

Prayers - Advanced (part 2 of 2)

Description: The second lesson will discuss the obligatory, recommended and disliked acts of *salah*.

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Objectives

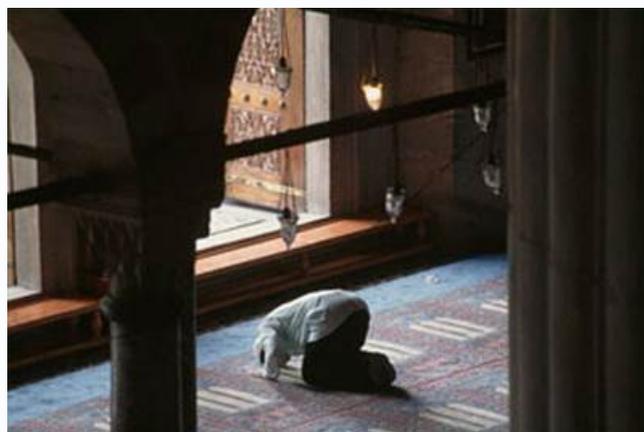
- To learn the *wajibaat* of *salah*.
- To learn some of the recommended acts of *salah*.
- To learn seven disliked acts in *salah*.

Arabic Terms

- *Salah* - the Arabic word to denote a direct connection between the believer and Allah. More specifically, in Islam it refers to the formal five daily prayers and is the most important form of worship.
- *Ruku'* - the bowing position in prayer.
- *Imam* - someone who leads the prayer.
- *Tashahhud* - the saying "At-tahiy-yatu lil-lahi... Muhammadan 'abduhu wa rasuluh." in the sitting position of the prayer.
- *Takbir* - uttering "Allahu Akbar".
- *Wajib* - (plural: *wajibaat*) obligatory.
- *Sunnah* - The word *Sunnah* has several meanings depending on the area of study however the meaning is generally accepted to be, whatever was reported that the Prophet said, did, or approved.
- *Rakah* - unit of prayer.
- *Surah* - chapter of the Quran.

Wajibaat (Obligatory acts) of Salah

They are those acts that have to be performed in the prayer. If a *wajib* act is left intentionally, the prayer is invalidated. However if it is left unintentionally then one must perform the “prostration of forgetfulness” to make up for it. This will be covered in more detail in a later lesson.



The following are the obligations of the prayer:

1. Saying ‘Allahu Akbar’ when moving from one position to another

The Prophet used to say *Allahu Akbar* every time he went down or rose.[\[1\]](#)

2. Words while bowing (*ruku’*)

To say: ‘*Subha-na Rabbi al-‘Adheem*’ (Exalted and perfect is my Lord, the Great) once. To say beyond that is a recommended act.

3. Words upon standing up from *ruku’*

The Prophet said, “When he (the *imam*) says:

Sami’-Allahu li-man hamidah (Allah hears the one who praises him),

then you all say:

Rabba-na wa lakal-hamd (To our Lord is all praise and thanks).“ (Agreed upon)

Both these are to be said when you are praying by yourself. However when you are praying behind an *imam* then you only say ‘*Rabba-na wa lakal-hamd*’.

4. Words while prostrating

To say: ‘*Subha-na Rabbi al-A‘la*’ (Exalted and perfect is my Lord, the All-High) once. To say beyond that is a recommended act.

5. Supplication between two prostrations

To say ‘*Rabbig-fir lee*’ once. To say beyond that is a recommended act.

6. First *Tashahhud*

To recite the first *tashahhud*. This takes place in the first “long sitting” of those prayers which are more than 2 units.

Once, the Prophet forgot the first *tashahhud*, but he did not repeat the prayer, instead he made up for it with the “prostration of forgetfulness.” This shows that this is a *wajib* act; if it were an “essential component”, then the “prostration of forgetfulness” would not have

been sufficient.

7. Sitting to recite the first *Tashahhud*

To sit to recite the first *tashahhud*.

Recommended Acts of Prayer

The following are some of the recommended acts of prayer:

1. Opening Supplication

It is only to be said in the first *rakah*.

The most common prayer is the following:

“Subhaana-kallaa-humma wa biham-dika, wa tabaa-ra-kasmu-ka, wa ta’aa-laa jad-du-ka, wa laa ilaa-ha ghay-ruk.”

(You are Glorified, O Allah, and Praised; Your Name is blessed; Your Majesty is Exalted, and none has the right to worshipped but You). (Abu Daud).

2. Seeking Refuge in Allah

It is to be said in the first *rakah* by simply saying,

“Aa’oodhu billahi min ash-Shaitan nir-rajim”

‘I seek refuge with Allah, from the Devil, the Rejected One.’

3. Saying ‘Ameen’

The word ‘Ameen’ is not part of *Surah* al-Fatihah, but rather a supplication meaning, “O Allah, respond.”

It is to be said after reciting *Surah* al-Fatihah.

The Prophet said, “When the imam says *Ameen*, you should say *Ameen*. If this corresponds with when the angels say it, then he will have all of his previous sins forgiven.”[\[2\]](#)

4. Reciting a portion of the Quran after reciting *Surah* al-Fatihah in the first two units

You can recite any portion of the Quran. For example you can recite short chapters such as *Surah* al-Ikhlās, *Surah* al-Falaq, or *Surah* an-Naas.

5. Supplicating after sending blessings on the Prophet in the final sitting of the prayer

One can say:

“*Allaahumma innee ‘a’oothu bika min ‘athaabil-qabr, wa min ‘athaabi jahannama, wa min fitnatil-mahyaa wal-mamaati, wa min sharri fitna-til-masee-hid-dajjaal.*”

(O Allah! I truly seek refuge with You from the punishment of the grave, and from the punishment of the Hellfire, and from the trials of living (meaning the trials of this life and temptations a person faces) and dying (it means either the trial at the time of death or the punishment of the grave), and from the evil [trials] of the Anti-Christ.)[\[3\]](#)

6. Raising one’s hands

To raise one’s hands when saying the opening *takbir*, when bowing, and rising from the bowing and when standing from the first “long sitting” (where one recites the first *tashahhud*).

7. Putting the right hand over the left upon the chest

To put the right hand over the left upon the chest.[\[4\]](#)

8. Looking at the place of prostration

To look at the place of prostration.[\[5\]](#)

9. Turning the face to the right and left at the conclusion of prayer

To turn the face to the right while saying ‘*As-Salamu ‘Alaikum wa-Rahmatullah*’ and likewise for the left.

What is Disliked in *Salah*?

Disliked acts are just that, disliked. They do not invalidate the prayer, but a person should try to avoid them as much as possible so as to not reduce the reward of his prayer.

1. Looking around in *salah* without any need to do so

Looking around without any reason reduces concentration and focus. If it is for some need then it’s permissible. For example, a woman with a crying baby.

2. To place hands on your waist

“The Messenger of Allah forbade a man should pray with his hands on his waist.”[\[6\]](#)

3. Praying when food has arrived or is ready or when one is suppressing the urge to urinate or defecate

The reason is that a person cannot concentrate or focus on *salah* in such a case.

5. Fidgeting

Fidgeting is disliked as is everything that distracts one from prayer and concentration.

6. Shutting the eyes

You may close your eyes if that will help you concentrate better when you are around distractions.

7. Placing forearms flat on the ground

This is while when one is prostrating.

Endnotes:

[1] *Tirmidhi*

[2] *Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Saheeh Muslim*

[3] *Saheeh Muslim*

[4] *Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Malik, Ibn Khuzayma*

[5] *Hakim*

[6] *Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Saheeh Muslim*

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