



UNIS

2301 Plymouth Rd, Ann Arbor, MI 48105. Ph: (734) 665-6772

Supererogatory Prayers Or Nawafil

At-tatawwu', or nawafil or supererogatory prayers, have been legislated to make up for any deficiencies left in the performance of fard salah (obligatory prayers). In salah, there are virtues that are not found in any other form of worship. Abu Hurairah reports that the Prophet sallallahu alahi wasallam said: "The first thing that the people will be called to account for on the Day of Resurrection will be the prayers. Our Lord will say to the angels although He knows better: 'Look into the salah of my servant to see if he observed it perfectly or been negligent in it. So if he observed it perfectly it will be recorded to his credit, but if he had been negligent in it in any way, Allah would say: See if My servant has any supererogatory prayers. Then if he has any supererogatory prayers, Allah would say: Make up the deficiency in My servant's obligatory prayer with his supererogatory prayers.' Thereafter all his actions will be examined in like manner" (Abu Dawud).

Abu Umamah narrates that the Prophet sallallahu alahi wasallam said: "Allah does not listen to anything from His slave as He does to the two rak'at (of prayer) that he offers. Mercy descends over the servant's head as long as he remains in prayer" (Ahmad and at-Tirmizhi).

Offering Supererogatory Prayers in One's House

Ahmad and Muslim relate from Jabir that the Messenger of Allah said: "If one of you offers his prayers in the Mosque then he should make a portion of his prayers in his house, as Allah has made his prayers in his house a means of betterment (for him)."

Ahmad records from 'Umar that the Messenger of Allah said: "The nawafil salah of a man in his house are a light; whoever wishes should lighten up his house."

'Abdullah ibn 'Umar reports that the Prophet sallallahu alahi wasallam said: "Make some of your prayers in your houses and do not turn your houses into graves." This statement is related by Ahmad and Abu Dawud. Abu Dawud records from Zaid ibn Thabit on sound authority that the Messenger of Allah said: "A person's salah in his house is better than his salah in my mosque, except for the fard salah."

These hadith prove that it is preferred to say one's nawafil prayers in one's house since prayers in one's house are better than those that he performs in the mosque.

Supererogatory prayers, their Elongation

It is preferred to prolong the reciting by making many rak'at. The group, except for Abu Dawud, reports that al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah said: "The Prophet sallallahu alahi wasallam would stand and pray until his feet or shanks swelled. When he was asked about it, he said: 'Should I not be a thankful slave?'" Abu Dawud records from 'Abdullah ibn Hubshi al-Khath'ami that the Prophet sallallahu alahi wasallam was asked: "What is the best deed?" He said: "Prolonging the qiyam; (standing) [in the prayer]." Then it was asked: "What is the best charity?" He replied: "The sacrifice made by one who has little to give." Then it was asked: "What is the best migration?" He responded: "The migration from what Allah has forbidden." ..."

It is allowed to make supererogatory prayers while in julus (sitting) It is acceptable for one to make nawafil while sitting even though he has the ability to stand. It is also acceptable for one to make part of such prayers sitting and part of them standing even if all of that is in one rak'ah, (i.e., one sits for part of the first rak'ah and then stands for the rest of it, or vice versa). All of that is acceptable without any dislike for it. One may sit in any manner one likes

although it is preferable to sit cross-legged. Muslim records that 'Alqamah asked 'Aishah: "How did the Prophet perform two rak'at while sitting?" She replied: "He would recite while sitting and then when he wished to make ruku', he would stand and bow." Ahmad, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmizhi, an-Nasa'i, and Ibn Majah record that she said: "I never saw the Messenger of Allah ever sitting while reciting during the night prayer until he became old, then he would sit until when about thirty or forty verses were left of his recital then he would stand, finish the recital and make ruku'..."

Different Types of Nawafil

Nawafil may be divided into two types: general and specific prayers. The nawafil are said to be those prayers which are in addition to the fard salah, as prayed by the Prophet sallallahu alahi wasallam.

An-Nawawi says: "If one decides to make nawafil prayers and he does not make any intention concerning the number [of rak'at] he shall make, then he may end the prayer after one rak'ah or make it two rak'at or increase it to three or one hundred or one thousand, and so forth. If he prays a number of [rak'at], without knowing how many, and then ends the prayer his salah will still be valid." There is no difference of opinion on this. The Shaf'iyyah are in agreement with it and there is a text attributed to ash-Shaf'i on this point.

Al-Baihaqi records with a chain of narrators, that Abu Zharr prayed many rak'at and then concluded his salah. Al-Ahnaf ibn Qais asked him: "Do you know if you finished on an odd or an even number?" He replied: "Even if I do not know, Allah knows. I heard my friend Abu al-Qasim say: 'No slave makes a sajdah to Allah without Allah raising him a degree and wiping out one of his sins due to it.'" This is related by ad-Darimi in his Musnad with a sahih chain, but it should be noted

that there is a difference of opinion over the integrity of one of its narrators.

The specific nawafil prayers are referred to as al-sunan ar-ratibah, or the sunnah prayers that have a specific order, number, and so on. These include the sunnah prayers of fajr, zuhr, 'asr, maghrib, and 'isha.

The Two rak'at of Fajr

There are a number of hadith that state the virtues of observing the sunnah prayer at dawn time. For example: 'Aishah relates that the Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam said about the two rak'at before the fajr "They are dearer to me than the whole world." This is related by Ahmad, Muslim, and at-Tirmizhi. Abu Hurairah reports that the Prophet said: "Do not leave the two rak'at of the fajr, even if you are being attacked by a cavalry." This is confirmed by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, al-Baihaqi, and at-Tahawi. The message of the hadith is that one should not leave the two rak'at of the fajr no matter what the excuse, even while under enemy attack or under most trying conditions.

The Sunnah Prayer Of Zuhr

It has been related that the sunnah rak'at at zuhr are four, six, or eight.

Reports concerning four rak'at

Ibn 'Umar said: "We observed and preserved from the Prophet ten rak'at [of sunnah prayers]: two before zuhr and two after it, two after maghrib in his house, two after 'isha in his house and two rak'at before the fajr." This is related by al-Bukhari.

Al-Mughirah ibn Sulaiman reports that he heard Ibn 'Umar say: "The Prophet never left the two rak'at before zuhr and two rak'at after it, two rak'at after maghrib, two rak'a~ after 'isha and two rak'at before fajr." This is related by Ahmad with a good chain.

Reports concerning six rak'at

'Abdullah ibn Shaiq said: "I asked 'Aishah about the prayer of the Prophet and she said: 'He would pray four rak'at before zuhr and two after it.'" This is related by Ahmad, Muslim, and others.

The sunnah of maghrib

It is sunnah to pray two rak'at after maghrib. Earlier we mentioned that Ibn 'Umar narrated that the Prophet would not miss them. As to their content, it is preferred to recite, after al-Fatihah: "Say: O Disbelievers," and "Say: He is Allah, the

One," in the sunnah prayer after salat al-maghrib.

The sunnah of 'Isha

We have already mentioned the hadith which record that the Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam prayed two rak'at after 'isha.

Nonstressed Sunnah Prayers (As-Sunan Ghair Al-Mu'akkadah)

Two or four rak'at before 'asr

Many ahadith have been related about this sunnah prayer and they all support each other.

Such hadith include the following:

Ibn 'Umar reports that the Prophet said: "May Allah have mercy on a person who prays four rak'at before 'asr prayer." This was related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmizhi (who calls it hasan), Ibn Hibban, and Ibn Khuzaimah. The latter two hold it as sahih. 'Ali reports that the Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam prayed four rak'at before 'asr while separating every two sets of rak'at with salutations to the angels close to Allah, to the prophets, and to those who followed them - the believers and Muslims. This is related by Ahmad, an-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, and at-Tirmizhi

Two rak'at before maghrib

Al-Bukhari records, from 'Abdullah ibn Mughaffal, that the Prophet said: "Pray before maghrib, pray before maghrib," and after saying it a third time, he said: "For whoever wishes to do so," not wanting the people to take it as a sunnah. Ibn Hibban records that the Prophet prayed two rak'at before maghrib prayer.

Muslim records that Ibn 'Abbas said: "We would pray two rak'at before maghrib, and the Prophet would see us but he would not order us to do so, nor would he prohibit us."

Ibn Hajar says in Fath al-Bari: "All of the evidence points to the fact that it is preferred to say these two rak'at quickly like the two rak'at before the salat al-fajr."

Two rak'at before salat al-'isha

'Abdullah Ibn Mughaffal reports that the Prophet said: "Between every azhan and iqamah there is a prayer. Between every azhan and iqamah there is a prayer." And, after saying it a third time, he said: "For whoever wishes [to pray it]." This is related by the group. Ibn Hibban records from Ibn az-Zubair that the Prophet said: "There exists no obligatory prayer without there

being, immediately preceding it, two rak'at."

Separating The Obligatory Prayer From The Supererogatory

It is preferred to make a separation between the fard and nawafil prayers after one finishes the fard prayer.

One of the companions of the Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam reports that the Prophet prayed the afternoon prayer and right afterward a man stood up to pray. 'Umar saw him and told him: "Sit, the People of the Book were destroyed because they did not differentiate between their prayers." The Prophet said: "Well said, Ibn al-Khattab [i.e., 'Umar]." This is related by Ahmad

The Witr Prayer

Its excellence and justification: The witr prayer is one that the Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam practiced and which he encouraged others to practice. As such, praying witr comes under as-sunnah al-mu'akkadah.

'Ali says: "The witr prayer is not required like your obligatory prayers, but the Prophet would perform the witr prayer and say: 'O you people [followers] of the Qur'an, perform the witr prayer, for Allah is one and He loves the witr.'" This is related by Ahmad, an-Nasa'i, Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, at-Tirmizhi who calls it hasan, and al-Hakim who grades it sahih.

It is permissible to perform the witr by praying two rak'at [and concluding them] and then praying one rak'ah with a tashahud and taslim. Likewise, it is allowed to pray all the rak'at with two tashahuds and one taslim. One may pray a number of rak'at, one after another, without making any tashahud, save in the one before the last rak'ah in which case one makes the tashahud and then stands to perform the last rak'ah wherein one will make another tashahud and end the prayer with the taslim. One may also make only one tashahud and the taslim, in the last rak'ah of witr. All of that is permissible and can be traced to the Prophet.

Talking about the thirteen rak'at in witr, at-Tirmizhi says: "It has been related from the Prophet that he would perform the witr prayer with thirteen, nine, seven, five, three rak'at or one rak'ah."

The Late Night Prayer, tahajjud (qiyam al-Layil)

Its excellence and merit from the Qur'an: Allah ordered his Messenger to perform salat tahajjud:

"And some part of the night awake for prayer, a largess for thee. It may be that thy Lord will raise thee to a praised position."

This order, although it was specifically directed to the Prophet, also refers to all the Muslims since the Prophet is their example and guide in all such matters.

Those who regularly perform the tahajjud prayers are the Righteous and are more deserving of Allah's bounty and mercy. Allah says: "Lo! Those who keep from evil will dwell amid gardens and watersprings, taking that which their Lord gives them. For, lo, they were doers of good. They used to sleep but little of the night and before the dawning of each day would seek forgiveness."

Salman al-Farsi relates that the Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam said: "Observe the night prayer, it was the practice of the righteous before you and it brings you closer to your Lord and it is penance for evil deeds and erases the sins and repels disease from the body."

Sahl ibn Sa'd reports: "Gabriel came to the Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam and said: 'O Muhammad, live as long as you like, for you are to die. Do whatever deed you wish, for you are to be rewarded. Love whomever you wish, for you are to be parted. And know that the honor of the believer is in the night prayer and his glory is being free from want from the people.'"

Etiquettes of Late Night Prayer

The following acts are sunnah for one who wishes to perform the tahajjud prayers. Upon going to sleep, one should make the intention to perform the tahajjud prayers. Abu ad-Darda' relates that the Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam said: "Whoever goes to his bed with the intention of getting up and praying during the night, and sleep overcomes him until the morning comes, he will have recorded for him what he had intended, and his sleep will be a charity for him from his Lord." This is related by an-Nasa'i and ibn Majah with a sahih chain. Upon waking, one should wipe one's face, use a toothstick, and look to the sky and make the supplication which has been reported from the Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam: "There is no God but Thee,

Glory be to Thee, I seek forgiveness from You for my sins, and I ask for your mercy. O Allah, increase my knowledge and let my heart not swerve after You have guided me, and bestow mercy upon me from Thyself. All praise be to Allah who has given us back life after our death and unto Him is the resurrection."

One should wake up one's family for tahajjud

Abu Hurairah reports that the Prophet said: "May Allah bless the man who gets up during the night to pray and wakes up his wife and who, if she refuses to get up, sprinkles water on her face. And may Allah bless the woman who gets up during the night to pray and wakes up her husband and who, if he refuses sprinkles water on his face." The Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam also said: "If a man wakes his wife and prays during the night or they pray two rak'at together, they will be recorded among those (men and women) who (constantly) make remembrance of Allah." This is related by Abu Dawud and others with a sahih chain.

The recommended time for tahajjud

Salatul Layil may be performed in the early part of the night, the middle part of the night, or the latter part of the night. It is best to delay this prayer to the last third portion of the night. Abu Hurairah reports that the Messenger of Allah said: "Our Lord descends to the lowest heaven during the last third of the night, inquiring: 'Who will call on Me so that I may respond to him? Who is asking something of Me so I may give it to him? Who is asking for My forgiveness so I may forgive him?'" This is related by the group.

Making qada' for the missed tahajjud

Muslim records that 'Aishah said: "If the Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam missed the late-night prayers due to pain or anything else, he would pray twelve rak'at during the day."

'Umar reports that the Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam said: "Whoever sleeps past his full portion [of the late-night prayers] or part of them, he should pray between the dawn and noon prayers and it would be recorded for him as if he had prayed during the night." This is related by the group except for al-Bukhari.

The Duha prayer

Salatul duha is a prized prayer and whoever wishes to earn reward should pray it, while

there is no blame upon the one who does not pray it. The time for duha begins when the sun is about a spear's length above the horizon and it continues until the sun reaches its meridian. It is preferred to delay it until the sun has risen high and the day has become hot.

Number of rak'at for the duha prayer

The minimum number of rak'ah to be prayed is two, as was mentioned in the hadith of Abu Zharr. The most that the Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam performed was eight rak'at, whereas, the most he mentioned was twelve rak'at. Some people, such as Abu Ja'far at-Tabari, al-Mulaimi, and ar-Ruwyani, who subscribes to the Shafi' school, say there is no maximum limit to the number of rak'at that one may perform for duha.

Salatul Istikharah

It is a sunnah that, if one must choose between permissible alternatives, one may pray two non-obligatory rak'at, even if they are of the regular sunnah prayers or a prayer for entering the mosque, and so on, during any time of the day or night, and to recite therein whatever one wishes of the Qur'an after reciting al-Fatihah. Then one praises Allah and sends salutations to the Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam and recites the following supplication which has been recorded by al-Bukhari in Jabir's narration: "The Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam would teach us al-istikhara for all of our affairs as he would teach us a surah from the Qur'an. He said: 'If one of you is deliberating over an act, he should pray two non-obligatory rak'at and say:

"O Allah, I consult You as You are All-Knowing and I appeal to You to give me power as You are Omnipotent, I ask You for Your great favor, for You have power and I do not, and You know all of the hidden matters. O Allah! If you know that this matter (then he should mention it) is good for me in my religion, my livelihood, and for my life in the Hereafter, (or he said: 'for my present and future life,') then make it (easy) for me. And if you know that this matter is not good for me in my religion, my livelihood and my life in the Hereafter, (or he said: 'for my present and future life,') then keep it away from me and take me away from it and choose what is good for me wherever it is and please me with it."

Salatul Tasbih

'Ikrimah reports from Ibn 'Abbas that the Messenger of Allah said to 'Abbas ibn

'Abdal-Mutalib: "O 'Abbas, O Uncle, shall I not give you, shall I not present to you, shall I not donate to you, shall I not tell you ten things which, if you do, Allah will forgive your first and last sins, past and present sins, intentional and unintentional sins, private and public sins? The ten actions are: pray four rak'at, reciting in every rak'ah al-Fatihah and a surah. And when you finish the Qur'anic recitation of the first rak'ah, say, while standing, 'Subhanallah, al-hamdulillah, wa la ilaha illallah, wa Allahu Akbar' [Glory be to Allah. All praise is due to Allah. There is no God except Allah. Allah is the greatest.] fifteen times. Then make ruku', and while you are in ruku', say the same ten times; then stand, and say the same ten times. Then go down and make sajdah, and while you're in sajdah, say the same ten times. Then sit after the sajdah, and say the same ten times. Then make sajdah, and say the same ten times. Then sit after the second sajdah, and say the same another ten times. That is seventy-five [repetitions of the phrases] in each rak'ah. Do that in each of the four rak'at. If you can pray it once a day, do so. If you cannot, then once every Friday. If you cannot do that, then once a year. And if you cannot do that then once in your life." This is related by Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, Ibn Khuzaimah in his sahih, and at-Tabarani. This hadith has been related through many chains and from a number of companions. Ibn alMubarak says: "The tasbih prayer is a greatly desired act and it is desirable that one should punctually observe it and never neglect it.

Salatul Hajah, the prayer for need

Ahmad has on sound authority reported from Abu Darda that the Prophet Sallallahu Alehi wasallam said: "He who makes wudu, and does it properly, then prays two rak'at, Allah will grant him whatever he may pray for, sooner or later."

Salatul Taubah, the prayer of penitence

At-Tabarani records in al-Mu'jam al-Kabir, with a hasan chain, from Abu ad-Darda' that the Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam said: "Whoever makes wudu' and perfects the wudu' and then stands and prays two rak'at or four rak'at, obligatory or non-obligatory, and perfects therein his ruku' and sujud and then asks for Allah's forgiveness, he will be forgiven."

Salatul Kasuf, prayer of the solar and lunar eclipse

The scholars agree that the prayer of the eclipses is a sunnah mu'akkadah, a stressed one, which is to be performed by both men and women. It is best to pray it in congregation although the congregation is not a condition for it. The people are called to it by announcing as-salatu jami'ah "prayer in congregation." The majority of the scholars hold that it is to consist of two rak'at and that in every rak'ah one is to perform two bowings (ruku') instead of the customary one.

'Aishah narrates: "There was a solar eclipse during the time of the Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam and the Prophet went to the mosque, and he stood and made the takbir, and he put the people in rows behind him, and he made a lengthy recital during the salah. Next, he made the takbir and made a long ruku', but it was not as long as the recital. Following that, he raised his head, saying: 'Allah hears him who praises Him. And to You, our Lord, belongs the praise.' Afterward, he stood and made another long recital but it was shorter than the first one. Again, he made the takbir and made a ruku' that was shorter than the first one. Then, again he said: 'Allah hears him who praises Him. And to You, our Lord, belongs the praise.' After this, he prostrated. He did the same in the next rak'ah and finished four ruku' and four sujud. The sun appeared again before he finished. Finally, he stood and addressed the people and praised Allah as He deserves it and said: 'The sun and the moon are two signs from among Allah's signs and there is no eclipse due to someone's death or life. If you see them occurring, hurry to pray.'" This is related by alBukhari and Muslim

Salatul Istisqa, prayer for rain

This prayer is taken recourse to when seeking rain from Allah during times of drought. It may be performed in one of the following manners:

Ibn 'Abbas reports: "The Messenger of Allah went out [to make the salatul istisqa] wearing old clothes, in a humble and lowly manner, and prayed two rak'at as he prayed the 'id, but he did not give a similar khutbah." This is related by the five. At-Tirmizhi, Abu 'Awanah, and Ibn Hibban grade it sahih.

The Prostration of Thankfulness (Sajdat ush-Shukr)

The majority of the scholars say that it is preferred to make prostrations of thankfulness (shukr) when one receives a

bounty or is rescued from some trial. Abu Bakr reports that, when the Prophet sallallahu alehi wasallam received something which pleased him or some glad tidings, he would make the sajdah in thanks to Allah. This is related by Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, and at-Tirmizhi who says it is hasan.

.....
 Hazrat Abu Dharr al-Ghifari (RAA) relates from the Holy Prophet (SAW) that: Allah (God) says, "O My servants, I have forbidden oppression for Myself and have made it forbidden amongst you, so do not oppress one another. O My servants, all of you are astray except for those I have guided, so seek guidance of Me and I shall guide you. O My servants, all of you are hungry except for those I have fed, so seek food of Me and I shall feed you. O My servants, all of you are naked except for those I have clothed, so seek clothing of Me and I shall clothe you. O My servants, you sin by night and by day, and I forgive all sins, so seek forgiveness of Me and I shall forgive you. O my servants, you will not attain harming Me so as to harm Me, and you will not attain benefiting Me so as to benefit Me. O My servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you to be as pious as the most pious heart of any one man of you, that would not increase My kingdom in anything. O My servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you to be as wicked as the most wicked heart of any man of you, that would not decrease My kingdom in anything. O My servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you to rise up in one place and make a request of Me, and were I to give everyone what he requested, that would not decrease what I have, any more than a needle decreases the sea if put into it. O My servants, it is but your deeds that I reckon up for you and then recompense you for, so let him who finds good (in Hereafter) praise Allah and let him who finds other than that blame no one but himself."

Editorial

Assalamu Alakium

Dear Readers!

Have a sacred and blessed Ramadhan .

UNIS, 2301 Plymouth Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48105