upon him) also said: **Every Tasbihah (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]") is Sadaqah (voluntary charity), every Tahlilah (saying: "La ilaha illa Allah [There is no god except Allah]") is Sadaqah, every Takbirah (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") is Sadaqah, every Tahmidah (saying: "Alhamdu lillah [All praise is due to Allah]") is Sadaqah, enjoining Al-Ma`ruf (that which is judged as good, beneficial, or fitting by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect) is Sadaqah, forbidding Al-Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect) is Sadaqah, and if you offer two Rak`ahs at Duha time (the forenoon), that may be sufficient.** This affirms that it is stressed. It is two Rak`ahs and if a person offers four Rak`ahs or more, it is also good. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) entered Makkah, he offered Salat-ul-Duha with eight Rak`ahs, performing Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs. What is meant is that Salat-ul-Duha is Mustahab (desirable) and a stressed Sunnah. There is nothing wrong with offering it occasionally but it is better to observe it regularly. The minimum is two Rak`ahs, but the more Rak`ahs a person offers, the more reward they will receive. The time for Salat-ul-Duha is when the sun rises above the horizon to the height of a spear until it reaches its zenith, twenty or thirty minutes before the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer.

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The best time to offer Salat-ul-Duha is when it is intensely hot. If a person offers it early after the sun rises above the horizon, this will be sufficient. Yet, it is better to offer it when there is intense heat at the forenoon. It is the Salah of the oft-repentant, meaning that those who turn to Allah (Exalted be He) and observe many acts of `Ibadah (worship) pray when it is intensely hot at forenoon (i.e. Salat-ul-Duha).



**Q: Please describe Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon). How many Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) is Salat-ul-Duha? When should it be offered? Also, please describe Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit Prayer to greet the mosque).**

**A:** The minimum number of Rak`ahs for Salat-ul-Duha is two Rak`ahs and if a person offers four Rak`ahs or more, there is nothing wrong with that. There is no limit to the number of Rak`ahs for Salat-ul-Duha. The Prophet (peace be upon him) offered it with eight Rak`ahs on the Day of the Liberation of Makkah. It is preferable to offer two Rak`ahs or four Rak`ahs with two Taslims (salutations of peace ending the Prayer). Also, a person may offer six, eight, or ten Rak`ahs, with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs. All is good as there is no limit to the number of Rak`ahs to be offered for Salat-ul-Duha. Some scholars said that the maximum number of Rak`ahs is eight but there is no evidence to prove that. Thus, a Muslim may offer as many Rak`ahs as Allah (Exalted be He) makes easy for him, performing Taslim after every two Rak`ahs, observing the proper sense of Khushu` (the heart being submissively attuned to the act of worship), and being at ease in all the postures when performing it. The time for Salat-ul-Duha starts when the sun rises above the horizon to the height of a spear

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until it reaches its zenith, fifteen or twenty minutes before noon. Yet, the best time to offer Salat-ul-Duha is when it is intensely hot, one or two hours before noon. This is the Salah (Prayer) of the oft-repentant who offer it when the heat becomes so intense that even the young camels feel it as described by the Prophet (peace be upon him). As previously mentioned, it is better if a person offers Salat-ul-Duha one or two hours before noon. If he offers it after the sun rises, it will suffice. As stated earlier, there is no designated number of Ra`kahs for this Prayer, so a person may offer as many Rak`ah as he likes. As for Tahiyat-ul-Masjid, it is only two Rak`ahs that a Muslim should offer whenever he enters the Masjid (mosque). They should be done even if the Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) is preaching the Khutbah (sermon) of Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer and even if it is during the time when it is not permissible to offer supererogatory Salah. The Muslim should not stay in the Masjid until he has offered it. This is according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars. If a person enters the Masjid after the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer and intends to stay there until the Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer or to attend a religious session, he has to offer the two Rak`ahs of Tahiyat-ul-Masjid. In the same manner, if he enters the Masjid after the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer to attend a religious session or to stay there until sunrise, he has to offer the two Rak`ahs of Tahiyat-ul-Masjid and this is the correct view.



## 182- The number of Rak`ahs in Salat-ul-Duha and its merit

**Q: Please give us your opinion concerning the number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) in Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), the recitation for it, the time at which it should be offered, and whether Tasbih (saying "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]") and Tahلیل (saying: "La ilaha illa Allah [There is no god but Allah]") should be said during it. May Allah reward you with the best.**

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**A:** Salat-ul-Duha consists of a minimum of two Rak`ahs, but it is be good if a person offers four Rak`ahs or more. The Prophet (peace be upon him) advised Abu Hurayrah to offer the two Rak`ahs of Salat-ul-Duha. He also advised Abu Al-Darda' to offer Salat-ul-Duha. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *«For every joint of the son of Adam a Sadaqah (voluntary charity) must be given each day. Every Tasbeehah [saying Subhaan Allah (Glory be to Allah)] is a Sadaqah, every Tahmeedah [saying al-hamdu Lillah (praise be to Allah)] is a Sadaqah, every Tahleelah [saying Laa ilaaha ill-Allah (There is no god but Allah)] is a Sadaqah, every Takbeerah [saying Allahu akbar [Allah is Most Great]] is a Sadaqah, enjoining what is good is a Sadaqah, forbidding what is evil is a Sadaqah, and two Rak`ahs offered in the mid-morning (Duha) is sufficient.»* (Related by Muslim in the Sahih) This signifies the great benefit of these two Rak`ahs. If four Rak`ahs are offered, say two Taslims (salutation of peace ending the Prayer); if six Rak`ahs are offered, say three Taslims; if eight Rak`ahs are offered, say four Taslims. All of these cases are good and pleasing. If ten, twenty, or thirty Rak`ahs are offered, you would say Taslim at the end of every two Rak`ahs. From mid-morning until the sun is directly overhead (at its zenith) is a suitable time for offering this Salah (Prayer). The Prophet (peace be upon him) sometimes offered four Rak`ahs or more. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: *«The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer Salat-ul-Duha, consisting of four Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) or more, as he wished.»* On the day of the liberation of Makkah, he offered eight Rak`ahs, saying Taslim at the end of every two Rak`ahs. There is nothing wrong with offering more Rak`ahs, in fact it is pleasing. However, when the sun is directly overhead (in its zenith), this means

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that it is fifteen or twenty minutes before noon. Just as when the sun is in the middle of the sky before sunset, this is regarded as the time when it is not permissible to offer supererogatory Salah. At this time, no Salah is offered except for specific reasons, such as entering the Masjid (mosque). If a person enters the Masjid before the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, they offer Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit Prayer to greet the mosque). If they circumambulate Al-Ka`bah before noon in Makkah, they offer Salat-ul-Tawaf (two-unit-Prayer performed after circumambulating the Ka`bah). If the sun eclipses before the Zhuhr Prayer, they offer Salat-ul-Kusuf (Prayer on a solar eclipse); and if it eclipses after the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, they offer Salat-ul-Kusuf, as it is offered for a specific reason. There is no specific recitation for Salat-ul-Duha; the praying person should recite Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an) and any other Ayahs (Qur'anic verses). All praise be to Allah. They say "Subhana Rabbiya Al-`Azhim (Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great)" during the Ruku` (bowing) and Subhana





### 183- Clarifying the Salah performed when the sun rises

**Q: This questioner asks: "What is the number of Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) for Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon)? Are there any differences between Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) and the Salah (Prayer) performed when the sun rises?"**

**A:** The Salah performed when the sun rises is Salat-ul-Duha, but it is offered early in the morning. However, it is preferable to offer it at the time when the sun's heat becomes so intense that young camels lift their feet.

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The number of its Rak`ahs has no limit. The minimum number of Rak`ahs that can be performed is two Rak`ahs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) sometimes offered four or eight Rak`ahs. If a person offers more Rak`ahs, there is nothing wrong with that, but they should offer Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) at the end of every two Rak`ahs. Salat-ul-Duha should be offered as two Rak`ahs followed by two more Rak`ah.



### 184- Ruling on recitation in Salat-ul-Duha

**Q: Please give us information about Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon). What is the time for it? How many Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) is it? How should it be performed? Is it necessary to recite certain Surahs (Qur'anic chapters) in it or may a person recite any part of the Qur'an that he likes?**

**A:** Salat-ul-Duha is a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) which the Prophet (peace be upon him) recommended some of his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) to offer. He (peace be upon him) used to perform it sometimes and [\(on the Day of the Liberation of Makkah, he offered it with eight Rak`ahs.\)](#) Salat-ul-Duha is a stressed Sunnah and its time starts when the sun rises above the horizon to the height of a spear until it reaches its zenith and this includes the whole period of the forenoon. If a person offers it in the beginning or in the middle of its time, they are following the Sunnah. Yet, the best time to offer it is when the heat of the forenoon

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becomes so intense that even the young camels feel it as stated by the Prophet (peace be upon him) in the Hadith Sahih (authentic Hadith) that reads: [\(Those who are oft-repentant observe praying when the sun's heat has become so intense that even the young of the camels feel it \(i.e. observe Salat-ul-Duha\).\)](#) This indicates that it is better to perform Salat-ul-Duha when it is so hot that even the young camels feel the heat and when the sun rises above the horizon at the forenoon. If a person offers it after the sun has risen above the horizon, he is still following the Sunnah. A person may recite whatever he likes of Surahs and Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) in this Prayer. The minimum number of Rak'ahs to be prayed in Salat-ul-Duha is two Rak`ahs with one Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). If a person offers four, six, or eight Rak`ahs, performing Taslim after every two Rak`ahs, this is good. As previously stated, on the Day of the Liberation of Makkah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered Salat-ul-Duha with eight Rak`ahs, performing Taslim after every two Rak`ahs.





### 185- The time of Salat-ul-Duha

**Q: The inquirer is asking about Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) and Salat-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night): What is the time of Salat-ul-Duha and is it permissible to pray Salat-ul-Layl during the first portion of the night after `Isha' (Night) Prayer if one cannot pray it during the last portion of the night?**

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**A:** The time of Salat-ul-Duha begins after the sun rises a spear's length from the horizon, i.e. a quarter of an hour after sunrise until it passes its zenith. It continues until the sun rises high in the sky about fifteen to twenty minutes before noon, since the time the sun remains high in the sky is short, and continues until the sun remains high in the sky till when it starts to decline towards the west, i.e. this time is called the time when it is forbidden to pray. It is permissible to pray any time during the time of Duha, but it is preferable to pray when the heat of the sun is most intense; i.e. an hour and a half to two hours after noon. It is preferable to offer Salat-ul-Duha after performing `Isha (Night) Prayer if one fears that they will not be able to wake up to offer it. The Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed Abu Hurayrah and Abu Al-Darda' to perform Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) before sleeping. It seems- and Allah knows best- that they feared that they would not be able to wake up because they were occupied with studying Hadith in the first portion of the night. It is preferable to perform Witr during the first portion of the night if one fears they will not be able to wake up. However, if one expects to awake during the last part of the night and is certain that one will be able to do so, then it is preferable to delay offering Witr till the last portion of the night. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whosoever fears that they may not be able to wake up is to pray Witr at the beginning of the night. And whosoever hopes to awake in the latter portion of the](#)

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[night is to offer Witr during that time as Prayer in the latter portion of the night is ever witnessed and is best.>\)](#) This Hadith was reported by Muslim in his Sahih (authentic Book of Hadith). The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: [\(Our Lord \(Exalted be He\) descends every night to the lowest heaven when the last third of the night begins. He proclaims: Is there any supplicant so that I may answer him? Is there any seeker of My Favor so that I may grant it? Is there any seeker of forgiveness so that I may forgive them?\)](#) In another wording of the same Hadith, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [\(Is there any repentant so that I may forgive then? Is there any seeker of My favor so that I may grant it? Is there any seeker of forgiveness so that I may forgive them \(until Dawn breaks?\)](#)

This is a great Hadith that has been narrated through many paths that has reached mass narration levels. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) descends in the third portion of the night and therefore the Servant of Allah must be among those who worship Him during that time by offering Prayer, Istighfar (seeking forgiveness from Allah), reciting the Qur`an and reciting Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah). This time, the third portion of the night, is a blessed time indeed! Prophet Dawud used to worship Allah for half the night; he used to sleep half the night, get up to perform Prayer for one third, four sixth or five sixth of it. This time is a great time indeed for Prayer, i.e. to combine between the

beginning, middle and last third portions of the night. Allah (Exalted be He) encouraged His Servants to worship,

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offer Du`a' and humble themselves before Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). Those from among the Muslim men and women who seek to offer Prayers at these times are indeed worthy. Those who strive to observe Qiyam-ul-Layl, especially during the four sixth and five sixth portions of the night or spend the entire one third of it reciting Du`a', offering Prayer, reciting the Qur`an, and seeking Istighfar as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) has instructed. When Allah descends from the heavens, it is in a manner fitting His Majesty and cannot be compared in any way to the act of displacement that occurs with His Creatures. Allah (Exalted be He) says: [\(There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.\)](#) And: [\("And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him."\)](#) And: [\(So put not forward similitudes for Allâh \(as there is nothing similar to Him, nor He resembles anything\).\)](#) Just as the Descent of Allah cannot be compared to that of His Creations, His establishment on the `Arsh (Allah's Throne), His Mercy and Laughter-all cannot be compared to those of His Creatures. This likewise applies to all of Allah's Attributes as attested to by His Words: [\(There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.\)](#) This is the opinion of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (adherents to the Sunnah and the Muslim mainstream), the Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and those who follow them in piety and righteousness. Therefore, O Servant of Allah, you must likewise adhere to this principle of the

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the Companions and the scholars from among the Salaf (righteous predecessors). Beware of the opinions of the Al-Murji'ah (a deviant Islamic sect claiming that Faith is restricted to belief not deeds) who falsify the Book of Allah, those who interpret the Attributes of Allah literally and those who compare Him to His Creation. Beware of their opinions because they are all erroneous. The correct position is that of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah which was that of the Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and those who follow them in piety and righteousness, and of all the prophets and messengers. This includes belief in the Names and Attributes of Allah mentioned in the Qur`an and Sunnah without falsifying them, Ta`til (negation of the meaning or function of Allah's Attributes), Ta'wil (allegorical interpretation), Tashbih (comparison) or Tamthil (likening Allah's Attributes to those of His Creation). We must believe in them all as they were mentioned and believe that Allah's Descent to the lowest heaven is true, His establishment upon the `Arsh (Allah's Throne) is true, His Mercy is true, His Anger is true, His Pleasure is true, His Compassion is true and that the rest of His Attributes are true. His Hands, Eyes and Sight are all true, but must be attributed to Him in a manner that befits Allah (Exalted be He) -they cannot be compared to those of His Creation. Based on this, His Speech, Anger, Laughter, Pleasure and other Attributes are not the same as those of His Creatures.

All of His Attributes befit Him (Glorified and Exalted be He) and cannot be compared to those of His Creation- no one knows their modality except Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). Some people asked Malik ibn Anas the Imam (initiator of a School of Jurisprudence) of Dar-ul-Hijra (Medinah), the famous and great Imam (may Allah be merciful to him),

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" [\(O Abu `Abdullah! \(The Most Gracious \(Allâh\) rose over \(Istawâ\) the \(Mighty\) Throne \(in a manner that suits His Majesty\).\)](#) How was this istiwa'? He replied, "Allah's establishment over the throne is

not unknown, its modality is inconceivable to the mind; belief in it is obligatory, and inquiring about it a bid`ah (innovation).) Therefore, it is a Bid`ah (innovation in religion) to inquire about the modality of Allah's establishment over the throne. His establishment is known and it is His transcendence over His Throne; however, what its manner is not known. Similarly, we do not know the modality of His Pleasure, Anger or Descent. We do not know the manner of Allah's Descent, but we believe that He descends every night in the third portion; we believe that He is established on His Throne, we know that He laughs and becomes pleased and angry but we do not know their modality. We repeat what Allah (Glorified be He) says: (There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.) To Him belongs all perfection in His Attributes; people do not know their modality and this is the correct stance as maintained by Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah. We ask Allah to grant success to everyone in all that is good!



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### 186- The beginning and ending time of Duha and offering Du`a' at this time

**Q: The inquirer from the United Arab Emirates asks: When does the time of Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) begin and when does it end? Are there any specific supplications to be recited in this Prayer?**

**A:** The time for Duha starts when the sun rises a spear's length from the horizon, until it rises high in the sky. All this is the time for Salat-ul-Duha. The earliest and optimal time to offer this Prayer is when the heat of the sun is most intense. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The prayer of those who are penitent is observed when your weaned camels feel the heat of the sun,\)](#) i.e. when the heat becomes intense for the young camels. The purport of this is the time between when the sun has risen a spear's length from the horizon until the time it is high in the sky; this is the time for Salat-ul-Duha whether it is offered at the beginning, end or middle of its time, or before the sun has passed its zenith. There are no specific supplications for this Prayer, but one may supplicate to Allah in Sujud (prostration) with whatever Allah facilitates for him and during Al-Tahiyyat before concluding Prayer with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). One may choose the supplications one likes best as attested to by the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(Seek to offer Du`a' in Sujud\)](#) and the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(The closest a](#)

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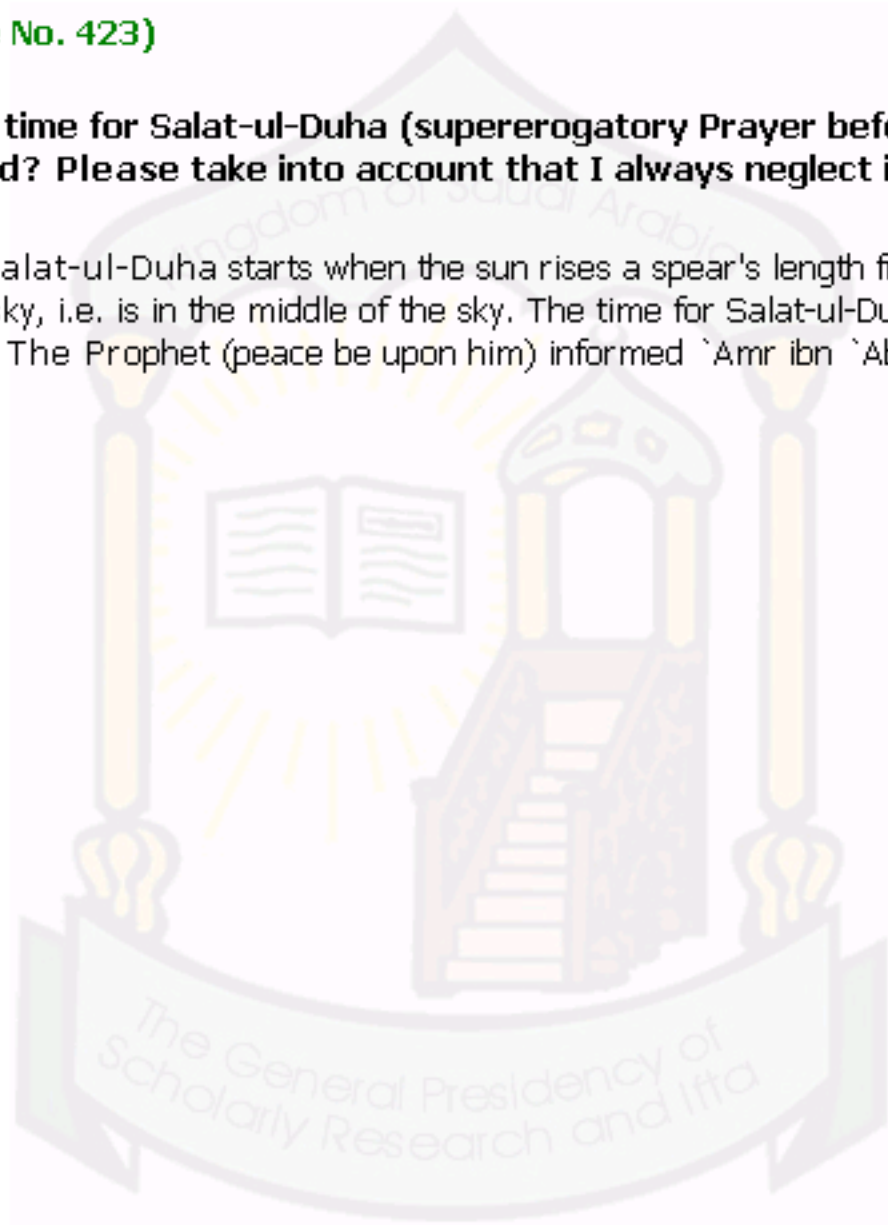
[servants come to their Lord is when prostrating in Prayer, so offer Du`a' in abundance \[during this time\].\)](#) From among the Du`a' offered by the Prophet (peace be upon him) is: [\(Oh Allah! O Allah! Forgive all my sins; the major and minor ones, those I did in the past or will do in the future, and also the sins I did in secret or in public.\)](#) The above is from among the great Du`a'. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed us to say: [\(O Allah! You are oft-forgiving, and love to forgive, so forgive me\)](#) Also from among the blessed Du`a' is: "O Allah! I ask for Your Pleasure and to enter Paradise. I seek refuge in You from Your displeasure and Hell-fire. O Allah! I ask You to enter Paradise and for the words and deeds that bring one close to it. I seek refuge in You from Hell-fire and from the words and deeds that bring one close to it." This is to be recited in Sujud or before concluding the Prayer with Taslim after the Al-Tahiyyat, as confirmed by the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him) when he was teaching Tashahhud (testification recited in the sitting position in the second/last unit of Prayer): [\(Then let one choose from supplication what they love best and let supplicate \(with it\).\)](#) In another wording of the Hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Then let one choose the supplication one likes\)](#) before concluding the Prayer with Taslim.



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**Q: When does the time for Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) begin and when does it end? Please take into account that I always neglect it. May Allah reward you!**

**A:** The time for Salat-ul-Duha starts when the sun rises a spear's length from the horizon until it rises high in the sky, i.e. is in the middle of the sky. The time for Salat-ul-Duha ends when the sun passes its zenith. The Prophet (peace be upon him) informed `Amr ibn `Absah and others of this fact.





**Q: When do Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) and Salat-ul-Layl (optional Prayer at night) begin and when do they end? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Salat-ul-Layl is offered between Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha (Night) Prayers as well as after `Isha. This is all considered the time for Salat-ul-Layl. The optimal time for Salat-ul-Layl is after `Isha in the middle of the night, and in the latter portion of the night. One is to conclude their Prayers by offering one unit of Salat-ul-Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units). Salat-ul-Layl consists of paired units that are to be offered with presence of mind and tranquility and with supplications. It is followed by one unit of Witr as confirmed by the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him) conveyed in the Sahih (authentic) Hadith: [\(Salat-ul-Layl is offered in paired units. If any of you fears](#)

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[that morning will enter, one is to pray one unit that will be considered Witr for what was prayed.\)](#) If Salat-ul-Layl is offered between Maghrib and `Isha, one is to pray what is easy for and it will be meritorious, as it is a `Ibadah (worship). The same applies to daytime; one can worship Allah and pray Duha, or offer Prayers at noon. It is a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the teachings of the Prophet) to offer Salat-ul-Duha after the sun has risen high in the sky and it is best to offer it when the heat of the sun is most intense. It is preferable to perform it at this time in two, four or more units- all are meritorious. One may offer four units before and after noon Prayer since this is recommended based on the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him) who said: [\(Whoever observes the practice of performing four Rak`ah before Al-Zuhr prayer and four after the Zuhr Prayer, Allah will shield them against the Fire \(of Hell\).\)](#) It is likewise meritorious to pray many units between Zhuhr (Noon) and `Asr (Afternoon) or pray many units for Salat-ul-Duha. However, the minimum number of units is two for Salat-ul-Duha and the minimum number to be prayed after Zhuhr Prayer is four with Taslims (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after each two.



### 187- The ruling on offering more than eight units in Salat-ul-Duha

**Q: I perform eight units in Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) between seven and eight o'clock in the morning. Is this correct ?**

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**A:** Yes, it is right. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do this. On the Day of the Liberation of Makkah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered eight Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) for Salat-ul-Duha. It was reported that `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) entered my house at Duha and offered eight units of Salat-ul-Duha.\)](#) The option of Salat-ul-Duha is wide. It can be performed in eight, ten or more units and the minimum number of units is two. It has been established that the Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed Abu Hurayrah and Abu Al-Darda' to pray two units in Salat-ul-Duha. He also used to visit Quba' (a town near Madinah where the Prophet established the first mosque) in Madinah and pray two units in Salat-ul-Duha. The purport is that Salat-ul-Duha is a stressed Sunnah and its minimum number of units is two. And there is no harm if one offers four, six, eight or more. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) used to offer four units or add to it as much as Allah willed.\)](#) And Um Hani' bint Abu Talib (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(I saw the Prophet \(peace be upon him\) on the Day of the conquest of Makkah offer eight units in Salat-ul-Duha.\)](#)



### 188- Ruling on Salat-ul-Duha on journey and in residence

**Q: Tell me about Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) and its merit. What if I see people offering it?**

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**Will I join them?**

**A:** Salat-ul-Duha is a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet). The Prophet (peace be upon him) recommended some of his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) to observe it. He used to observe it. So it is a Sunnah. It consists of, at least, two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer). One may offer four or more Rak`ahs. One may also offer it as eight Rak`ahs as the Prophet (peace be upon him) did. In a word, it is a Sunnah both on journey and in residence. If one does not offer it, there will be no offence. But, if he observes it, that is preferable.





### 189- Explanation of Salat-ul-Awabin

**Q: Is Salat-ul-Awabin (the oft-repentant Prayer) authentic? It is six Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) offered after Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer.**

**A:** This is incorrect and unestablished. However, it is recommended to offer Salah (Prayer) between Maghrib (Sunset) and `Isha' (Night) Prayers even if it is more than six Rak`ahs (units of Prayer). Still, this is not called Salat-ul-Awabin. Salat-ul-Awabin is Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon). At the peak of the forenoon time, the Salah to be offered then is called Salat-ul-Awabin. The Prophet

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(peace be upon him) said: [\(The Salah of those who are the oft-repentant is performed when your weaned camels feel the heat of the sun.\)](#) That is to say that this Salah is offered when scorching heat is felt. This is Salat-ul-Awabin which is Salat-ul-Duha when heat is felt, i.e. in the morning one or two hours before noon. As far as the Salah offered between Maghrib and 'Isha' Prayers, the relevant Hadith cited in support of it is Da`if (weak) and so is calling it Salat-ul-Awabin. However, it is Mustahab (desirable) to offer supererogatory Salah at that time as much as one desires. As for the two-Rak`ah supererogatory Salah offered after Maghrib Prayer, it is a stressed Sunnah. If one offers more Rak`ahs; four, six, or ten, this is good. Indeed, the period between Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers is a time for worship. One can then offer as much Salaha as possible. The same applies to `Isha' Prayer. All of such times are open for supererogatory Salaha. Praise be to Allah.



### 190- Offering more than eight Rak`ahs in Salat-ul-Duha

**Q:** It is reported in a Hadith that the minimum Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) for Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) is two, while the maximum is eight. Is it permissible to offer more than eight Rak`ahs? What about the two Rak`ahs at Sunrise? Should I count them as Salat-ul-Duha

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**to complete eight Rak`ahs or offer them separately?**

**A:** Salat-ul-Duha is not limited to eight Rak`ahs; rather, this is a view held by some of the people of knowledge. According to the correct scholarly opinion, there is no limit to the number of Rak`ahs for Salat-ul-Duha. A person may perform eight, ten, or even twenty Rak`ahs, but the minimum is two Rak`ahs. (The Prophet (peace be upon him) recommended some of his Companions to offer the two Rak`ahs of Salat-ul-Duha.) In summary, the minimum number of Rak`ahs for Salat-ul-Duha is two Rak`ahs, though it is Mashru` (Islamically permissible) to perform six, eight, ten, or more Rak`ahs with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) after every two Rak`ahs. Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah).



**Q: I have read that anyone who performs twelve Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) for Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) will have a palace built for them in Jannah (Paradise). Is this Hadith Sahih (authentic)? And when should Salat-ul-Duha be performed?**

**A:** Salat-ul-Duha is a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) and an act of worship that draws a person closer to Allah. Its time begins after the sun rises up above the horizon to the height of a spear and lasts until it is directly overhead (at its zenith). However, it is preferable to perform it during the peak of the forenoon. It is the Salah (Prayer) of the devout as it was mentioned in the Sahih Hadith, in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) was reported to have said:

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[\(The Salah of those who are penitent is observed when your weaned camels feel the heat of the sun.\)](#) That means during the peak of the forenoon when the sun is too hot for the young camels. Salat-ul-Duha is at least two Rak`ahs. However, if a person performs four, six, eight, or more Rak`ahs, this is good because there is not a limit to the number of Rak`ahs that may be performed for it.

With regard to a palace in Jannah being built for those who observe twelve Rak`ahs, nothing but Da`if (weak) Hadith was reported. There is no specific number of Rak`ahs, so if a person performs ten, twelve, fourteen, sixteen, or even one hundred Rak`ahs, all is good. Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah). It is better to perform them two by two, based on the Sahih Hadith reported in this regard, in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) was reported to have said: [\(Salah during the night or daytime is offered as two \(Rak`ahs followed\) by two \(Rak`ahs\).\)](#)



**Q: How many Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) is Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon)? What should a person say when intending to offer it? Should they say: "I intend to offer Salat-ul-Duha" before raising their hands to make Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer), or should they say something else? Please advise me, may Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Salat-ul-Duha is a stressed Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet), which the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to encourage

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and recommend that some of his Companions observe. The minimum number of Rak'ahs to be prayed is two with one Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). However, one may offer four, six, eight, or more Rak`ahs with Taslim after every two Rak`ahs. All are good; the minimum is two Rak`ahs with one Taslim.



**Q: Is Salat-ul-Ishraq (supererogatory Prayer shortly after sunrise) the same as Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon)? How many Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) is Salat-ul-Duha? Please explain this to us in detail. May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Yes, Salat-ul-Ishraq is the same as Salat-ul-Duah. Its time begins after the sun rises to the height of a spear above the horizon and lasts until the sun is directly overhead (at its zenith). All the time in between is the permissible time for Salat-ul-Duah. It is preferable to offer it during the peak of the forenoon. However, if a person performs it at the Masjid (mosque) or at home at the start of its time, when the sun rises to the height of a spear above the horizon, this is good too. If a person performs more than two Rak`ahs, for example, four, six, eight, or more, all are good.





**Q: Are the two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) offered at sunrise called "the two Rak`ahs of Shuruq (sunrise)" or "Salat-ul-Shuruq (supererogatory Prayer shortly after sunrise)"?**

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**A:** The public call it Salat-ul-Shuruq. However, it is Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) when it is offered early in the day shortly after sunrise. It is preferred to delay it until the sun has risen at the peak of the forenoon time. But if a person offers it immediately after sunrise, it is still Salat-ul-Duha, or Salat-ul-Shuruq as the public call it.



### 191- Ruling on reciting out loud and subvocally in Salat-ul-Duha

**Q: A questioner from Jordan asks: Is Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) a Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud) or a Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation)? Does reciting out loud include only the Qur'an or does it include what is said in the Ruku` (bowing) and the Sujud (Prostration)?**

**A:** Salat-ul-Duha is a Sirri Salah and so are Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer and `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer. If worshipper recites Salat-ul-Duha out loud, it does not matter. This is because both reciting out loud and subvocally in the Salah are Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) and they are not Haram (prohibited) or Wajib (obligatory). Thus, if a person recites out loud in the day time Prayers (i.e. Salat-ul-Duha, Zhuhr Prayer, and `Asr Prayer) or recites subvocally in the night time Prayers, their Salah is valid but doing so goes against the Sunnah. The Sunnah is to recite subvocally in the day time Prayers which are Salat-ul-Duha, Zhuhr Prayer, and `Asr Prayer and to recite out loud in the night time Prayers in the first two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer and `Isha' (Night) Prayer. This is so, except for Fajr (Dawn) Prayer as it is a Jahri Salah. Also, Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer is a Jahri Salah even though it is offered during the daytime and so is Salat-ul-`Eid (the Festival Prayer),

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and Salat-ul-Istisqa' (Prayer for rain) even if it is performed during the daytime. The supererogatory Prayers, which are performed during the daytime are done with subvocal recitation like Zhuhr Prayer and `Asr Prayer. As stated above, the first two Rak`ahs of Maghrib Prayer and `Isha' Prayer, Fajr Prayer, Jumu`ah Prayer, Salat-ul-`Eid, Salat-ul-Istisqa' as well as Salat-ul-Kusuf (Prayer on a solar eclipse) are recited out loud. That is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite out loud in each of them. However, if a person recites subvocally in a Jahri Salah, their Salah is valid whether he does so intentionally or out of forgetfulness but this goes against the Sunnah and thus he should not do this deliberately. In the same manner, a person may not recite out loud deliberately in a Sirri Salah because doing so goes against the Sunnah. Yet, even if a person does so intentionally, his Salah is not invalidated but he is going against the Sunnah.



## 192- Ruling on becoming accustomed to reciting certain Ayahs in Salat-ul-Duha

**Q:** I am now accustomed to recite in the two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) these two Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) of Shukr (Thankfulness to Allah): an Ayah from Surah (Qur'anic chapter) Al-Naml: ﴿So he [Sulaimân (Solomon)] smiled, amused at her speech and said: "My Lord! Grant me the power and ability that I may be grateful for Your Favours which You have bestowed on me﴾ and an Ayah from Surah Al-Ahqaf: ﴿And We have enjoined on man to be dutiful and kind to his parents. His mother bears him with hardship. And she brings him forth with hardship, and the bearing of him, and the weaning of him is thirty months, till when he attains full strength and reaches forty years﴾

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**Is this act considered a Bid`ah (innovation in religion) or do I have the right to choose freely what I want to recite from the Qur'an? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** There is nothing wrong with that; you may recite as much as may be easy for you so long as you do not specify certain Ayahs to recite believing that is Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) to do so. The reason is that this has no basis in Shari`ah (Islamic law) and Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿So, recite you of the Qur`ân as much as may be easy for you.﴾ Thus, if you recite what is easy for you, there is nothing wrong with doing so. But if you deliberately specify certain Ayahs to recite believing that to be Sunnah, this has no basis in Shari`ah for Bid`ah is not allowed in Shari`ah. Moreover, no one can classify acts as Sunnah or Bid`ah unless there is evidence to support that, for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Anyone who does an action which is not in accordance with this matter of ours (Islam) will have it rejected.﴾ Hence, if you do this act on the basis that these two Ayahs or whatever else are great and you like to recite them, then there is nothing wrong with that, provided that you do not believe that reciting them specifically is Sunnah.





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**193- Ruling on delaying Salat-ul-Duha until ten o'clock**

**Q: Is it permissible to delay offering Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) until, for example, 10 a.m.?**

**A:** One may offer Salat-ul-Duha at any time before noon from the time the sun rises above the horizon to the height of a spear until it reaches its zenith. The best time to offer it is when it is intensely hot which nowadays is at 10 a.m., 10:30 a.m. or 11a.m. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said about Salat-ul-Duha, [\(Those who are oft-repentant observe prayer \(i.e. observe Salat-ul-Duha\) when the sun's heat has become so intense that even young camels feel it.\)](#) This indicates that it is better to perform Salat-ul-Duha when there is intense heat that even young camels feel such heat and when the sun rises above the horizon to the height of a spear until it reaches its zenith fifteen or twenty minutes before noon. Thus, Salat-ul-Duha may be performed at any time before noon. However, it is best to offer it when it becomes intensely hot before noon.



### 194- Ruling on offering Salat-ul-Duha ten minutes before Zhuhr Prayer

**Q: What is the ruling on offering Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) ten minutes before Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer? Is it permissible, and how many Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) is it?**

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**When does its time begin?**

**A:** The Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) is to offer Salat-ul-Duha when it is intensely hot before the sun reaches its zenith; this is the best. Its time begins when the sun rises above the horizon to the height of a spear until it reaches its zenith fifteen or twenty minutes before noon. After the sun reaches its zenith, i.e. fifteen or twenty minutes before noon, one should not offer Salat-ul-Duha. As stated before, it is best to offer Salat-ul-Duha when there is intense hot at the forenoon. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: [\(Those who are oft-repentant observe prayer \(i.e. observe Salat-ul-Duha\) when the sun's heat has become so intense that even young camels feel it.\)](#) When the heat becomes so intense at the forenoon that even young camels feel it, it is the best time to offer Salat-ul-Duha. Salat-ul-Duha is Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) and the Prophet (peace be upon him) recommended it to Abu Al-Darda' and Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with them). The Prophet (peace be upon him) himself used to offer it, thus it is Sunnah.



### 195- Offering Salat-ul-Duha following the first Adhan of Jumu`ah Prayer

**Q: What is the ruling on offering Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) after the first Adhan (call to Prayer) of Jum`ah (Friday) Prayer?**

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**A:** It is Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) to offer Salat-ul-Duha on any day of the week. There is nothing wrong with offering Salat-ul-Duha following the announcement of the first Adhan of Jum`ah Prayer. This is because the sun has not reached its zenith at that time. Also, according to the soundest opinion, it is not prohibited to offer supererogatory Salah (Prayer) when the sun reaches its zenith on Friday. The Messenger (peace be upon him) allowed Muslims to offer as many Salahs as they were able to upon entering the Masjid (mosque). He did not instruct them to stop offering Salah when the sun reaches its zenith. This indicates that one is allowed to continue offering supererogatory Salahs on Friday until the Khatib (preacher) ascends the pulpit. This is the preponderant opinion. Therefore, there is nothing wrong if the Mu'min (believer) offers as many Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) as he is able to until the Khatib enters the Masjid. There is also nothing wrong if a woman offers Salat-ul-Duha at home, whether before or after the first Adhan of Jum`ah Prayer.



### 196- Ruling on women remaining in their Musalla after offering Fajr Prayer and until Salat-ul-Duha

**Q: The noble Prophet (peace be upon him) stated:** [\(Whoever offers the Fajr \(Dawn\) Prayer in congregation and continues to remember Allah until sunrise then offers two Rak`ahs \(units of Prayer\) will receive the full reward given to one who performs Hajj or `Umrah \(minor Hajj\).\)](#) **We know that this Hadith is applicable only to men since they gather**

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**in the Masjids (mosques). Does it apply to women as well?**

We hope that women will be entitled to receive the same reward as men. Accordingly, women who remain seated in their Musalla (place for Prayer) remembering Allah, reciting the Qur'an, and supplicating and then offer two Rak`ahs after the sun has risen high in the sky will receive the same reward given to men. Women are included in all the rulings applicable to men and vice versa, unless there is evidence to restrict a certain ruling to either category. As a rule, all rulings of the Shari`ah (Islamic Law) are applicable to both genders because they all are Mukallafs (persons meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions). The commands and prohibitions of the Shri`ah are applicable to them both. Accordingly, any evidence indicating that one is prohibited, permitted, obliged, or even recommended to perform a certain act is considered applicable to all men and women; unless other evidence restricts the matter to either gender.



**Q: It is reported that the Messenger (peace be upon him) said:** (Whoever prays the Fajr Prayer in congregation then sits remembering Allah until the sun rises, then prays two Rak`ahs shall receive the full reward granted to one who performs Hajj and `Umrah.) **How can a woman attain such a reward?**

**A:** She must remain seated in her prayer place until sunrise. She can busy herself with remembering

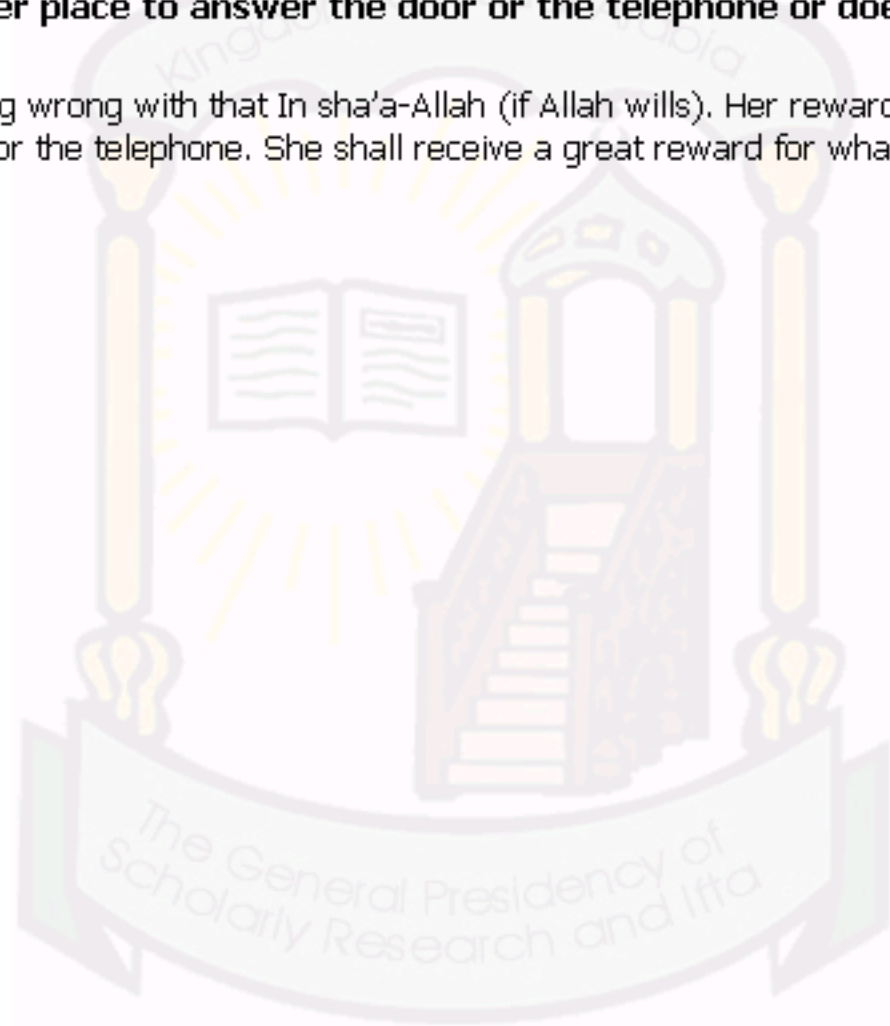
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Allah, reading the Qur'an, reciting Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]") and Tahlil (saying: "La ilaha illa Allah [There is no god except Allah]"). She may also offer two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) at sunrise in order to be included among the category mentioned in the Hadith. This Hadith has been classified as Hadith Hasan (good Hadith).



**Q: A woman remains seated waiting for the approach of the time of the next Adhan (call to Prayer). She busies herself with saying Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]"), Tahlil (saying: "La ilaha illa Allah [There is no God except Allah]") and offering as many Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) as Allah wills for her. Will her reward decrease if she leaves her Prayer place to answer the door or the telephone or does something else of the sort?**

**A:** There is nothing wrong with that In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills). Her reward does not decrease by answering the door or the telephone. She shall receive a great reward for what she does.





### 197- Ruling on offering the Zhuhr Prayer with the Wudu' of Salat-ul-Duha

**Q: If a woman performs Wudu' (ablution) for Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), is it permissible for her to offer the Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer with the same Wudu'?**

**A:** Yes, if a person performs Wudu' at the forenoon to offer Salat-ul-Duha or to recite the Qur'an, it is permissible for them to offer the Zhuhr Prayer with the same Wudu' if the time for the Zhuhr Prayer enters while they are still in state of Taharah (ritual purification). In the same manner, if a person performs Wudu' for Salat-ul-Duha and their Wudu' is not invalidated, it is permissible for them to offer the Zhuhr,

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`Asr (Afternoon), and Maghrib (Sunset) Prayers without repeating their Wudu'. Also, if they remain in state of Taharah until the `Isha' (Night) Prayer, they may offer the `Isha' Prayer as well. It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered all the Prayers with one Wudu' that on the Day of the Liberation of Makkah and said: [\(I did that deliberately, O `Umar. \)](#) That is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) wanted to teach the people that so long as a person is in state of Taharah, they may offer as many prayers as they want. Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah).



### 198- Ruling on making up for Salat-ul-Duha

**Q: If a person is late to offer Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) and does not pray it because of certain circumstances, is it necessary to make up for it? Also, is there a certain description of Salat-ul-Duha or is it performed like any other Salah (Prayer)?**

**A:** Salat-ul-Duha is a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) and Qurbah (a good deed by which Allah's Pleasure is sought). Thus, whoever offers it will receive a reward and there is no sin on whoever does not offer it. If a person misses it, he does not have to make up for it. A person may offer two, four, six, eight, or more Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), all are good. (The Prophet (peace be upon him) recommended to Abu Hurayrah and Abu Al-Darda' (may Allah be pleased with both of them) Salat-ul-Duha. In another narration: performing the two Rak`ahs of

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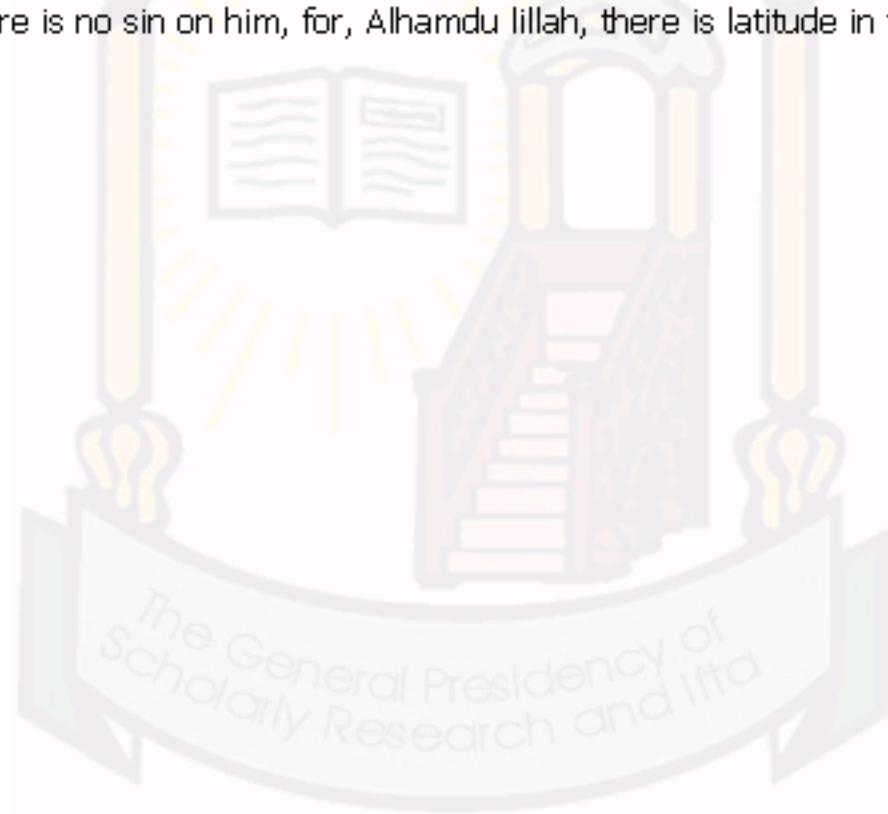
Salat-ul-Duha, fasting three days of every month, and offering the Witr (Prayer with an odd number of units) before sleeping.) These acts of worship - offering Witr every night, observing Salat-ul-Duha, and fasting three days of every month - are Sunnah. Thus, whoever does not perform one of them, there is nothing wrong with that. It is better to offer Witr in the last part of the night for there are many Hadiths indicating that.





**Q: I offer Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) but some days I forget to offer it. Is there a sin on me, considering that I miss it because I am busy with domestic duties that make me forget to offer it on some days?**

**A:** Salat-ul-Duha is a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) and is not a Faridah (obligatory act). It is Mustahab (desirable) for the Mu'min (believer) to offer it, whether with two or more Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) as recommended and done by the Prophet (peace be upon him). If a person does not offer it on purpose or is too busy to offer it, he does not have to make up for it and there is no sin on him, because it is Nafilah (supererogatory), Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah). Hence, whoever offers it will receive Allah's Reward and whoever does not offer it, there is no sin on him, for, Alhamdu lillah, there is latitude in this matter.





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### 199- The ruling on praying supererogatory Prayers while seated

**Q: A Muslim sister from the Republic of Iraq asks: What is the ruling on praying Sunnah (supererogatory) Salah while seated?**

**A:** It is permissible to perform supererogatory Salah (Prayer) while seated though one will only earn half the reward of having prayed while standing. This has been mentioned in the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Therefore, it is permissible to pray Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer) at night, Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) or Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon) while seated even if one is able to stand but only half of the reward is earned.

As for the obligatory Prayers, it is necessary to pray them while standing if one is able to stand. However, if one cannot perform it due to illness, there is no objection to praying while seated. Otherwise, one is to pray while standing due to the Allah's (Praised and Glorified be He) Saying: [﴿And stand before Allâh with obedience \[and do not speak to others during the Salât \(prayer\)\].﴾](#) i.e. pray in the standing position. The Prophet (peace be upon him) mentioned in an authentic Hadith reported by `Umran ibn Husayn: [﴿Pray in the standing position. If you cannot, then pray seated. If you cannot, then pray on your side.﴾](#) [﴿If](#)

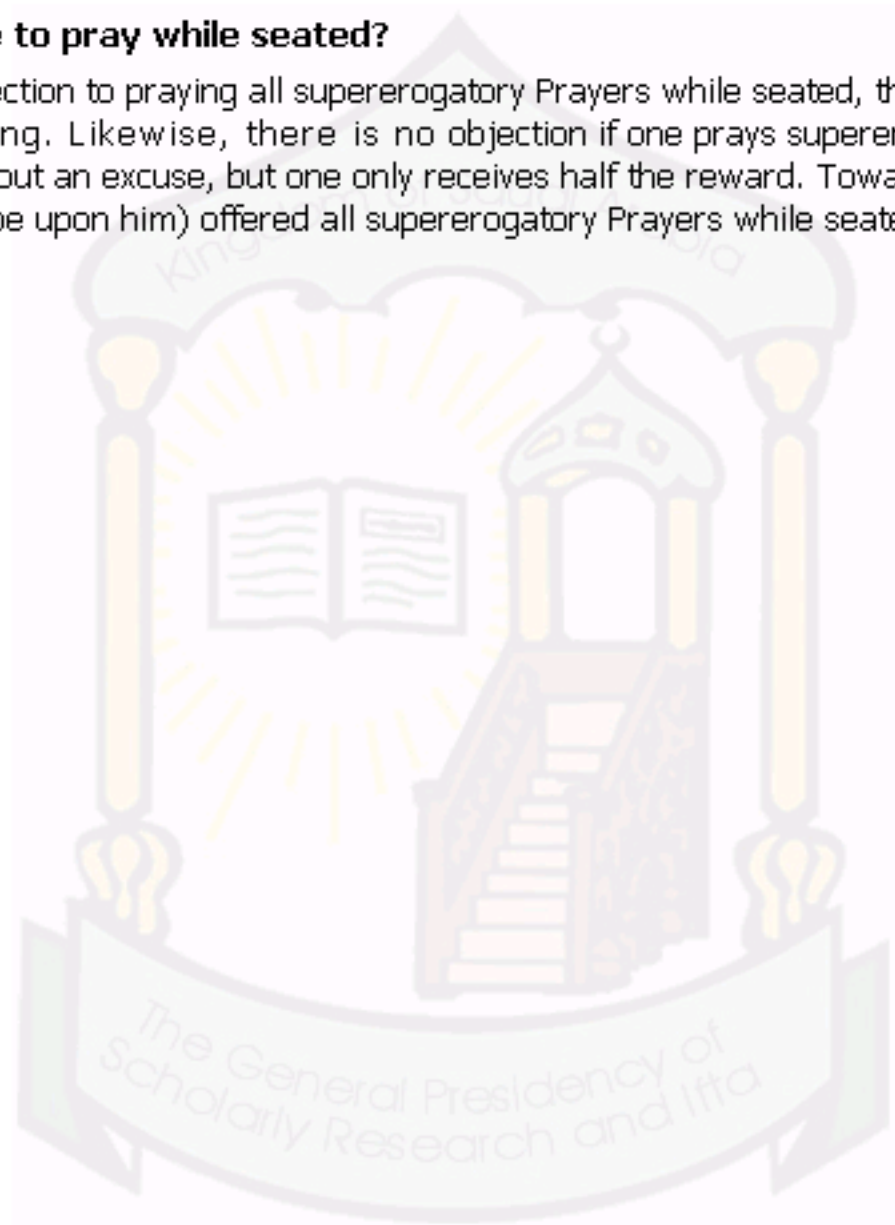
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[you cannot, then pray while lying on your back.﴾](#) This is the order of precedence for a person who is able to pray while standing, one is to pray while standing; if one cannot, they are to pray while seated; if they cannot, then on their side; and if one cannot, then while lying on their back. This is only regarding the obligatory Prayers. But as regards the supererogatory Prayers, it is permissible to pray while seated; however, one will receive half the reward.



**Q: Is it permissible to pray while seated?**

**A:** There is no objection to praying all supererogatory Prayers while seated, though it is best to pray them while standing. Likewise, there is no objection if one prays supererogatory Prayers while seated, even without an excuse, but one only receives half the reward. Towards the end of his life, the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered all supererogatory Prayers while seated.





**Q: What is the ruling on one who prays supererogatory Prayers while seated while being able to pray while standing? Please provide me with evidence if possible.**

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**A:** It has been confirmed that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) used to sometimes offer Tahajjud (optional late night prayer) while seated, and at other times while standing. This demonstrates the permissibility of performing supererogatory Prayers while seated. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Indeed in the Messenger of Allāh \(Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم\) you have a good example to follow\)](#) Supererogatory Prayers are encouraged and carry a great reward. It is a mercy from Allah that He left this matter unrestricted so that we may pray in whatever manner is easy and to complete supererogatory Prayers whether seated or standing. As for the obligatory Prayers, it is impermissible to offer them while seated except for one who has an excuse. Allah says: [\(And stand before Allāh with obedience \[and do not speak to others during the Salāt \(prayer\)\].\)](#) When Imran ibn Al-Husain asked the Prophet (peace be upon him) about this matter, he replied: [\(Pray while standing. If you cannot, then pray seated and if you cannot, then pray on your side\)](#) This applies only to obligatory Prayers. The Hadith was reported by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (authentic Book of Hadith). In another narration of the Hadith by Al-Nasa'y, it is reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(If you cannot do even that, you can pray lying on your back.\)](#) This is the ruling for obligatory Prayers. It is a duty upon Muslims, men and women alike, to offer the obligatory Prayers while standing if they are able. But whosoever is unable to stand due to an illness, may pray while seated and whosoever is in a narrow shop or in a low ceiling place

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and is unable to stand and cannot leave the place, may pray in any position according to their circumstances. Allah says: [\(So keep your duty to Allāh and fear Him as much as you can\)](#) If such a person is unable to pray seated, they may pray on their side and it is preferable to pray on the right side. And if unable to pray while lying on one's side, one may pray while lying on one's back; offering the Adhkar (invocations) and motions of Salah while having the intention in their mind. One is to recite Du`a-ul-Istiftah (opening supplication when starting the Prayer) and then recite the Al-Fatihah (Opening Chapter of the Qur'an), perform Istiftah, seek refuge in Allah and say Basmalah (saying, "Bismillah Al-Rahman, Al-Rahim [In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful]"), recite the Al-Fatihah along with whatever is easy and then pronounce Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]") with the intention of performing Ruku` (bowing) while lying on one's back or side and say: Subhana Rabbiya Al-`Azhim (Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great); Subhanak Allahum Rabbuna wa bi Hamdik (Glory be to Allah and praise be to You, O Allah! Forgive me! One is then to raise their head, if praying alone and say: Sami`a Allahu li man Hamida (Allah listens to he who praises him) with the intention of straightening up from Ruku` and while still lying on one's back or side. Then one should recite the prescribed Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah), pronounce Takbir with the intention of performing Sujud prostration) and say: Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High), and so on. One is to recite the same formula, Adhkar and Du`a' offered during Prayers when praying on one's back or side as one would in Prayers offered while standing, but one

must make the intention to make the motions of Prayer, for Ruku`, Sujud, sitting between Sujud and so on. As for supererogatory Prayers, the matter is flexible, praise be to Allah! A worshiper may pray while standing and this is the optimal manner. One may also pray seated though one will only receive half the reward as for standing. If one offers a supererogatory Prayer while seated while being able to pray standing, they will receive half the reward of one who offers the Prayer standing.

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This is mentioned in the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) of the Prophet (peace be upon him).



**Q: What is the ruling on offering supererogatory Salah (Prayer) while seated if one is capable of offering it while standing? Is that permissible or not?**

**A:** Yes, it is permissible. However, one will receive half the reward. It is reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Whoever offers Salah while seated shall receive half the reward of one who offers it while standing\)](#) This Hadith applies to the case when there is no valid excuse for offering Salah while seated. However, one will receive the full reward if they have a valid excuse such as an illness, to offer a supererogatory or obligatory Salah while seated. There is nothing wrong in offering a supererogatory Salah while seated. However, one will receive only half the reward if they are capable of offering it while standing.





**Q: Is it permissible to offer the supererogatory Salah (Prayer) while seated? I am a housewife and I have children. I cannot offer the supererogatory Salah while standing due to suffering from fatigue.**

**A:** There is nothing wrong with a Muslim offering the supererogatory Salah while seated even if they enjoy sound health. However, as long as the obligatory Salah is concerned, one is not allowed to offer it while seated if they are capable of offering it while standing.

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One is, however, allowed to offer the Tahajjud (optional late night Prayer), Salat-ul-Duha (supererogatory Prayer before noon), or Al-Sunan Al-Rawatib (supererogatory acts that were stressed and regularly performed by the Prophet) while assuming a sitting position, regardless of being of sound health. Therefore, there is nothing wrong with offering these Salaha while seated if one is suffering from weakness or laziness. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: [\(A short period of time before he died, the Prophet would offer the supererogatory Salah while seated.\)](#) , peace be upon him.



## 200- Ruling on facing the Qiblah and purity to perform Sujud-ul-Tilawah

**Q: Please, inform us about Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation). Are Taharah (ritual purification) and facing the Qiblah (Ka`bah-direction faced in Prayer) conditions for its validity?**

**A:** Sujud-ul-Tilawah is a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) and an act of obedience to Allah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to prostrate whenever he recites one of the Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) of prostration. It is not a Salah (Prayer), so Taharah and facing the Qiblah are not conditions to do it. However, Taharah and facing the Qiblah are preferred. Therefore, most scholars said that Taharah and facing the Qiblah are obligatory, but the soundest opinion is that they are not obligatory. This is because submission to Allah is a kind of remembrance like saying: "Glory be to Allah, praise be to Allah, and Allah is the greatest." Man may remember Allah when facing the Qiblah as well as other directions, and he may submit to Him (the Exalted) when remembering and when supplicating Him. Taharah and facing the Qiblah are not conditions for doing so. However, if one purifies himself and prostrates facing the Qiblah, it will

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be better and more preferred. It is also a way for avoiding the disagreement of scholars. It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite the Quran among his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet), and whenever he recited one of the Ayahs of prostration, he prostrated and they prostrated with him.

And he did not say to them: "Whoever is impure is not to prostrate." In the assembly with the Prophet, there were the pure as well as the impure. If purity were a condition, he (peace be upon him) would have informed them. The origin is that purity is not a condition, for it is not a Salah, rather it is mere prostration. Taharah is obligatory for Salah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **(Taharah is the opener of Salah.)** Sujud-ul-Tilawah is not a Salah, but it is a part of it. Also, the most proper and perfect recitation is not Salah and Taharah is not a condition for it and consequently, saying "glory be to Allah" or "praise be to Allah" and all forms of remembering Allah do not necessitate the observance of Taharah. Sujud-ul-Tilawah and Sujud-ul-Shukr (Prostration of Thankfulness to Allah) are the same as these kinds of remembrances. If the news of the birth of a son is brought to a person, or

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the news of the victory of Muslims over their enemies comes to someone and they prostrated thanking Allah, then there is nothing wrong with doing so. Rather, they would be rewarded even if they were impure. However, it is preferred to face the Qiblah to avoid the disagreement of scholars. The direction of Qiblah is superior to other directions so one should prostrate facing its direction and seek the best and most perfect behavior though it is not a condition.





## 201- What to say upon performing Sujud-ul-Tilawah

**Q: A questioner from Yemen inquires: I would like His Eminence to teach us the Du`a' (supplication) which is said upon making Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation) and Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness). What is the Du`a' which is said upon making these two Sujuds (prostrations)?**

**A:** Sujud-ul-Tilawah and Sujud-ul-Shukr (Prostration of Thankfulness to Allah) hold the same ruling as the Sujud made during Salah (Prayer). One may say: "Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High), Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High), Allahumma Ighfirli (O Allah! Forgive me). Therefore, one may recite the same Du`a' which is recited in the Sujud of regular Salahs. The same ruling applies to Sujud-ul-Sahw, Sujud-ul-Shukr, and Sujud-ul-Tilawah. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [﴿So fall you down in prostration to Allâh and worship Him \(Alone\).﴾](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to supplicate in his Sujud and say: [﴿The closest the servant to their Lord is when they are in the state of](#)

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[prostration. Therefore, make frequent Du`a' to Allah.﴾](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: [﴿So far as Ruk`u' \(bowing\) is concerned, extol in it the Great and Glorious Lord, and while prostrating yourselves be earnest in supplication, for it is fitting that your supplications should be answered.﴾](#)

This applies to all types of Sujud. The Prophet (peace be upon him) also used to say in his prostration: [﴿Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la, Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la.﴾](#) While in Ruku`, the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to say: [﴿Subhanaka Allahumma wa bihamdik Allahumma ighfirli \(Glory be to You, O Allah, our Lord, and praise be to You, O Allah, forgive me\).﴾](#) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also used to say in both Ruku` and Sujud: [﴿Subbuhun quddusun Rabbul-Mala'ikati wal-Ruh \(The Most Perfect and the Most Holy, You are the Lord of the Angels and the Ruh \[Gabriel\]\).﴾](#) What is said in Sujud-ul-Tilawah and Sujud-ul-Shukr is the same as what is said in the Sujud of regular Salah.

It is not necessary to make Wudu' (ablution) for Sujud-ul-Tilawah or Sujud-ul-Shukr. Sujud-ul-Sahw and Sujud made during regular Salah are part of Salah and therefore one must be in a state of Wudu'. It is permissible to perform Sujud-ul-Tilawah

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without being in a state of Taharah (ritual purification) according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars. The same applies to Sujud-ul-Shukr. The reason for the permissibility of performing them without being in a state of Taharah is that they may happen on occasions when a person is not ritually pure. For example, Allah (Exalted be He) may bestow a blessing on a person at a time when that person is not ritually pure. A person, who recites the Qur'an from memory because of not being ritually pure, may come across Ayat-ul-Sujud (Qur'anic verses of Prostration) and, therefore, performs Sujud-ul-Tilawah. A person may also fall in prostration to Allah (Exalted be He) upon receiving good news though they may not be ritually pure. According to one Hadith: [﴿Whenever the](#)

Prophet (peace be upon him) received good news, he would fall in prostration to Allah. When Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq was informed of the death of Musaylamah, he fell in prostration to Allah (Exalted be He).



## 202- Sujud-ul-Tilawah

**Q: What is the ruling on Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation)? Does a Muslim have to make Sujud-ul-Tilawah if they happen to listen to Ayat-ul-Sujud (Qur'anic verses of Prostration) while being engaged in some activity or while reciting these Ayat in a Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud)? What is the proper method of making Sujud-ul-Tilawah?**

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**A:** Sujud-ul-Tilawah is Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet). Ayat-ul-Sujud (Qur'anic verses of Prostration) are found in fifteen places in the Qur'an. The first of these occurs at the end of Surah (Qur'anic chapter) of Al-A`raf and the last occurs at the end of Surah Al-`Alaq. Whenever a Mu'min (believer) recites any of these Ayat (Qur'anic verses) outside the Salah (Prayer), they are recommended to fall in prostration even if they are not ritually pure. This is the correct opinion maintained by scholars. Ritual purity is not a condition to perform Sujud-ul-Tilawah. It is preferable to say Allahu Akbar (Allah is the Greatest) upon going down for prostration. While prostrating, a person may say the same words said in the Sujud (prostration) of regular Salah: Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High), Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High). They may recite whatever Du`a' (supplication) they want. One does not have to make Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) or say Allahu Akbar upon rising from the prostrating position. This is the preferred and preponderant opinion. If an Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) happens to recite any of these Ayat in a Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud) like Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha' (Night), Fajr (Dawn), or Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayers, then he as well as the worshippers behind him are recommended to fall in prostration.

The Imam is not allowed to perform Sujud-ul-Tilawah in a Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation) because this might confuse the worshippers. Therefore, if the Imam happens to recite any of these Ayat in a Sirri Salah like Zhuhr (Noon) or `Asr (Afternoon) Prayers or in the third Rak`ah (unit of Prayer) of Maghrib or the third and fourth Rak`ahs of `Isha', then it is preferable that he should not make Sujud-ul-Tilawah in order not to confuse the worshippers. However, if a person is offering a Sirri Salah individually, there will be nothing wrong if they go down for prostration once they recite any of Ayat-ul-Sujud. This applies to the case when one is offering a Nafilah (supererogatory) Prayer

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or when a person is praying alone. In this case, a person is allowed to make Sujud-ul-Tilawah because of the lack of confusion. The person should say Allahu Akbar upon going down for prostration and upon rising from it. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to say Allahu Akbar whenever he kneeled, prostrated, or rose up while in Prayer. This applies to Sujud-ul-Tilawah which is made during Salah. Sujud-ul-Tilawah is a non-obligatory Sunnah. It is authentically reported in the the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) that [Zayd ibn Thabit \(may Allah be pleased with him\) read the entire Surah of Al-Najm \(which contains a Qur'anic verse of prostration\) to the Prophet \(peace be upon him\), but the Prophet did not fall down in](#)

prostration.) This Hadith indicates that Sujud-ul-Tilawah is not obligatory.

'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said: (Allah has not made the prostration of recitation compulsory but if we wish we can do it.) So, whoever wishes to prostrate may prostrate and whoever wishes not to prostrate may not prostrate as it is a non-obligatory Sunnah.



## 203- Du`a' made upon making Sujud-ul-Tilawah

**Q: What is the Du`a' (supplication) one is recommended to say in Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation)?**

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**A:** The Du`a' made in Sujud-ul-Tilawah is similar to the Du`a' made in the Sujud (prostration) of regular Salah (Prayer). It is Mustahab (desirable) to recite good Du`a's. It is preferable to say the Du`a' Ma'thur (supplication based on transmitted reports): *«Allahumma ighfir-li dhanbi kullahu diqqahu wa jullah wa awwalahu wa akhirahu wa `alanyatahu wa sirrah (O Allah! Forgive all my sins, whether small or great, first or last and open or secret).» «Allahumma ya muqalliba al-qulub thabbit qalbi `ala dinik (O Controller of the hearts make my heart steadfast in Your religion).» «Ya musarrif al-qulub thabbit qalbi `ala dinik (O Controller of the hearts, keep my heart in a state of constant obedience to You).»* Du`a' Ma'thur is better than other formulas of Du`a'. This includes such Du`a's as: *«Allahumma atina fiddunya hasanatan wa filakhirati hasanatan wa qina `adhab an-nar (O Allah, grant us good in this life and in the Hereafter and save us the torment of the Fire).»* One should recite this as a formula of Du`a'. One may also supplicate for their parents, their Muslim relatives and their offspring. One may also ask Allah (Exalted be He) to grant them lawful provision, a good wife or husband or anything of the sort. The Prophet (peace be upon him) is reported to have said in an authentic Hadith: *«As for Ruku` (bowing), you should glorify your Lord while performing it, and as for Sujud (prostration), you should do your best to supplicate and ask for more from Him, because your supplications during prostration*

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*are more worthy to be accepted.»* (Related by Muslim in his Sahih) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: *«The nearest a servant comes to their Lord is when they are prostrating themselves, so make supplication (in this state).»* (Related by Muslim) This indicates the permissibility of making frequent Du`a's in Sujud. No specific Du`a' is to be made during Sujud-ul-Tilawah. The Mu'min (believer), male or female, may say whatever Du`a' that comes to mind provided that it does not lead to bearing sins or severing bonds of relations with one's relatives. They may only say those Du`a's which fall under the category of Mubah (permissible).



**Q: When we recite the Qur'an, we may come across one of the Ayat-ul-Sujud (Qur'anic verses of Prostration). How many times should we then perform Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation)? Should we say, "Subhana Rabbi Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High)" three times or is there another Du`a' (supplication)? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness) is like the Sujud (prostration) in Salah. A person may say in Sujud-ul-Sahw and Sujud-ul-Tilawah the same as they say in the Sujud in Salah: Subhana Rabbi Al-A`la, Subhana Rabbi Al-A`la and then supplicate: ﴿"Allahumma laka sajatu, wa-bika amantu, wa-laka aslamtu, sajada wajhi lilladhi khalaqahu wa-sawwarahu, wa-shaqqa sam'ahu wa-basarahu, bihawlihi wa quwatahu, tabaraka allahu ahsanul-Khaliqin (O Allah! To You I have prostrated and in You I have believed, and unto You I have submitted. My face has prostrated to Him Who created it and fashioned it,

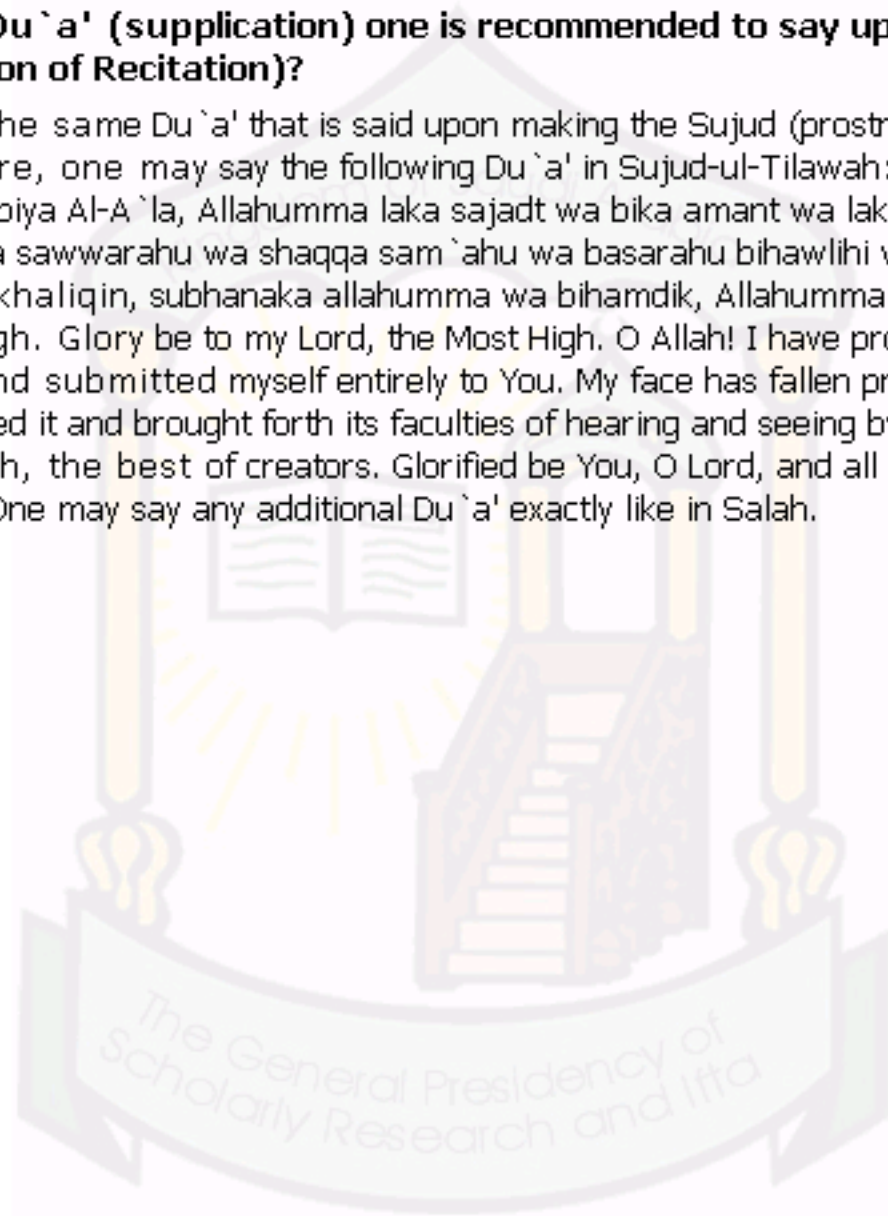
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and brought forth its faculties of hearing and seeing. Blessed is Allah, the Best of creators).﴾ The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to say this Du`a' in Sujud, whether in Sujud-ul-Tilawah, Sujud-ul-Sahw, or Sujud in Salah. A person may also supplicate: "O Allah! Forgive me all of my sins, the small and the large, the first and the last, and the known and the secret. O Allah! Forgive me and my parents. O Allah! I ask You Your Pleasure and Paradise, and seek refuge with You from Your Displeasure and Hell-Fire." A person may say such pieces of good Du`a'. What is meant is that Sujud-ul-Sahw is like Sujud in Salah.



**Q: What is the Du`a' (supplication) one is recommended to say upon making Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation)?**

**A:** One may say the same Du`a' that is said upon making the Sujud (prostration) of regular Salah (Prayer). Therefore, one may say the following Du`a' in Sujud-ul-Tilawah: "Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la, Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la, Allahumma laka sajadat wa bika amant wa laka aslamt, sajada wajhi lilladhi khalaqahu wa sawwarahu wa shaqqa sam`ahu wa basarahu bihawlihi wa quwwatihi tabaraka Allahu ahsana al-khaliqin, subhanaka allahumma wa bihamdik, Allahumma ighfirli (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High. Glory be to my Lord, the Most High. O Allah! I have prostrated myself to You, believed in You and submitted myself entirely to You. My face has fallen prostrate before He who created and shaped it and brought forth its faculties of hearing and seeing by His Might and Power. So Blessed is Allah, the best of creators. Glorified be You, O Lord, and all praise is due to You. O Lord, forgive me)". One may say any additional Du`a' exactly like in Salah.





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#### 204- What to do upon reciting Ayat-ul-Sujud

**Q: What exactly are we required to do when reciting any of the Ayat-ul-Sujud (Qur'anic verses of Prostration)?**

**A:** It is Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) to say, "Allahu Akbar (Allah is the Greatest)" and fall down in prostration upon reciting any of the Ayat-ul-Sujud. While in Sujud (prostration), one may recite the same Du`a' (supplication) said during Salah (Prayer): Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High). It is also Sunnah to recite the following Du`a': "Allahumma laka sajadt, wabika amant, walaka aslamt, sajada wajhi lilladhi khalaqahu wa sawwarahu wa shaqqa sam`ahu wa basarahu, tabarak Allahu ahsanu al-khaliqin (O Allah, I have prostrated myself to You, believed in You, and submitted myself to You. My face has prostrated for the One Who created and shaped it and gave it its hearing and sight. Blessed be Allah, the best of all creators). This Du`a' may be recited during the Sujud of Salah or Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation). Another authentic Du`a' reads, "Allahumma aktub li biha indaka ajran wamhu biha `anni wizran waj`alha li `indaka dhukhran wa taqabbalha minni kama taqabbaltaha min `abdika Dawud (O Allah, record for me a reward for this (prostration), and remove from me a sin. Save it for me and accept it from me just as You accepted it from Your Servant Dawud (Prophet David). The Prophet is reported to have said this Du`a': (O Allah, record for me a reward for this (prostration), and remove from me a sin. Save it for me and accept it from me just as You accepted it from Your Servant Dawud.)"

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During Sujud-ul-Tilawah, one may recite the same words which are said during (prostration in) Salah, such as, "Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la, subhana rabbiya al-a`la, subhanaka Allahumma rabbana wa bihamdika, Allahumma ighfirli, subbuhun quddusun rabb-ul-mala'ikati warruh, "Allahumma laka sajadt, wabika amant, walaka aslamt, sajada wajhi lilladhi khalakahu wa sawwarahu wa shaqqa sam`ahu wa basarahu bihawlihi wa quwwatihi, tabarak Allahu ahsanu al-khaliqin (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High, Glory be to my Lord, the Most High. Glorified be You O Allah, our Lord and we praise you. O Allah, forgive me. Glorified and Exalted be the Lord of the angels and the Holy Spirit (i.e. Gabriel). O Allah, I have prostrated myself to You, believed in You, and submitted myself to You. My face has prostrated for the One Who has created and shaped it and given it its hearing and sight by His Might and Power. So, blessed be Allah, the best of all creators)". If offering Salah, one should say "Allahu Akbar" upon rising from Sujud-ul-Tilawah. It is, however, sufficient to say "Allahu Akbar" one time before going down for Sujud. One is not required to say "Allahu Akbar" or Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) when offering Sujud-ul-Tilawah outside Salah. This was the practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Thus, one is required to say "Allahu Akbar" upon prostrating as well as rising from prostration when reciting any of the Ayat-ul-Sujud during Salah.





### 205- Ruling on Sujud-ul-Tilawah during obligatory Salah

**Q: A questioner from the UAE asks about what to do in case he is offering an obligatory Salah (Prayer) and recites a Surah (Qur'anic chapter) that contains one of Ayat-ul-Sujud (Qur'anic verses of Prostration) like Surah Al-Najm or Al-`Alaq. Should he offer Ruku` (bowing) or Sujud (prostration)? Please guide us.**

**A:** In case he happens to recite a Surah that contains one of Ayat-ul-Sujud during a Jahri Salah (Prayer recited out loud) like `Isha' (Night) Prayer, Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, or Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer, he is required to fall down in Sujud.

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This was the regular practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him). He should say Allahu Akbar (Allah is the Greatest) and then perform Sujud and the worshippers behind him should do the same. However, the situation is different in a Sirri Salah (Prayer with subvocal recitation) where he should not fall down in prostration. This is because offering Sujud-ul-Tilawah in this case may confuse the worshippers who might think that he has forgotten part of Salah. In short, one is allowed to offer Sujud-ul-Tilawah in a Jahri and not in a Sirri Salah.



## 206- Ruling on performing Taslim and Takbir in Sujud-ul-Tilawah

**Q: Does Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation) include offering Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) twice - to the right and left, or only once to the right?**

**A:** Sujud-ul-Tilawah performed outside Salah (Prayer) include neither Taslim nor Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]"). Takbir is said only once before prostrating. This is the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) to be applied when performing Sujud-ul-Tilawah outside Salah. During prostration, one should say: "Subhana Rabbiyal A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High). O Allah! To You I have prostrated myself, in You I have believed and to You I have submitted. My face has prostrated to the One Who created and shaped it and gave it the faculties of hearing and seeing with His Power and Might. Blessed is Allah the Best of creators." It is performed in the same way, saying the same supplication said during prostration in Salah. But it consists of only one Takbir before prostrating oneself. This is what is prescribed by Shari`ah (Islamic law).

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During Salah, Takbir is said while falling down in prostration and upon rising from it, based on the action of the Prophet (peace be upon him) who [\(would pronounce Takbir whenever he prostrated, and whenever he rose; he \(peace be upon him\) used to say Takbir whenever he moved down or up during Salah.\)](#) Sujud-ul-Tilawah is performed in the same manner as the usual prostration during Salah. However, during Salah one should say "Allahu Akbar" upon bending for prostration and rising up from the prostrating position.



### 207- Performing Sujud-ul-Tilawah during prohibited times

**Q: I was reciting the Qur'an following the Fajr (Dawn) Prayer when I came across an Ayat-ul-Sujud (Qur'anic verses of Prostration). Should I have prostrated myself even though it was at a time when it is not permissible to offer supererogatory Salah?**

**A:** There is no such time when it is not permissible to make Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation), because it is not considered as a Salah (Prayer). Accordingly, if you happen to recite any Ayat-ul-Sujud following `Asr (Afternoon) or Fajr Prayers, you are recommended to fall in prostration as it is an act of showing submission and humility to Allah (Exalted be He). This is the right thing to do. Therefore, if while reciting the Qur'an a person comes across an Ayat-ul-Sujud, they are recommended to prostrate themselves, no matter whether this takes place after `Asr or Fajr time. Were it a Salah, it would still be considered as an occasional Salah offered for a specific reason. However, the mere recitation of any Ayat-ul-Sujud provides a reason for making Sujud-ul-Tilawah.

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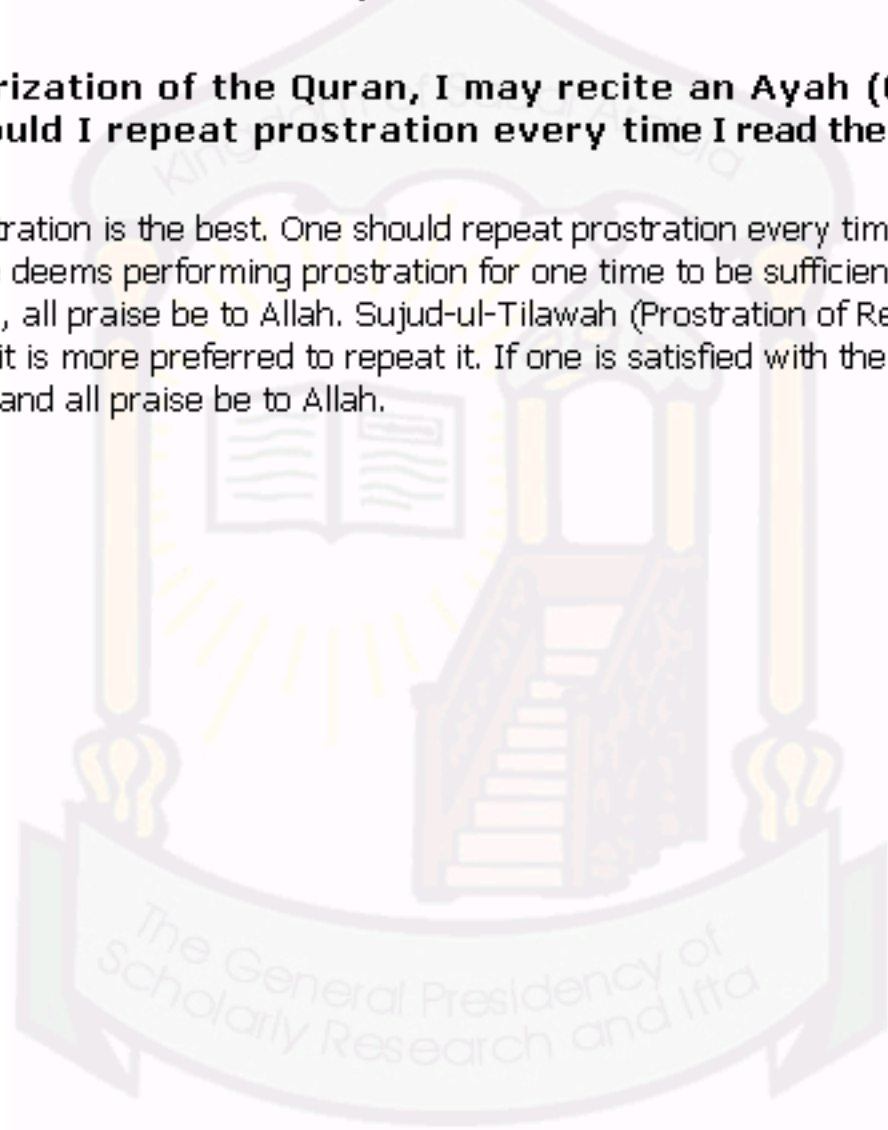
This is the Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) regarding this matter.



**208- Ruling on repeating Sujud-ul-Tilawah by the learner when repeating the Ayah of prostration**

**Q: During memorization of the Quran, I may recite an Ayah (Qur'anic verse) of prostration, should I repeat prostration every time I read the Ayah or is one time sufficient?**

**A:** Repeating Prostration is the best. One should repeat prostration every time he repeats recitation of the Ayah. If one deems performing prostration for one time to be sufficient, there will be nothing wrong in doing so, all praise be to Allah. Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation) is a voluntary act of worship, but it is more preferred to repeat it. If one is satisfied with the first prostration, it will be sufficient for him and all praise be to Allah.





## 209 - Taharah as a prerequisite for making Sujud-ul-Tilawah and Sujud-ul-Shukr

**Q: A brother from the Arab Republic of Egypt inquires whether a person must be in a state of Taharah (ritual purification) before he can make Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation).**

**A:** According to the view held by the majority of scholars, a person must be in a state of Taharah before they can make Sujud-ul-Tilawah. However, the preponderant view is that Taharah is not a requirement for making Sujud-ul-Tilawah as there is no evidence for that. The Prophet (peace be upon him) would

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come across Ayat-ul-Sujud (Qur'anic verses of Prostration) as he recited the Qura'n, and then he (peace be upon him), as well as the people with him, would prostrate themselves. There is no report that the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered those who were not in a state of Taharah not to prostrate.

It is well-known that people's gatherings include those who are or are not in a state of Wudu' (ablution). Had Taharah been considered as a condition for performing Sujud-ul-Tilawah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) would have ordered them to make Taharah before performing it. Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) used to make Sujud-ul-Tilawah without being in a state of Taharah. The same was practiced by Al-Sha`by, one of the great Tabi`un (Followers, the generation after the Companions of the Prophet). Thus, the correct view is that it is not a requirement. There is nothing wrong if a person who is not ritually pure makes Sujud-ul-Tilawah, as there is no evidence to prove otherwise. Sujud-ul-Tilawah is not considered as a Salah (Prayer); rather, it is part of Salah. The same holds true with regard to Sujud-ul-Shukr (Prostration of Thankfulness to Allah). Accordingly, when a person is given the good news of receiving a blessing, they are recommended to make Sujud-ul-Shukr. Like Sujud-ul-Tilawah, Sujud-ul-Shukr does not have to be preceded by Taharah. However, Taharah is a prerequisite for both Sujud (prostration) made in Salah and Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness).



**Q: Is it obligatory upon one to be in the state of Taharah (ritual purification) in order to perform Sujud-ul-Tilawah (prostration of recitation) or Sujud-ul-Shukr (prostration of Thankfulness to Allah)? Is it an act of Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) to perform Sujud (prostration) following the completion of a Khatmah (one complete reading of the entire Qur'an)? We are accustomed to performing Sujud-ul-Shukr as an expression of gratitude to Allah for enabling us to complete the recitation of the entire Qur'an? The questioner is from Syria.**

**A:** The correct view is that Taharah is not a prerequisite for performing Sujud-ul-Tilawah or Sujud-ul-Shukr. This is because one may recite the Qur'an without being in a state of Taharah. Therefore, performing Sujud-ul-Tilawah without being ritually pure is acceptable. One may also be informed of good news

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and therefore prostrate in thankfulness to Allah. The Prophet used to fall in prostration whenever he received pleasing news as a sign of gratitude to Allah. He also used to recite the Qur'an to his Sahabah (Companions) and whenever he recited any of Ayat-ul-Sujud (Qur'anic verses of prostration), he as well as they prostrate. The Prophet (peace be upon him) is not reported to have ordered any of his Sahabah to perform Taharah. It is known that gatherings include those who are or are not ritually pure. Had Taharah been a prerequisite, the Prophet would have ordered those who were not ritually pure not to prostrate. Therefore, the Prophet's silence over the issue indicates that Taharah is not a prerequisite. As for prostrating upon completing a Khatmah, it has no basis in Shari'ah (Islamic law). Therefore, it is preferable not to do it as there exists no evidence to support it.



## 210- Ruling on a menstruating woman performing Sujud-ul-Tilawah

**Q: Is it permissible for a menstruating woman to perform Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation)?**

**A:** The correct opinion is that there is nothing wrong with a menstruating woman performing Sujud-ul-Tilawah when she is reciting the Qur'an from memory. This is the correct opinion maintained by scholars, which applies only when reading from memory, not from the Mus-haf (copy of the Qur'an). A menstruating woman does not fall under the same ruling as a Junub (person in a state of post-sexual ritual impurity), for Janabah (major ritual impurity related to sexual discharge) lasts for a short period, whereas menstruation and postpartum period extend for a long period. Therefore, a Junub may have Ghusl (full ritual bath) and then recite, which does not apply to a menstruating or a newly-delivered woman. The correct opinion is that a menstruating or a newly-delivered woman may recite Qur'an from memory, and on coming across an Ayah (Qur'anic verse) that requires prostration, she prostrates herself. Sujud-ul-Tilawah is not a Salah (Prayer), therefore it does not take its rulings. Rather, it is an expression of submission to Allah (Exalted be He) the same as Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah).



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### 211- Sujud-ul-Shukr

**Q: What is Sujud-ul-Shukr (prostration of Thankfulness to Allah)? Is it performed during the Salah (Prayer) or outside it? Does it carry the same ruling as the Sujud (prostration) performed during Salah in terms of Taharah (ritual purification), covering the `Awrah (parts of the body that must be covered in public)? What is the Du`a' (supplication) one is recommended to recite while performing it?**

**A:** Sujud-ul-Shukr is performed upon Allah's bestowing a blessing on Muslims in general, or a person in particular like having a child or surviving an accident or something of the sort. When Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) was informed of the murder of Musaylimah Al-Kadhdhab, he fell in prostration to Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) as an expression of gratitude to Allah for doing away with Allah's wicked enemy, Musaylimah Al-Kadhdhab. Therefore, Sujud-ul-Shukr is performed when one is given news of something that pleasing and falls in prostration to Allah for that. Upon performing Sujud-ul-Shukr, one may recite the same Du`a' as in Salah. Accordingly, one may repeat Subhana Rabbiya Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High). One may also say: Subhanaka Allahumma rabbana wa bihamdik Allahumma ighfirli (Glorified be You O Allah, our Lord and all praise is due to You. O Allah! Forgive me). One may recite the same Du`a' as in the Sujud of Salah. The correct view is that Taharah is not a prerequisite for performing Sujud-ul-Shukr as is the case with Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation). One may perform them even if one happens not to be ceremonially pure. Therefore, if one reads or hears any of Ayat-ul-Sujud (Qur'anic verses of prostration),

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it is recommended to perform Sujud-ul-Tilawah, even if one is not in a state of ceremonial purity. The same applies to Sujud-ul-Shukr. This is because Sujud-ul-Shukr is not part of Salah; rather, it is an act of submission, humility and sincere devotion to Allah (Glorified be He). Therefore, it falls under the category of Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah), Tasbih (Glorification of Allah) and Tahlil (saying: "La ilaha illa Allah [There is no god except Allah]"). It also falls under the category of reading the Qur'an. Taharah is not a prerequisite for performing it. This is similar to reading the Qur'an from memory, which does not require Taharah. One who performs Dhikr, Tasbih and Tahlil and one who seeks Allah's Forgiveness is may do so even if when not ritually pure. This is the correct thing to do. Some scholars are of the view that Taharah is a prerequisite for Sujud-ul-Shukr and Sujud-ul-Tilawah as is the case with Salah. However, this view is less preferred as there is no evidence to support it.





## 212- Ruling on Salah of thankfulness

**Q: Please explain the way of performing Salat-ul-Shukr (Prayer of Thankfulness to Allah)?**

**A:** We do not know of a Salah called "Salat-ul-Shukr"; rather, the act is called Sujud-ul-Shukr (Prostration of Thankfulness to Allah). However, if a Muslim performs two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) at the forenoon, midday, or nighttime in which they praise and thank Allah and express gratitude for His countless Blessings, this is all good. It is desirable to offer Salah, which is of immense blessings at times when it is permissible to offer supererogatory Salah. The entire forenoon is a permissible time for worship until the sun is directly overhead (at its zenith). The entire forenoon is a permissible time for worship except during the interval following `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer. The entire night is a permissible time for worship - all praise be to Allah.

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Accordingly, anyone who offers a two-Rak`ah Salah for thanking, praising, and asking Allah for more blessings, this is all good. Back to the question raised, we do not know a Salah called Salat-ul-Shukr in Shari`ah (Islamic law). We only know Sujud-ul-Shukr. For example, on receiving the good news of becoming a father to a baby boy or girl, one prostrates out of thankfulness to Allah, or on learning that Allah healed one's ill son or parent, or a relative narrowly escaping death in a car accident, one falls down in prostration out of gratitude to Allah, all this is good. Among other events that call for the prostration of thanks is the victory of the Muslims over their enemy; if Muslims are fighting a war against an enemy, on receiving the good news of their victory, one should prostrate out of thankfulness to Allah. Also, it was reported that when Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) received the glad tidings that Musaylimah the Liar was killed in Yamamah Battle, he prostrated in thankfulness to Allah. It was also reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) prostrated in thankfulness to Allah when he was informed that Al-Aswad Al-`Ansy was killed. What is meant is that Sujud-ul-Shukr is well-known. It is performed in the same manner as the usual prostration during Salah. Thanking for a bestowed blessing is expressed through one prostration made to Allah, saying during it: "Subhana Rabbiyal A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High), Subhana Rabbiyal A`la," then supplicating and praising Allah for the blessings granted to oneself and to other Muslims as well.

The correct scholarly opinion is that it does not necessitate Taharah (ritual purification). Yet the Jumhur (dominant majority of scholars) are of the opinion that Taharah is necessary, but the correct scholarly opinion is that it is not a prerequisite for lack of evidence on this issue. Rather, it is an expression of submitting oneself to Allah and being mindful of Him the same as Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]"), Tahlil (saying: "La ilaha illa Allah [There is no god except Allah]") and reciting Qur'an from memory.

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Taharah is not a condition at all in any of these three. According to authentic reports, Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) used to prostrate himself without being ritually pure, and Al-Sha`by also. [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) used to recite the Qur'an \(while sitting among the Sahabah\) and when he recited one of Ayat-ul-Sujud \(Qur'anic verses of Prostration\), he would prostrate and](#)

they would prostrate along with him.) He (peace be upon him) did not say that those present who are not ritually pure should not prostrate. Evidently, such gatherings inevitably comprise some who are not ritually pure. Had Taharah been a prerequisite for making Sujud-ul-Tilawah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) would have informed the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) that no one should prostrate unless in a state of Taharah. The fact that those attending the gathering prostrated themselves with him indicates that Taharah is not a condition. Had Taharah been a prerequisite for making Sujud-ul-Tilawah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) would have informed the Sahabah. Allah (Exalted be He) sent him as a conveyor of knowledge and a teacher. It is not permissible to delay clarification beyond the proper time. Attendance of his assemblies and prostrating along with him was the time for a clarification if any was deemed necessary.



### 213- Sujud-ul-Shukr

**Q: What is the description of Sujud-ul-Shukr (Prostration of Thankfulness to Allah)? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Sujud-ul-Shukr is like the Sujud (prostration) in Salah, Sujud-ul-Sahw (Prostration of Forgetfulness), and Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation).

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It consists of one Sujud in which a person may say: "Subhana Rabbi Al-A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High)." Then a person may praise Allah and thank Him for the blessings He has bestowed upon them, be it health, child, victory or triumph for Muslims, and other similar matters that please Muslims. [\(The Prophet \(peace be upon him\) prostrated in thankfulness \(to Allah\).\)](#) Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) did the same when he was informed of the conquest of Al-Yamamah and the death of Musaylimah Al-Kadhhab. According to the correct scholarly opinion, it is permissible to perform Sujud-ul-Shukr even if the person is not in a state of Taharah (ritual purification). When a person receives good news, they may perform Sujud-ul-Shukr even without being in a state of Taharah. Likewise, Sujud-ul-Tilawah is like Sujud-ul-Shukr; when a person recites one of the Ayat-ul-Sujud (Qur'anic verses of Prostration), they may perform one Sujud, even if they are not in a state of Taharah, according to the more correct of the two opinions maintained by scholars. In all kinds of Sujud, including Sujud-ul-Tilawah, Sujud-ul-Shukr, and Sujud-ul-Sahw, a person says what they say in Sujud in Salah: "Subhana Rabbi Al-A`la," "Subhanaka Allahumma Rabbana wa Bihamdik. Allahumma ighfir li (Glory be to You, O Allah, our Lord, and praise be to You. O Allah, forgive me)," and "Subbuhun Quddusun Rabbul-malaikati wal-Ruh (Perfect and Glorified (He is), Lord of the angels and the Ruh, i.e. Jibril)." A person may say a similar good Du`a' (supplication) that Allah makes easy for him. In Sujud-ul-Shukr, the worshipper should thank Allah a lot for the blessing with which He has endowed them. In Sujud, the worshipper may also say: "Allahumma laka sajatu, wa-bika amantu, wa-laka aslamtu, sajada wajhi lilladhi khalaqahu wa-sawwarahu, wa-shaqqa sam'ahu wa-basarahu, bihawlihi wa quwatahu, tabaraka allahu ahsanul-Khaliqin (O Allah! To You I have prostrated and in You I have believed, and unto You I have submitted.

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My face has prostrated to Him Who created it and fashioned it, and brought forth its faculties of hearing and seeing through His Might and Power. Blessed is Allah, the Best of creators." Such a Du`a' may be said in Sujud in Salah, Sujud-ul-Tilawah, and Sujud-ul-Shukr besides saying "Subhana Rabbi Al-A`la" which is a necessity. The worshipper should say in all kinds of Sujud, such as Sujud-ul-Tilawah, Sujud-ul-Shukr, Sujud in Salah, and Sujud-ul-Sahw: "Subhana Rabbi Al-A`la" at least once, though it is preferable to say it three or five times.



**Q: How and when is it recommended to perform Sujud-ul-Shukr (Prostration of Thankfulness to Allah)? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Sujud-ul-Tilawah is performed in the same manner as the usual prostration during Salah. It consists of only one prostration saying during it the same words of glorification said while prostrating in Salah: "Subhana Rabbiyal A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High), Subhana Rabbiyal A`la," then praising, thanking and acknowledging Allah, as the Giver of the blessing obtained. One should also supplicate Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and express gratitude, that is Sujud-ul-Shukr. Good events like, for example, becoming a father, recovery of one's mother or father from illness, victory of Muslims over their enemy...on receiving such good news it is recommended by Shari`ah (Islamic law) to offer prostration out of thankfulness to Allah, even if one is not ritually pure. The same supplications said during prostration in Salah are to be said in Sujud-ul-Shukr: Subhana Rabbiyal A`la,

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Subhana Rabbiyal A`la. O Allah! Forgive me. O Allah! Forgive me. O Allah! Forgive me. Bestow on me the bounty of thanking You for Your Blessings. Praise be to Allah for this blessing, and similar words for expressing gratitude.



**Q: My question is about why and how to perform Sujud-ul-Shukr (Prostration of Thankfulness to Allah)?**

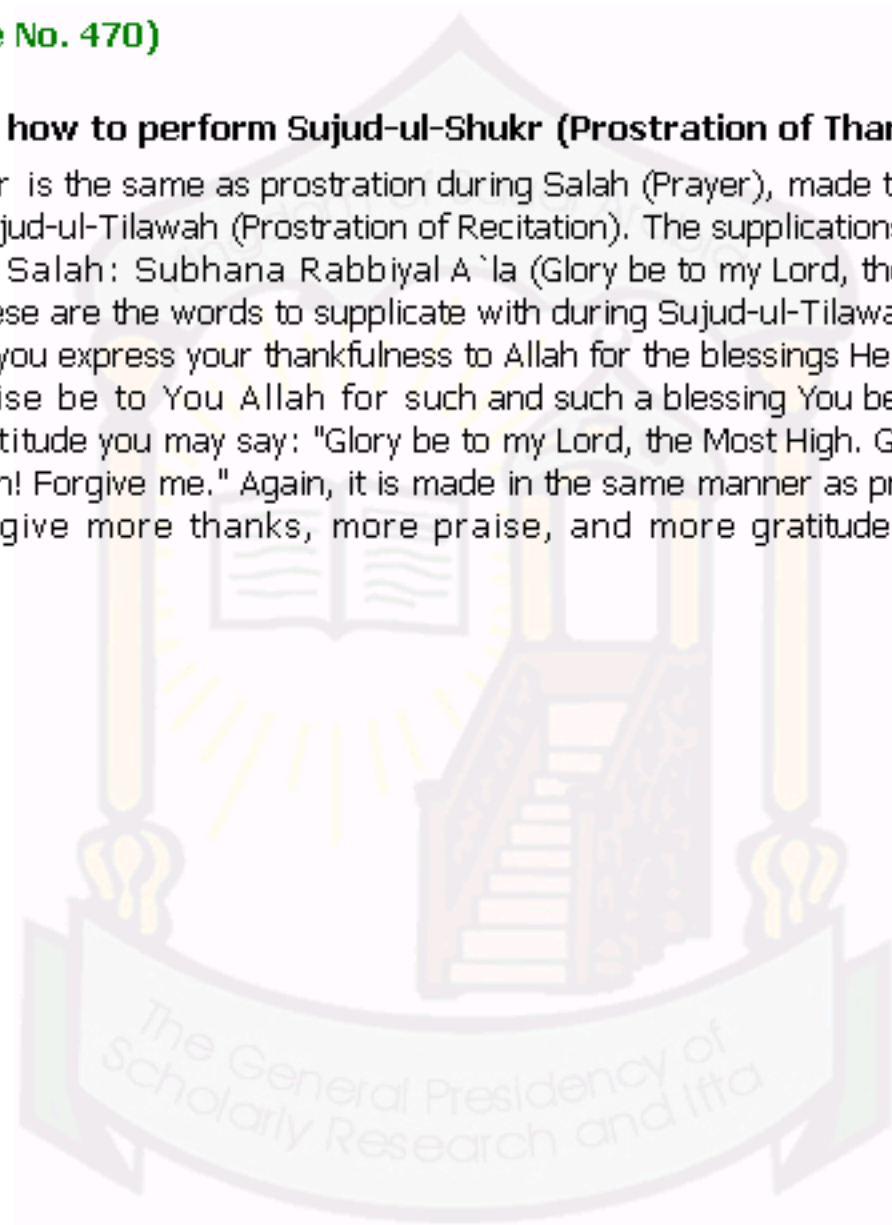
**A:** Sujud-ul-Shukr is performed in the same manner as prostration during Salah (Prayer) or recitation of the Qur'an (Sujud-ul-Tilawah [Prostration of Recitation]). It is done to express thankfulness to Allah on receiving some good news. In this prostration you say: "Subhana Rabbiyal A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High), Subhana Rabbiyal A`la," and praise and thank and supplicate to Allah to put blessings in the thing He bestowed on you and to confer on you more bounties that benefit you in the life of this world and the Hereafter. This prostration can be done without having Wudu' (ablution) as applies to Sujud-ul-Tilawah, which does not necessitate Wudu' according to the correct scholarly opinion. A person may receive some good news while not being ritually pure or may recite the Qur'an from memory while not being ritually pure and on coming across an Ayah (Qur'anic verse) that requires prostration, fall down in prostration without Wudu' according to the correct scholarly opinion. Similarly, if in response to the good news of having a child, or a victory of the Muslims over their enemy, or recovery of an ill person etc. one prostrates out of thankfulness to Allah while being ritually impure, there is nothing wrong with this. The glorification is the same as that said during Salah: "Subhana Rabbiyal A`la, Subhana Rabbiyal A`la," along with supplicating, praising, and thanking Allah for the great blessing bestowed.



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**Q: I want to know how to perform Sujud-ul-Shukr (Prostration of Thankfulness to Allah)?**

**A:** Sujud-ul-Shukr is the same as prostration during Salah (Prayer), made the same way, and this also applies to Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation). The supplications are also the same as those said during Salah: Subhana Rabbiyal A`la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High), Subhana Rabbiyal A`la. These are the words to supplicate with during Sujud-ul-Tilawah and Sujud-ul-Shukr, where in the latter you express your thankfulness to Allah for the blessings He bestowed on you. You may say: "All praise be to You Allah for such and such a blessing You bestowed on me." As an expression of gratitude you may say: "Glory be to my Lord, the Most High. Glory be to Allah and all praise is His. O Allah! Forgive me." Again, it is made in the same manner as prostration in Salah, but here you have to give more thanks, more praise, and more gratitude to Allah for the gift He conferred on you.





## 214- Ruling on performing much prostration

**Q: Is it correct that making many prostrations is Bid`ah (innovation in religion), bearing in mind that I often recall the countless blessings of Allah on me and I prostrate myself thankfully to Allah?**

**A:** Prostration alone should only be made for a reason, such as Sujud-ul-Tilawah (Prostration of Recitation) performed on reciting one of Ayat-ul-Sujud (Qur'anic verses of Prostration) while praying or reading the Qur'an;

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or Sujud-ul-Shukr (Prostration of Thankfulness to Allah) for a bestowed blessing where one expresses thankfulness and gratitude to Allah by prostrating oneself, such as having a new baby or Muslims achieving a victory over their enemy. Prostrating oneself without a reason has no basis in Shari`ah (Islamic law). Rather, it is a Bid`ah. Offering a full or a two Rak`ah Salah (Prayer consisting of two units) or more with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) made after every two, is permissible and good. Salah is a source of immense blessings, but it has to be offered in pairs, i.e. two Rak`ahs followed by two and so on, when voluntarily performed whether by night or day. Prostration may be made alone for specific reasons, such as prostration performed on reciting one of the Ayat-ul-Sujud (Qur'anic verses of Prostration), or to express thankfulness to Allah for a new blessing, such as a newborn, or a victory, or escape from an accident, and similar events.



## 215- Ruling on Tahiyat-ul-Masjid

**Q: Should a man who enters the Masjid (mosque) for one of the Five Obligatory Daily Salahs (Prayers) also offer Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit Prayer to salute the mosque) everytime - i.e. it has to be performed with every obligatory Salah - or once a day is sufficient? Does this supererogatory Salah suffice for the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis)? May Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** The Sunnah (action following the teachings of the Prophet) to be done on entering the Masjid while being ritually pure is to pray the two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) of Tahiyat-ul-Masjid. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Anyone of you who enters the Masjid](#)

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[should not sit until he has prayed two Rak`ahs.\)](#) Another wording says: [\(Let him pray two Rak`ahs before sitting down.\)](#) This Sunnah is to be applied at any time, forenoon, afternoon, sunset, any time. At no time is Tahiyat-ul-Masjid prohibited, according to the correct opinion maintained by scholars. It is permissible even after the time of `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, if one enters the Masjid to sit there waiting for Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer, or enters after Fajr (Dawn) Prayer to attend a Halaqah (learning circle) or to sit there, he should pray two Rak`ahs before sitting. There is no time when it is not permissible to offer it. That is the course of action prescribed for the Muslim. It is a stressed Sunnah that a Muslim is to act upon whenever he enters the Masjid, no matter how many times, whether twice or thrice at the forenoon, midday or nighttime. Every time one enters the Masjid while ritually pure, one should pray two Rak`ahs. However, performing the Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer) of Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer will suffice for Tahiyat-ul-Masjid, whether one performs two or four Rak`ahs with Taslim after every two. The same applies to Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, if one has not performed its Sunnah Ratibah at home and offers it instead in the Masjid, in such a case it will suffice for Tahiyat-ul-Masjid.

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The two supererogatory Rak`ahs offered before Fajr will suffice for Tahiyat-ul-Masjid. All praise be to Allah.





**Q: Is it obligatory every time a man enters the Masjid (mosque) to offer one of the Five Obligatory Daily Prayers to also pray Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit Prayer to salute the mosque)? This means that he will have to pray Tahiyat-ul-Masjid five times a day. Kindly explain this, may Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** Tahiyat-ul-Masjid is Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet), not Wajib (obligatory). Anyone who enters the Masjid should offer two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer). If it is the time of Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, its Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) will suffice for Tahiyat-ul-Masjid, i.e. the four supererogatory Rak`ahs offered with two Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) before Zhuhr Prayer will suffice for Tahiyat-ul-Masjid. The same applies to `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, it is Mustahab (desirable) to pray before it four supererogatory Rak`ahs with Taslim after every two, based on the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [\(May Allah have mercy on a person who performs four Rak`ahs before `Asr Prayer.\)](#) They will suffice for Tahiyat-ul-Masjid, whether intended as Tahiyat-ul-Masjid or not. Similarity, coming to the Masjid while or before or after pronouncing the Adhan (call) for Maghrib (Sunset) or `Isha' (Night) Prayers, the two Rak`ahs of Tahiyat-ul-Masjid are to be offered after or before Adhan, or between Adhan and Iqamah (call to start the Prayer). This is also an act of Sunnah, based on the saying of the Prophet

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(peace be upon him): [\(Between every two calls \(Adhan and Iqamah\) there is a Salah; between every two calls there is a Salah. In the third time he \(peace be upon him\) added: "For whoever wants to \(do so\)."](#) Anyone who enters the Masjid after or before the Adhan for Maghrib or `Isha' Prayer should pray Tahiyat-ul-Masjid. Also, it is Mustahab to offer two Rak`ahs between Adhan and Iqamah in Maghrib and `Isha' Prayers. The Sunnah Ratibah of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer consists of two Rak`ahs performed before it either at home or in the Masjid, and in the latter case they will suffice for Tahiyat-ul-Masjid. All praise be to Allah.



## 216- Ruling on praying Tahiyat-ul-Masjid during the times Salah is declared prohibited

**Q: A questioner from Syria asks: "Respected Shaykh, is it permissible to offer Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit Prayer to salute the mosque) at any time even when it is not permissible to offer supererogatory Salah (Prayer)?"**

**A:** Yes, it is permissible to offer Tahiyat-ul-Masjid at any time, because it is classed among occasional Salahs offered for specific reasons. Accordingly, any worshipper who enters the Masjid (mosque) after `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer to sit there waiting for Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer or to attend a lesson or for other reasons should offer Tahiyat-ul-Masjid. The same applies when arriving at the Masjid after Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, Tahiyat-ul-Masjid should be offered at that time because it is one of the occasional reason-specific Salahs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [«When anyone of you enters the Masjid, he should not sit till he has prayed](#)

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[two Rak`ahs.](#) According to another wording: [«Let him pray two Rak`ahs before sitting.»](#) Also, if it happens that the sun is eclipsed after `Asr Prayer, Salat-ul-Kusuf (Prayer on a solar eclipse) may be offered because it is a reason-specific Salah. The same applies to performing Tawaf (circumambulation of the Ka`bah) after `Asr or Fajr Prayer, Salat-ul-Tawaf (two-unit Prayer performed after circumambulating the Ka`bah) may be offered, based on the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): [«O Banu `Abd Manaf, do not prevent anyone from circumambulating this House \(Ka`bah\) and praying \(there\) at any time of night or day.»](#)



**217- Ruling on offering two Rak`ahs with the intention of both Sunnah Ratibah and Tahiyat-ul-Masjid**

**Q: After my entry into the Masjid (mosque), I perform two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) without resolving an intention whether they are Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit Prayer to salute the mosque) or Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis)? For example, I enter the Masjid to offer Fajr (Dawn) Prayer and I just pray two Rak`ahs without a specific intention?**

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**Does the two Rak`ahs suffice to fulfill both: Tahiyat-ul-Masjid and Sunnah Ratibah before an obligatory Salah or is it better to offer two separate Rak`ahs for each?**

**A:** As long as you make the intention to perform both: Tahiyat-ul-Masjid and Sunnah (supererogatory) Salah of Fajr, this is sufficient for both. The same applies to the first two Rak`ahs of Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer) of Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer, if you make the intention to perform both Tahiyat-ul-Masjid and Sunnah Ratibah, this is sufficient for both. Similarly, if you perform four Rak`ahs before `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer, two Rak`ahs followed by two Rak`ahs, the first two will suffice for Tahiyat-ul-Masjid, all praise be to Allah. The intention includes both. If you make the intention to perform Sunnah Salah of Fajr, it will suffice for Tahiyat-ul-Masjid. Also, if you pray with the intention of offering Sunnah Qabliyyah of Zhuhr, it will suffice for Tahiyat-ul-Masjid.



## 218- Ruling on offering a four-Rak`ah Salah with one Taslim to honor the Masjid

**Q: I have seen some people who, upon entering the Masjid (mosque), offer four consecutive Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) with one Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) as Tahiyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit Prayer to salute the mosque). Is this correct or Tahiyat-ul-Masjid consists of only two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer)?**

**A:** This is inconsistent with the Sunnah (acts, sayings or approvals of the Prophet). The Sunnah is to offer two Rak`ahs only. Praying four continuous Rak`ahs is contrary to the Sunnah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(\(Optional\) night and day Salah \(Prayer\) is two Rak`ahs followed](#)

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[by two Rak`ahs.](#)) The Sunnah is to offer two Rak`ahs upon entering the Masjid, concluding them with Taslim. If there is a wish to offer more, this is permissible provided that Taslim is made at the end of every two Rak`ahs. That is certainly what is best in voluntary Salah performed day or night. It is not permissible to offer four consecutive Rak`ahs with one Taslim. Every two Rak`ahs should be concluded with Taslim.



**Q: A brother from Al-Dammam, Eastern Region, says: I notice that some people offer four consecutive Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) with one Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer) as Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (Prayer to greet the mosque), which is only two Rak`ahs. Guide us, may Allah reward you with the best.**

**A:** According to the Sunnah (acts, sayings, or approvals of the Prophet), Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid consists of two Rak`ahs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(When anyone of you enters the Masjid, they should offer two Rak`ahs before sitting.\)](#) The Sunnah is to offer two Rak`ahs. If a person offers four, there is nothing wrong with this, as long as it is not during the time when it is prohibited to offer supererogatory Salah (Prayer). If a person enters the Masjid (mosque) in the forenoon or at night, and offers four Rak`ahs, it is permissible, though it is preferable to perform Taslim after every two Rak`ahs. The Sunnah is to offer two Rak`ahs, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(The \(optional\) Salah by night and day should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs.\)](#) A person should not

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combine the four Rak`ahs; the Sunnah is to perform Taslim after every two Rak`ahs. Especially during night Salah, a person should not offer more than two Rak`ahs with one Taslim; they should not offer four Rak`ahs with one Taslim. They should perform Taslim after every two Rak`ahs. However, some scholars hold the opinion that it is permissible to offer more than two Rak`ahs with one Taslim during daytime Salah. But according to the correct opinion, the Sunnah is to offer two by two. However, if a person likes to offer four Rak`ahs with two Taslims, six Rak`ahs with three Taslims, or eight Rak`ahs with four Taslims at a time when it is not prohibited to offer supererogatory Salah such as at the forenoon or at night, this is permissible.

However, during the time when it is not permissible to offer supererogatory Salah, a person should not offer more than two Rak`ahs as Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid. If a person enters the Masjid after the `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer or Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, it is permissible for them - rather, preferable - to offer two Rak`ahs as Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid before sitting, because Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid is one of the occasional Salaha offered for specific reasons; but a person should offer more than two Rak`ahs, which fulfill the purpose.



### 219- Articulating one's intention upon offering Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid

**Q: Every time I go to the Masjid (mosque), I offer two Rak`ahs. Upon starting the Salah (Prayer), I would say: "I intend to offer two Rak`ahs as Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque)". Is this permissible? Were the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet; peace be upon him) used to do that?**

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**A:** It is Sunnah (action following the example of the Prophet) for the Mu'min (believer) to offer two Rak`ahs as Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid upon entering the Masjid. This is based on the Hadith in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(When anyone among you enters the Masjid, he should not sit till he has observed two Rak'ahs.\)](#) Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid can be offered even if the Khatib (preacher) is delivering the Friday Khutbah (sermon). According to the correct opinion maintained by scholars, it is also permissible to offer Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid at the time when it is not permissible to offer supererogatory Salah, like the time after `Asr (Afternoon) or after Fajr (Dawn) Prayers. Therefore, it is Sunnah to offer two Rak`ahs upon entering the Masjid. One does not have to say: "I intend to offer two Rak`ahs as Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid." It is sufficient to make the intention in one's heart. Articulating the intention is an act of Bid`ah (innovation in religion) according to the more correct of the two opinions maintained by scholars. Therefore, one should not articulate one's intention upon making Wudu' (ablution) or upon performing Salah (Prayer). Rather, one should intend this in his heart, knowing that this applies to all Salahs, whether obligatory or supererogatory.



**220- The ruling on repeating Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid each time one enters the Masjid**

**Q: A man from Egypt asks: Near to my residence is a Masjid (mosque) where I offer Maghrib (Sunset), `Isha (Night) and Fajr (Dawn) Prayers daily, praise be to Allah! Is it obligatory to offer Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque) every time I enter the Masjid?**

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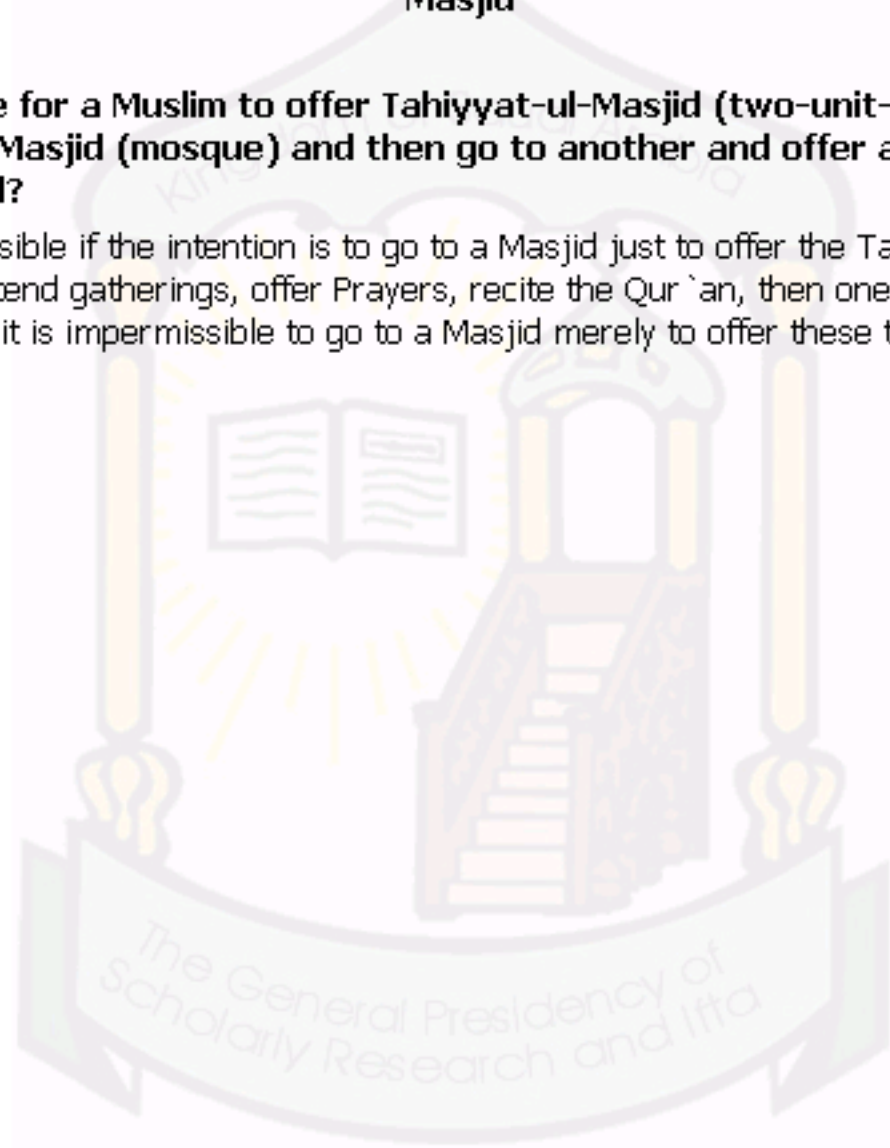
**A:** Yes! Whenever you have entered the Masjid, then you must greet it whether you go to offer Zhuhr, `Asr, Maghrib or `Isha. Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid is a stressed Sunnah if you enter the Masjid while in a state of Wudu' (ablution). But if you have offered a supererogatory Prayer associated with the Prayer, such as the Sunnah for Zhuhr for instance, it takes the place of Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid. The same applies to the Sunnah (supererogatory) Salah of Fajr Prayer, and praise be to Allah!



**221- The ruling on offering Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid and then leaving to offer it at another Masjid**

**Q: Is it permissible for a Muslim to offer Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque) in one Masjid (mosque) and then go to another and offer another two units of Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid?**

**A:** This is impermissible if the intention is to go to a Masjid just to offer the Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid. But if the purpose is to attend gatherings, offer Prayers, recite the Qur`an, then one should offer Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid. However, it is impermissible to go to a Masjid merely to offer these two units.



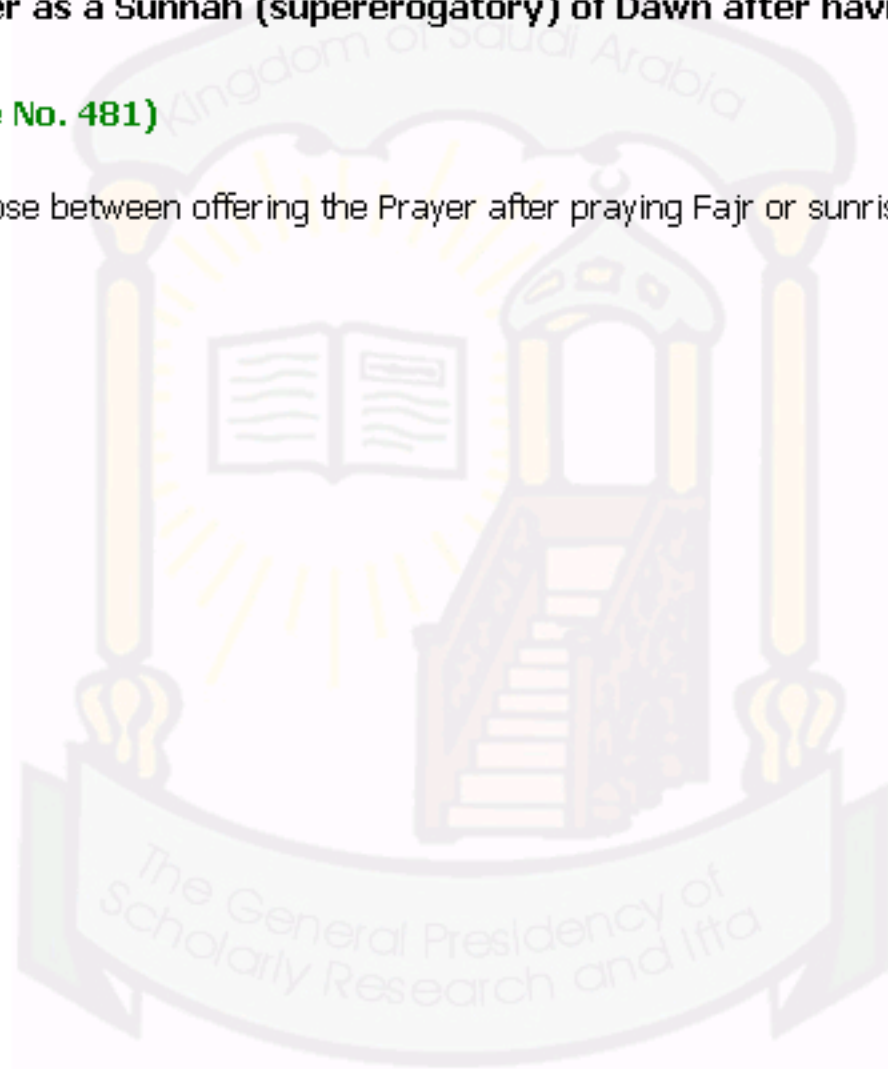




**Q: A Muslim brother asks: Your Eminence Shaykh! If one enters the Masjid (mosque) at the time of the Iqamah (call to start the Prayer) for Fajr (Dawn) Prayer for instance, should he offer Tahiyat Al-Masjid (two-unit-prayer to greet the mosque) and then offer two units of Prayer as a Sunnah (supererogatory) of Dawn after having prayed Fajr ?**

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**A:** Yes, he may choose between offering the Prayer after praying Fajr or sunrise.





### Sunnah Ratibah makes up for Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid

**Q: Does the Sunnah Ratibah (supererogatory Prayer performed on a regular basis) make up for Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid (two-unit-Prayer to greet the mosque)?**

**A:** Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah) and may Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah, his family and whomsoever follows his guidance. To proceed: Authentic Hadiths narrated from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) state that there are twelve Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) which are performed as Sunnah Ratibah. These include four Rak`ahs performed before Zhuhr (Noon) Prayer. Each two Rak`ahs are performed separately; two Rak`ahs are performed following Zhuhr; two after Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer; two after `Isha' (Night) Prayer; and two before Fajr (Dawn) Prayer. These are known as the Sunnan Rawatib. The Prophet (peace be upon him) observed them regularly. He used to offer four Rak'ahs before Zhuhr, each two separated by Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). He would also offer two Rak'ahs after Zhuhr, two Rak`ahs after Maghrib, two Rak`ahs after `Isha', and two Rak'ahs before Fajr. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(May Allah be merciful to a person who performs four Rak`ahs before Salat al-`Asr.\)](#) It is a Mustahab (desirable) act

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to offer four Rak`ahs before `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer. However, this is not a Sunnah Ratibah. It is also a Mustahab act to offer two Rak`ahs between every Adhan (call to Prayer) and Iqamah (call to start the Prayer). This is based on the Hadith in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: [\(Between each two calls \(Adhan and Iqama\) there is a prayer \(He repeated it twice\).\)](#) These Rak`ahs fall under the category of Mustahab acts and they are not part of Sunnan Rawatib. Therefore, it is desirable to offer two Rak`ahs after the Adhan of Maghrib and `Isha'. Offering Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid is sufficient and it makes up for the Sunnah Ratibah. Likewise, the Sunnah Ratibah also makes up for Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid. Accordingly, if a person offers Sunnah Qabliyyah (supererogatory Prayer performed before an obligatory Prayer) of Zhuhr, they will not have to offer Tahiyyat-ul-Masjid. The same applies for the Sunnah Qabliyyah of the Fajr Prayer.