



UNIS

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A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A MUSLIM

Dear readers this is a very basic guideline of how a Muslim /Muslima should spend her day. There are other obligations that one has to do in addition to these based on the time and situation like fasting in the month of Ramadhan, Hajj at the time of Hajj etc. Also there is really no limit to Non-obligatory worship that one can do. That brings one closer to Allah (SWT). Editor UNIS.

Ordinary every day activities can become rewarding act of worship if a Muslim does them for the sake of pleasing Allah. Of them, the regular, consistent deeds are best. Allah's Messenger said, "The deeds most loved by Allah are those done regularly, even if they are small. (Bukhari, Muslim).

We do not have to do anything extraordinary in our day to obtain divine rewards, but we should establish some daily routine that incorporates not only salah prayer, but reading Quran, remembrance of Allah (Dikr), and other simple good deeds. This will bring satisfaction to the heart, heal the soul, and keep the believer on the straight path.

Many of us are students or work full time. We are teenagers, single moms, full-time mothers, or retired from the workforce. New Muslims are varied and this means everyone has a unique life and schedule, but the common spiritual practices of Islam bring harmony and balance in all our lives. This article will attempt to bring that spiritual side in the everyday life of an average Muslim which reconnects the mundane with the divine.

EARLY MORNING

(1) The very first thing a Muslim does at waking up in the morning is thank Allah for giving him life by saying the supplication,
Al-Hamdu-lil-laa-hil lazi Ah-ya-naa baa-da maa Amm-tanaa wa ilay-hin nu-

shoor. 'All praise is for Allah who gave us life after having taken it from us and unto Him is the Resurrection. (Bukhari)

(2) Make wudu' or take a bath (ghusl) for the Fajr prayer, except for menstruating or postnatal women who do not have to offer salah. Before entering the toilet say "Bis-millah," followed by the supplication for entering the toilet,
Allah-humma inni aa'oozu-bika min-al khub-thi wal-kha-baith. "In the name of Allah. O Allah, I seek refuge in you from the evil and evil things. (Abu Dawud)

Enter with the left foot.

(3) Be sure to use the left hand in the bathroom for cleaning yourself. Aisha said that the right hand was used by Allah's Messenger for his ablution and taking food, and his left hand was used in the toilet and the like. (Abu Dawud)

(4) One is encouraged to brush the teeth or use the miswak¹ (Miswak refers to a carefully crafted fresh twick used to clean teeth made from special trees.) to clean the teeth. The Prophet said, "If I had not found it difficult for my followers, I would have ordered them to clean their teeth with miswak for every salah."² (Bukhari, Muslim)

(5) Supplication after finishing wudu'.
Ash-hadu ann la-ilaha il-Allah wah-da-hu la shareeka-la wa ash-hadu an-naa Mhamma-dann ab-doo-hu wa-rasoolu. 'I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah, alone, without partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger (Tirmidhi)

(6) When getting dressed, a Muslim thanks Allah for providing him clothes by saying this supplication,
Al-Hamdu-lil-laa-hil lazi ka-sa-ni hadha wa raza-qa-nee-hi min ghay hawlin minni wa la qoo-wa. 'All praise and thanks are for Allah who has clothed me with this garment and provided it for me, with no power nor might from myself (Abu Daud)

(7) On leaving the toilet a Muslim says,
Gufranak. "(I ask for) Your forgiveness. (Abu Dawud)

(8) Before going to work or school, a Muslim begins his/her day by performing the obligatory Fajr salah: 2 rak'ah of sunna followed by two obligatory rak'ah. Menstruating or postnatal women are exempt from salah. A Muslim should make the habit of offering salah at the earliest time after it's time has begun. The Prophet was asked which deed was loved most by Allah. He said,

"Salah which is performed at its time. (Bukhari).

A Muslim should offer the salah prayer with proper attention and concentration as salah will be the first thing that one will be accountable for on Judgment Day.

The Prophet said,

"When you stand up for your salah, make it as if it was your last salah; do not say a word for which you will have to make an excuse the coming day; and build no hope on what is in the hands of men. (Ahmad)

(9) The quiet hours of the early morning is a good opportunity to recite the Quran for those who can. This allows one to fully concentrate and obtain the most spiritual benefit.

The Prophet said,

'The recital of the Quran at dawn is always witnessed - the angels of the night and the angels of the day witness it. (Tirmidhi).

If the schedule permits then it is highly recommended and rewarded to wait until sun rise and 15 minutes more on the place or near where we prayed and then pray two or four non-obligatory prayers. The reward of these is equivalent to accepted Hajj and Umrah.

MID AND LATE MORNING:

(1) Allah knows what is best for his creation and has provided us with what is natural, most healthy foods for our health. The Prophet used to eat healthy foods available to him such as dates, olives, olive oil, honey, bread, meats, and milk. If not available any halal food is OK.

It is best to avoid processed foods and to eat natural foods if available. Muslim parent should take care of meet their children's nutritional needs without making them obese. Attention should also be paid to cleanliness which should be observed in all matters, especially in preparing and handling foods.

(2) A Muslim begins his meal with the Name of Allah saying, "*Bismillah hir-Rahman nir-Raheem,*" eating and drinking with his right hand.

The Prophet taught eating manners to a boy who was attending a meal with him:

"... Mention the name of Allah, and eat with your right hand and eat of the food that is nearer to you. (Bukhari)

(3) After finishing the meal a Muslim thanks Allah for providing him by saying the supplication, *Al-Hamdu-lil-laa-hil lazi At-aamani haza wa-raza-qanee-hi min ghayr hawlinn minni wa la qoo-wa.* 'All praise is for Allah who fed me this and provided it for me without any might nor power from myself.'

Overeating is unhealthy. The Messenger of Allah said,

"The son of Adam fills no vessel more displeasing to Allah than his stomach. A few morsels should be enough for him to preserve his strength. If he must fill it, then he should allow a third for his food, a third for his drink and leave a third empty for easy breathing. (Tirmidhi)

(4) Raising children is an important and honorable task for a woman. A Muslim mother should spend quality time with her children.

Especially, the young ones need the additional care of the mother. It is essential to include quality time with the children in a busy daily schedule. Quality time may include such things as reading books, teaching basic manners and morals, reading Quran together, playing games, going to the park and library, and more. The emphasis should be on the children's spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical development. Doing this early in the day also makes it more likely that children will be content to play with themselves later on, freeing time for other activities.

Fathers should also spend time with their children as they have an important role to play in raising them. A Muslim father should spend time with them in the evening or on the weekends, listen to their concerns, and bond with them by doing healthy activities with his children.

(5) A Muslim steps out of his house trusting in Allah and says this supplication, *Bismillah. Tawak-kaltu 'al-Allah wa la hawla wa la qoo-wata illah billah.* "In the name of Allah, I trust in Allah, there is no might and power but in Allah".

Allah's Messenger said:

"When a man leaves his house, saying, 'In the name of Allah, I trust in Allah, there is no might and power but in Allah,' it is said to him at that time, 'You are guided, you are taken care of, you are protected.' The Satan turns away from him, and another Satan says, 'How can a man be for you, who is already guided, cared for and protected?' (Abu Dawud)

AFTERNOON

(1) A Muslim eats a healthy lunch within the Islamic dietary guidelines.

(2) Performing Duhur salah: 4 or 2 rak'ah of Sunna, 4 rak'ah Fard, and 2 rak'ah Sunna. A Muslim man tries to offer the obligatory prayers in the mosque in congregation especially if a mosque is close to his work/school and on weekends.

Regarding the congregational prayers the Prophet said,

"Prayer in congregation is superior to a prayer performed individually by twenty-seven degrees. (Bukhari, Muslim)

Regarding the sunna salah, Aisha said:

"When the Prophet used to be in my house, he would offer four Sunna rak'ah before Duhur, then go and lead the congregation, and thereafter return

home and offer two Sunna rak'ah. Similarly, he would lead Maghrib Salah in the congregation and come back and offer two Sunna rak'ah. Likewise after having led the Isha salah, he would come back to my apartment and offer two Sunna rak'ah."³ (Muslim)

It is preferable for a Muslim woman to perform both the obligatory and Sunna salah at her home. Regarding a woman's prayer, the Prophet said,

"Do not prevent the women from going to the mosques, although their houses are better for them. (Ahmad, Abu Daud)

(3) A Muslim offers the Asr salah (4 rak'ah Fard) on time realizing it's importance as the Prophet said:

"He who leaves the Asr salah is like one who has lost (some of) his family and his property. (Bukhari, Muslim)

"A person will not be sent to hell who has offered his Fajr and the Asr salahs. (Muslim)

EVENING

(1) A Muslim enters his house in the Name of Allah by saying the supplication:

Bismillahi wa-lajna, wa Bismillahi kharajna, wa-'ala Rabbinaa tawakkalnaa. 'In the name of Allah we enter and in the name of Allah we leave, and upon our Lord we place our trust. (Abu Daud)

(2) Perform the Maghrib salah: 3 rak'ah Fard and 2 rak'ah Sunna. The Muslim man should make every effort to pray in the mosque if he lives reasonably close to one. Children should be taken to accustom them to worshipping Allah in the mosque.

For those living too far from the mosque, they should try to offer the salah together in congregation. This is a good way of strengthening family

bonding and setting a positive example for the children.

(3) Conducting a study circle within the home. The evening is a good time for family members to gather for study of Quran, hadith, Seerah (biography of Prophet Muhammad) and other areas of Islam knowledge.

This is something that can be made a regular part of the daily or weekly schedule. Although parents will be primarily responsible for the topics and discussions, older children may be given assignments to prepare for the group.

Encouraging them to actively participate will enhance their excitement and interest in learning. Creative and engaging methods may be used to maintain the attention of younger children, although they should not be forced to sit for long periods of time.

Regarding the importance of teaching, the Prophet said:

"Each of you is a guardian, and each of you will be asked about your guardianship. The leader is a guardian, and the man is a guardian over the people of his house, and the woman is a guardian over her husband's house and children. So each of you is a guardian, and each of you will be asked about your guardianship. (Bukhari, Muslim)

(4) A Muslim should be careful what he watches on TV and how much time she spends on the Internet or in chat-rooms. A portion of the evening should be spent on holding a family discussion as it is an ideal time for family discussions since most family members are likely to be present.

The father should make himself available to his family members, discuss rules, schedules, plan vacations, address teen issues, and more. Doing this on a regular basis will instill responsibility and respect in children and make them feel that they are vital part of the family and the father will

play a responsible role in raising his children.

As children mature and reach the age of responsibility, it becomes necessary to include them in discussions, decision-making, even financial planning, particularly in matters that pertain to them. This is actually a time for them to learn how a family should function since they will eventually begin a family of their own. Obviously, the parents should provide acceptable role models that the children will want to emulate. A Muslim concludes any meeting or gathering by:

'How perfect You are O Allah, and I praise You. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except You. I seek Your forgiveness and turn to You in repentance.(Tirmidhi)

(5) Performing 'Isha salah: 4 rak'ah Fard, 2 rak'ah Sunna, and 3 or 1 rak'ah of Witr.

Allah's Messenger said:

"No salah is more burdensome to the hypocrites than the Fajr salah and the 'Isha salah, but if they knew what blessing lie in them they would certainly come for them, even if they had to crawl. (Bukhari, Muslim)

(6) A Muslim should not waste time watching movies, playing cards, or other activities late at night. Staying late at night is bad for health and makes getting up for Fajr salah harder.

Every night when the Prophet would go to bed, he would cup his hands together and blow into them after reciting Surat ul-Ikhlās, Surat ul-Falaq, and Surat un-Naas. He would then rub his hands over whatever he was able from his body, beginning with his head, face, and the front of his body. He used to do that three times. (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet said:

"When you go to your bed, recite the verse of the Footstool (Aaya tul-Kursi), 'Allah! There is no true god but Him,

the Ever-living, the One who Sustains and Protects all that exists...' (Quran 2: 255) to the end, for then there will remain over you a guardian from Allah, and Satan will not come near you until morning. (Bukhari)

It is also preferred to make wudu' before sleeping and to lie on one's right side or back. It is prohibited to lie on the left side or stomach. But when the person is asleep then there is no prohibition since he has no control now.

MIDDLE NIGHT AND PRE-MORNING.

It is highly recommended from the Sunnah of the prophet to wake in the last one-thirds of night and make 'Tahajjud' prayer. This is the time when Allah SWT comes down to the first heaven. This is a great time for acceptance of prayers too.

(When you do this please remember the UNIS team and their families in your Duas for the best of this world and Hereafter.)

Questions & Answers Section

Question 1: What is the structure of the Islam social class? How does it work? And to what extent does it exist? Is Islam only for Arabs, Blacks?

Answer 1: Praise be to Allaah. Human societies have known all kinds of class systems. In some societies there is a class of princes, a class of warriors, a class of farmers and a class of slaves, and based on this there is a lot of oppression, abuse and trampling on people's rights. But the sharee'ah or law of Allaah does not recognize such systems at all. Islam gives equal rights to all, rich and poor, black, white, noble and ignoble. The basic principle on which people are differentiated in Islam is mentioned in the Holy Qur'aan, in Soorat al-Hujuraat (interpretation of the meaning):

"O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable of you with Allaah is that (believer) who has al-taqwa [i.e., is one of the

muttaqoon or pious]. Verily, Allaah is All-Knowing, All-Aware" [al-Hujuraat 49:13]

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "O people! Verily your Lord is One and your father [Adam] is one. An Arab is no better than a non-Arab, and a non-Arab is no better than an Arab; a red man is no better than a black man and a black man is no better than a red man – except if it is in terms of taqwa (piety)..." (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 22391; al-Silsilat al-Saheeh, 2700).

This is the principle on which society is based in Islam. This is the global human society which mankind is trying to attain through its far-fetched ideas, but is failing to do so, because they are not following the one straight path that will lead them there, the way to God, may He be glorified, and because they are not standing under the one banner that could unite them, the banner of God, may He be exalted. People live on this earth connected by all kinds of relationships, all of which carry some weight or have some attraction in their lives... these include lineage, power, wealth, etc. From these stem other connections, practical, economic, etc., where people have different positions and levels of status with regard to one another. So some people have more status than others in worldly terms...

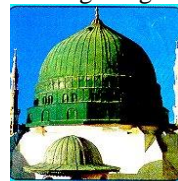
Then Islam comes and says: "the most honorable of you with Allaah [God] is that (believer) who has al-taqwa [i.e., is one of the muttaqoon or pious]" so it ignores all the values that carry weight in people's lives, and replaces them all with this new value that is derived directly from the Revelation and is the only one that is recognized in the standards of God. This is piety and consciousness of God, which is manifested in the worship of God alone, with no partner, no son, no equal... obeying what He commands and avoiding what He forbids, seeking His pleasure and Paradise, and fearing His punishment and Hell-fire. Allaah is All-Seer of His slaves.

Question 2: Is it mandatory for one who newly embraces Islaam to change his or her name?

Answer 2: He or she is not required to change his or her name unless it embodies the worship of someone or something other than God, Allaah. However, its amelioration by choosing a new Islamic name is legitimate and encouraged. The fact that he or she would change his or her name from a pagan or non-Islamic name to an Islamic one would be considered commendable--however, it is not mandatory.

Thus, if one's name is Abdul-Messiah (subject of Messiah), for example, or similar such names, then he is obligated to change it, as the Prophet (peace upon him) had people with the names Abdul-Ka'bah and Abdul-Uzzah change their names upon accepting Islaam. If the original name does not comprise or imply anything forbidden in Islaam, then he or she is permitted to retain it (such as the name George, for example).

As noted, though, it is preferable to change it to an Islamic name, as this also distinguishes him or her from the kuffaar. Note that if changing one's name in official documents and records poses a great inconvenience, it would suffice to change it among the people. In this case, he or she is called by his or her new name by friends, acquaintances, and the general public, while official documents would retain the original given name.



Editorial

Assalamu Alakium

UNIS and its staff wish you a very Happy Eid ul Adha Mubarak.

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