

Introduction

Bismillahi Rohmani Rohim,
Assalamualaikum Warrahmatullah Wabarokaatuh,

I made this Muslim's Prayer basic tutorial for handy purpose in mind as requested by my aunty Hanim Yahya. It was compiled from several articles, footnotes and books which I found. It's not the best one available, and I didn't even enhance it with features and explanation yet. However, I hope it can help most of those – our brothers and sisters- who had difficulties on learning practicing general daily prayer. For better information on such topic, please contact your local Masjid (mosque) or Imam. Since English is not my native language, there would probably be some mistaken on words choosing here and there. Forgive me then. But as long as you understand the meaning, I'll be happy. This tutorial consists of three section, Performing Wud'u (ablution), Performing the prayers (Salat), and Fiqh-us-Sunnah, Prayer.

Thank you.
Wassalamualaikum Warrahmatullah Wabarokatuh.

Bandung - Indonesia, August 30, 2003

(Naqib Helmy Ahmad Maulachela)

aka. James Argo - Jammie

Performing Wud'u (Ablution)

Here's How:

1. A Muslim begins every action with intention. To yourself, make the intention to cleanse yourself for prayer, for the sake of Allah.
2. To yourself, say "**Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Raheem**" (In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful).
3. Wash your hands three times, making sure the water reaches between the fingers and all over the hands.
4. Bring a handful of water to your mouth and rinse it thoroughly three times.
5. Sniff water into your nose three times to clean it. Use your right hand to bring up the water, and your left hand to expel it.
6. Wash your entire face three times.
7. Wash your arms, up to the elbows, three times. Start with the right.
8. Use your wet hands to wipe over your head once, from front to back and front again.
9. Use your wet fingers to wipe the inside and outside of your ears, once.
10. Wash your feet up to the ankles three times. Start with the right.
11. Dry off.
12. Make the supplication, "**Ashhadu anlaa ilaaha illallaahu wahdahu laa shareekalahu, washhadu anna Muhammadan 'abduhu wa rasooluhu**" (I witness that none should be worshipped except Allaah, and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger).

Tips:

1. Only a small amount of water is needed for wud'u, and Muslims are not to be wasteful. Fill a small water container, or your sink, and do not leave the water running.
2. It is recommended to perform a two-rakah prayer after completing wud'u.

Performing the prayers (Al-salat)

Comment:

the prayer (salat)(connection or meeting between Allah and His servant, in a specific five timing day and night
(showing the importance of the time in Islam between Allah and His servant).

and before we pray we do wuduu(Ablution), and is an indication for cleaning the inside and the outside for to meeting Allah. and then when you intend to start a prayer you stand (to the Qibla)facing the direction of Al-Kaaba, by your face, and bringing Allah in your heart(recall His greatness in your heart).



and say "**Allahu Akbar**"(=Allah is greater)(greater than anything might comes to your mind.) while rising the hand to the direction of the ears..and then bring them down.



read Al-Fatiha(surah no.1 in the Quran)(=the opening of the book)(the only surah which war revealed on prophet Muhammed (asws) twice and is called also Al-sab'e al-ma-sani.

and in this nobled surah you say;

1. "**Alhamdulillah Rabb el-Aalameen**"(=thanks(praise is to Allah the lord of the two- worlds)
2. "**Ar-Rahman Er-Rahim**"(=the Mercifull, the All-Mercifull),
3. "**Maliki yawm ed-deen**"(= the Sovereign(or owner) of the Day of Recompense)
4. "**Ey-yaka naa'bodou wa eyyaka nasta'een**"(=it is You that we worship and it is you that we ask for help)
5. "**Ehdenna es-Serat-al-Mustaqim**"(=guide us to the straight Path)
6. "**Serata alazinna anaamta aalayhim** "
the Path of those upon whom You bestowed favor)
7. "**ghayr elmaghdoubi aalayhim wa la Ad-daa-al-leen**"
(= not of those who have evoked (Your)anger or of those who are astray).

and then say "**Aamen**". then read any surah from Quran.or you can even say surah Al-ikhlass no.112; and you may even repeat it untill you learn to recite more surah.
after that, say **Allahu Akbar** and bow(Rukuu) and say 3 times Sobhan "**Rabiy-al Azim**".(=exalted is My Rabb (who is) the Great).



then stand up while saying "**Sami'a Allahu leman hamidah**"(=Allah have heard from the one who is thankful)..and then say "**Rabbana wa laka Al-Hamd**" (=Our Rabb and for You is the praise and thanks).



then prostrate down after saying "**Allahu-Akbar**", (doing Sujud)(while seven of your elements attach the earth(floor), and these seven are(the palms of the two hands, and the front face , and the two knees and the two feet.) and while doing the prostrating(sujud) say; "**Sobhan Rabbiy-al Aala**"(three times)(=Exalted is my Rabb (who is) the High).



then say "**Allahu Akbar**" and sit on your legs(preferably the left leg), and read "**Rabbigrfirlii, warhamnii, wajboornii, warfa'ni, wahdini, wa afinii, wa afu'annii**"



then say "**Allahu Akbar**" and prostrate(do sujud) once again and say again "**Sobhana Rabbiy-al Aala**"(3 times) (=exalted is my Rabb the High).



this is all is called one rakaat(rakaat).

and you repeat this al again when it is a salat consisting of 2 rakaat as of the Fajr(Dawn) is two rakaat. that's mean you stand saying AllahuAkbar. and read Al-Fatiha again....and so on.

and at the end of the second rakaat read Al-tashahud, in which we send prayers and salam and good to Allah and to prophet Muhammed (asws)and to ourselves and to all the(souls) of the good believers(all the time),

and this tashahadu is divided into two parts.(one part from the begining till Al-shahada)(the two witnessing), and the other part we read at the last rakaat of the prayers(in the case of salat el-Fajr)(two rakkat) we read all the tashahud;



"Altaheyatu lellah wa alsalawat wa altayebat"..(=the hailings is to Allah and the prayers and the good)

"alsalamu aalaika ayuha al-nabiy wa rahmatullahi wa barakatu".. (= Peace upon you O you prophet and the mercy of Allah and His blessings)

"Al-salamu aalayna"..(=alsalam upon us)(ourselves)

"wa aala ebad-illahi elsaleheen"..(=and on the servants of Allah who are righteous).



"Ashhadu Anna la ilah ila Allah, wa ashadu anna Muhammadan Rassoul-Allah"

(=i bear witness that there is no deity except Allah and i bear witness that Muhammed is the Messenger of Allah)

"Allahuma sali aala Muhammed wa aala Ahi Muhammed, kamma salayta aala Ibrahim wa aala Ahi Ibrahim wa barek aala Muhammed wa aala Ahi Muhammed kamma barakta aala

Ibrahim wa aala Ahl Ibrahim,, fee El-Alameen Ennaka Hamidun Majeed"

and this part is asking Allah to send the salam and the good prayers on prophet Muhammed(asws) and his family as he sent the prayers on Abraham(asws) and his family.(the continuity of the wish of sayidna Ibrahim of having a blessed offspring through the offspring of prophet Muhammed, asws, who is from the offspring of sayidna Ibrahim.

and after reading Al-tashahud(all when it is at the end of the last rakaat).. so say "**salam alaikum wa rahmatullah**" once to the right side(up the shoulder) and then two the left, for the angels(and among them the two angels of the right and the left) and to the believers...



and may Allah bless you and show you how beauty is the prayer, and may you find Allah near. and may Allah loves you and guide you to and on the right path , in this life and in the afterlife.

there is a great signs in the prayings it enough that the angel say when they saw someone who is lazy while sleeping, "if he knew who is he recalling!", or "if he knew in front of who he is standing!!"

and at the sujud (prostrating) for example it was said that Allah is in the most near circumstance between He and His servant (who is prostrating).

so i advice you and myself to do taqwa Allah, (pious to)(fear Allah).. (worshipping Allah while being certain that He sees us, He is surely the Hearing the Seeing the Near the Clear...

**wa al-hamdu lillah Rabb el-aalameen.
wa alsalam alaikum wa rahmatullah**

Fiqh-us-Sunnah, Prayer

Introduction to Fiqh-us-Sunnah

The prayer is a type of worship consisting of specific statements and actions. It is begun by pronouncing the greatness of Allah, and is concluded with salutations of peace. As prayer is the essence of Islam, we will discuss it here in detail.

To state it simply, prayer must exist, for without it Islam can not stand. The Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "The head of the matter is Islam, its pillar is the prayer, and the top of its hump is jihad in the way of Allah." It was the first act of worship that was made obligatory by Allah. Its

obligation was revealed directly to the Prophet, during his ascension to heaven. Said Anas, "The prayers were made obligatory on the Prophet, upon whom be peace, the night of his ascension to heaven. At first, they were fifty in number, but were reduced several times until they were five. Then it was proclaimed, 'O Muhammad, the order is not changed. These five are (equivalent) to the fifty."

As to the authenticity of the report, it is related by Ahmad, an-Nasa'i and at-Tirmizhi, who said it is sahih.

Salah is the first act that the person will be held accountable for. 'Abdullah ibn Qart related that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said "The first act that the slave will be accountable for on the Day of Judgement will be prayer. If it is good, then the rest of his acts will be good. And if it is evil, then the rest of his acts will be evil." (Related by at-Tabarani.) It is the last thing that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, recommended to his nation before he died, saying, "Prayer, prayer and what your right hand possesses." It will be the last thing taken away from the religion. When it perishes, Islam will perish. The Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, "If Islam were stripped away, piece by piece, people would hold tight to the next one. The first thing taken would be ruling and governance, and the last thing would be prayer." (Related by Ibn Hibban from the hadith of Abu Umamah.) In many verses of the Qur'an, Allah follows up prayer with the remembrance of Allah. "Lo! Worship preserves (one) from lewdness and iniquity, but verily, remembrance of Allah is more important." (al-Ankabut 45); "He is successful who grows and remembers the name of his Lord, so pray (al-A'la 14-15); "So serve Me and establish worship for My remembrance" (Taha 74). Sometimes He mentions prayer along with zakah: "Establish prayer and pay zakah" (al-Baqarah 110). And at times, with patience: "Seek help in patience and prayer" (al-Baqarah 45), and with hajj: "So pray unto your Lord and sacrifice" (al-Kauthar 2); "Say: Lo! my worship and my sacrifice and my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the Worlds. He has no partner. This am I commanded, and I am the first of those who surrender (unto Him)" (al-An'am 162-163). At other times, Allah begins the acts of piety with prayers and ends with them, as in the verses about the ma'arij (ascension to heaven): "Successful indeed are the believers who are humble in their prayers," and the verses, "And who pay heed to their prayers. These are the heirs who will inherit Paradise. There will they abide" (al-Mu'minun 1-29-11).

The importance of salah is so great that one is ordered to observe it while travelling or not, while one is safe or in fear: "Be guardians of your prayers, and of the mid-most prayer, and stand up with devotion to Allah. And if you go in fear, then (pray) standing or on horseback. When you are safe, remember Allah, as He has taught you that which (heretofore) you knew not" (al-Baqarah 238-239).

Allah explains how to pray during fear, safety or wartime

"And when you are among them and arrange their prayers for them, let only a party of them stand with you (to worship) and let them take their arms. Then, when they have performed their prostrations, let them fall to the rear and let another party come to pray with you, and let them take their precautions and arms. They who disbelieve long for you to neglect your arms and your baggage, that they may attack. It is no sin for you to lay aside your arms, if rain impedes you or if you are sick. But take your precautions. Lo! Allah prepares for the disbelievers shameful punishment. When you have performed your prayer, remember Allah, standing, sitting and reclining. And when you are in safety, observe your prayer properly. Prayer at fixed hours has been enjoined on the believers" (an-Nisa' 102-103).

Allah also strongly warns those who tamper with their prayers or are heedless

Says Allah in the Qur'an, "Now there has succeeded them a later generation who have ruined their prayers and have followed lusts. But they will meet deception" (Maryam 59); "Ah, woe unto worshippers who are heedless of their prayers" (al-Ma'un 4-5).

Prayer is one of the most important acts in Islam

Prayer is one of the most important acts in Islam, and thus it requires a special guidance

Ibrahim asked his Lord to give him descendants who abided by their prayers: "My Lord! Cause me and (some) of my offspring to remain constant in prayer. And O our Lord! Accept my supplication" (Ibrahim 40).

One Who Ignores His Prayers

Not praying and denying its obligation is seen as disbelief and places the person outside the religion of Islam. All scholars agree on this point. They base their opinion on several hadith, some of which are:

Jabir reports that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "Between a person and disbelief is discarding prayer." (Related by Ahmad, Muslim, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmizhi and Ibn Majah.)

Buraidah reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "The pact between us and them is prayer. Whoever abandons it is a disbeliever." (Related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmizhi, anNasa'i and Ibn Majah.)

'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aas reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, one day mentioned the prayer and said, "Whoever guards and observes his prayer, they will be a light and a proof and a savior for him on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever does not guard and observe them, they will not be a light or a proof or a savior for him. On the Day of Resurrection, he will be with Qarun, Fir'aun, Haman and Ubayy ibn Khalf." (Related by Ahmad, at-Tabarani and Ibn Hibban. Its chain is excellent.)

That one who does not pray will be with the leaders of the unbelievers in the Hereafter makes it evident that such a person is an unbeliever. Says Ibn al-Qayyim, "The one who does not pray may be preoccupied with his wealth, kingdom, position or business. If one is kept away from his prayers by his wealth, he will be with Qarun. One whose kingdom keeps him away from the prayers will be with Haman, and one whose business keeps him away from the prayers will be with Ubayy ibn Khalf."

Says 'Abdullah ibn Shaqiq al-'Aqeely, "The companions of Muhammad, peace be upon him, did not consider the abandonment of any act, with the exception of prayer, as being disbelief." (Related by at-Tirmizhi and al-Hakim, who said it met al-Bukahri's and Muslim's conditions.)

Says Muhammad ibn Nasr al-Mirwazi, "I heard Ishaq say, 'It is authentic (that) the Prophet (said or ruled): One who does not pray is an unbeliever.'" It is from the Prophet himself that one who intentionally does not pray until the time for the prayer is over is an unbeliever."

Says Ibn Hazm, "It has come from 'Umar, 'Abdurahman ibn 'Auf, Mu'azh ibn Jabal, Abu Hurairah and other companions that anyone who skips one obligatory prayer until its time has finished becomes an apostate. We find no difference of opinion among them on this point." This was

mentioned by al-Munzhiri in at-Targheeb wa atTarheeb. Then he comments, "A group of companions and those who came after them believed that an intentional decision to skip one prayer until its time is completely finished makes one an unbeliever. The people of this opinion include 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas, Mu'azh ibn Jabal, Jabir ibn 'Abdullah and Abu ad-Darda'. Among the non-companions who shared this view were Ibn Hanbal, Ishaq ibn Rahwaih, 'Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak, an-Nakha'i, al-Hakim ibn 'Utaibah, Abu Ayyub as-Sakhtiyani, Abu Dawud at-Tayalisi, Abu Bakr ibn Abu Shaibah, Zuhair ibn Harb, and others.

Some hadith make it clear that such a person should be killed. For example:

Ibn 'Abbas reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "The ties of Islam and the principles of the religion are three, and whoever leaves one of them becomes an unbeliever, and his blood becomes lawful: testifying that there is no god except Allah, the obligatory prayers, and the fast of Ramadan." (Related by Abu Ya'la with a hassan chain.) Another narration states, "If anyone leaves one of them, by Allah he becomes an unbeliever and no voluntary deeds or recompense will be accepted from him, and his blood and wealth become lawful." This is a clear indication that such a person is to be killed.

Ibn 'Umar related that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, "I have been ordered to kill the people until they testify that there is no god except Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and they establish prayer and pay the zakah. If they do that, their blood and wealth are protected from me save by the rights of Islam. Their reckoning will be with Allah." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.)

Umm Salamah related that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "There will be rulers over you who will do good and evil things. Whoever hates these (latter) acts will be innocent of them. Whoever denies them will be safe, but (not) one who accepts and follows them." They asked, "Should we kill them?" He said, "Not if they pray." (Related by Muslim.) Therefore, he made it unlawful to kill even an unjust ruler who observes his prayers.

Abu Sa'eed reported that 'Ali, while he was in Yemen, sent the Prophet some gold, which he then divided among four people. A man said, "O Messenger of Allah, beware of Allah." The Prophet said, "Woe to you. Of all the people of the earth, am I not the most dutiful in being aware of Allah?" Khalid ibn al-Walid said, "O Messenger of Allah, shall I kill him?" He said, "Perhaps he is one of those who pray." Khalid said, "How many people say with their tongues what is not in their hearts?" The Prophet said, "I have not been ordered to look into the hearts of people, nor to rip open their bellies." (Abridged from al-Bukhari and Muslim.) In this hadith also, prayer is given as the reason for not killing a person. It is understood, therefore, that not praying would have resulted in the person's killing.

Even though the preceding hadith clearly rule that one who discards salah becomes an unbeliever and should be killed, many early and later scholars (excluding Abu Hanifah, Malik and ash-Shafi) believe that such people become evildoers who must repent. If such a person does not repent, he is to be killed, that being the prescribed punishment, according to Malik, ash-Shafi'i and others. Abu Hanifah maintains that such a person is not to be killed, but must be given a minor punishment and confined until he prays. They say the hadith that calls such people unbelievers refer to those who deny the prayers, and so on. They say that any other interpretation is contradicted by other texts. For example, Allah says, "Lo! Allah does not pardon one who gives Him partners. He pardons all save whom He wills" (an-Nisa' 116). There is also a hadith related by Abu Hurairah and recorded by Ahmad and Muslim in which the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "Every prophet has a special supplication that is answered. Every prophet hastened to make his supplication, but I concealed mine and will use it for my nation on the Day of Resurrection. It will be granted--Allah willing--to whoever dies without associating any partners with Allah." Al-Bukhari also recorded that Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, upon whom be

peace, said, "The person who will be the happiest due to my intercession is the one who says, 'There is no god but Allah' sincerely from his heart."

Says ash-Shaukani, "The truth of the matter is that he becomes an unbeliever who is to be killed for his unbelief. The hadith authenticates that Islamic law calls one who does not pray an unbeliever. It has also put the performance as the barrier between a believer and an unbeliever. Abandoning prayer means he may be called an unbeliever. We need not concern ourselves with arguments presented by those of the opposing opinion. We can say to them: It is not impossible that some types of unbelievers may obtain forgiveness or may have a right to intercession, such as the unbelief of those who pray to (our) qiblah. Nevertheless, the fact remains that they commit some sins which the Islamic law views as unbelief. To turn to the other narrow interpretations is just redundant."

Who Must Pray

Prayer is obligatory upon every sane, adult Muslim. 'Aishah related that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, "The pen is raised for three (meaning: there is no obligation upon three): one who is sleeping until he awakens, the child until he becomes an adult, and one who is insane until he becomes sane."

As to the authenticity of this report, it is recorded by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmizhi, an-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, and al-Hakim, who grades it sahih according to the criterion of al-Bukhari and Muslim. At-Tirmizhi classifies it as hassan.

Although it is not obligatory for a child to pray, it is a must that his guardian order him to do so when he is seven, and he should beat him if he does not pray after he reaches the age of ten. A minor should practice praying until he reaches puberty. 'Amr ibn Shu'aib related from his father on the authority of his grandfather that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Order your children to pray when they reach the age of seven. Beat them (if they don't pray) when they reach the age of ten. And have them sleep separately."

The hadith is related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and al-Hakim. The latter grades it sahih according to Muslim's criteria.

The Number of Obligatory Prayers

The number of prayers prescribed by Allah is five. Ibn Mahyraz narrated that al-Makhdaji, from the tribe of Kananah, heard Abu Muhammad--a man in ash-Shams--saying, "The witr prayer is obligatory." He said he went to 'Ubadah ibn as-Samit and informed him of this. 'Ubadah corrected him, saying, "Abu Muhammad is mistaken. I heard the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, say 'Allah has laid five prayers upon His slaves. Whoever fulfills them and does not miss any of them will have a pact with Allah that He will let him enter Paradise. Whoever does not come with them will have no pact with Allah. If He wishes, He may punish him, and if He wishes, He may forgive him.'" (Related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah.) In one version it states, "Or one who comes with a deficiency in them or who degrades their duties." Talhah ibn 'Ubadullah narrated that a bedouin with unkempt hair came to the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, and said, "O Messenger of Allah, inform me of what Allah has made obligatory on me as regards praying." He said, "Five prayers, unless you do others voluntarily." He asked the Prophet to inform him about fasting, and he said, "The fast of Ramadan, unless you do others voluntarily." Then he asked him about charity...and the Messenger of Allah informed him of the Islamic legislations. The bedouin then said, "By the One who has honored you, I shall not voluntarily add anything to it, nor shall I be deficient in what Allah has ordered me to do." The Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, then said, "He will enter Paradise if he is truthful (to what he said)." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.)

The Times of the Prayers

Each prayer has its own particular time at which it must be performed. Says Allah, "Prayer at fixed hours has been enjoined upon the believers" (an-Nisa' 103).

The Qur'an itself points to these different times

Allah says, "Pray at the two ends of the day and in some watches of the night. Lo! Good deeds annul evil deeds. This is a reminder for the mindful" (Hud 114). Surah al-Isra' states, "Establish prayer at the setting of the sun until the dark of the night, and (the recital) of the Qur'an at dawn. Lo! The recital of the Qur'an at dawn is ever witnessed" (al-Isra' 78), and "Celebrate the praises of your Lord before the rising of the sun and before its setting. Glorify Him some hours of the night and at the two ends of the day, that you may find acceptance" (Taha 130). This verse specifically refers to the dawn prayer and the afternoon prayer, as it is recorded in the two Sahihs. Jarir ibn 'Abdullah al-Bajali reported, We were sitting with the Messenger of Allah and we looked at the moon on a clear night. The Prophet said, 'You will see your Lord as you see this moon, and you will not be harmed by seeing Him. So, if you can, do not let yourselves be overpowered in the case of prayer before the rising of the sun and its setting,' and he recited the above verse."

Those are the times of the prayers that the Qur'an mentions. From the sunnah, we have the following:

'Abdullah ibn 'Amr reported that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, "The time of the noon prayer is when the sun passes the meridian and a man's shadow is the same length as his height. It lasts until the time of the afternoon prayer. The time of the afternoon prayer is until the yellowing of the sun (during its setting). The time of the evening prayer is as long as twilight. The time of the night prayer is to the middle of a night of medium duration. And the time of the morning prayer is from the appearance of the dawn until the time of sunrise. When the sun rises, abstain from praying, as it rises between the horns of Satan." (Related by Muslim.)

Jarir ibn 'Abdullah narrated that the angel Gabriel came to the Messenger of Allah and said to him, "Stand and pray," and they prayed the noon prayer when the sun had passed its meridian. He then came to him for the afternoon prayer and said, "Stand and pray," and they prayed the afternoon prayer while the length of a shadow of something was similar to the length of the object. Then he came at sunset and said, "Stand and pray," and they prayed the sunset prayer when the sun had just disappeared. Then he came at night and said, "Stand and pray," and they prayed the night prayer when the twilight had disappeared. He came again when dawn broke (and they prayed the morning prayer). Then Gabriel came on the next day at noon and said (to the Messenger of Allah), "Stand and pray," and they prayed the noon prayer when the length of the shadow of something was close to the length of the object. Then he came for the afternoon prayer and said, "Stand and pray," and they prayed when the shadow of something was twice as long as the length of the object. Then he came at the same time (as the previous day) for the sunset prayer, without any change. Then he came for the night prayer after half of the night had passed ("or," he said, "one-third of the night"). Then he came when the sky was very yellow and said, "Stand and pray," and they prayed the morning prayer. Then Gabriel said, "Between these times are the times for the prayers."

As to the authenticity of the report, it is recorded by Ahmad, an-Nasa'i and at-Tirmizhi. Al-Bukhari observes, "It is the most authentic report concerning the prayer times."

The Time for the Noon Prayer (Zuhr)

The previous two hadith make it clear that the noon prayer begins when the sun passes its meridian and it continues until an object's shadow is approximately the same length as the object itself. If it is extremely hot, it is preferred to delay the noon prayer until it is cooler. This is done in order to retain the humility and awe of the prayer. If this is not the case, it should be prayed early in its time. This opinion is based on the following hadith: Reported Anas, "If it was extremely cold, the Prophet, upon whom be peace, would pray early. If it was extremely hot, he would wait for it to cool down." (Related by al-Bukhari.) Abu Zharr relates, "We were with the Prophet, upon whom be peace, on a journey. When the caller to prayer wanted to give the azhan, the Prophet said 'Let it cool down.' This happened two or three times, until we saw the shadows of the hills. Then the Prophet said, 'The extreme heat is from the fragrance of Hell. If the heat becomes extreme, delay the prayer until it becomes cool.'" (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.) However, this delay does have a limit. According to Ibn Hajr's Fath al-Bari, "The scholars differ over how long one may wait to let the temperature cool. Some say, 'Until the shadow of an object becomes an arm's length,' or 'Until the shadow becomes one-fourth of one's height.' Others say one-third or one-half, and so on. Its ruling is according to its basic principle, and it changes with different circumstances, provided that the prayer is not delayed until the end of its time."

The Time for the Afternoon Prayer ('Asr)

This prayer begins in the afternoon when the shadow of an object is of the same length as the object itself, and continues until the sun sets. Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "Whoever catches one rak'ah of the afternoon prayer before the sun sets and then prays the remainder of the prayer after the sun has set has not missed the afternoon prayer."

The best and most preferred time to pray the afternoon prayer ends when the sun becomes yellowish on the horizon. This is implied by the preceding hadith of Jabir and 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar. To delay the prayer until the sun becomes yellowish, although it is permissible, is greatly disliked, unless there is some need to do so. Anas reported that he heard the Prophet, upon whom be peace, say, "The following is the prayer of the hypocrite: he waits until the sun is between the horns of Satan, then he gets up and prays four quick rak'ah, and he does not remember Allah therein save a little bit." (Related by "the group," except for al-Bukhari and Ibn Majah.)

Says an-Nawawi in his commentary on Sahih Muslim, "Our companions (the Shafiiyah) hold that the afternoon prayer time can be divided into five categories: the most virtuous time, the preferred time, the allowable time in which there is no disliked aspect, the allowable time that contains some aspect of dislike, and the time that is due to some excuse or necessity. The most virtuous time is at the beginning of the permissible time. The preferred time is until the shadow of an object is twice the length of the object itself. The permissible time without any aspect of dislike is from the time the sun becomes yellowish. The permissible time with some aspect of dislike is from the time the sun becomes yellowish until the setting of the sun. The time of excuse or necessity begins, in fact, at the time of the noon prayer for one who is to combine the noon and afternoon prayers, due to travelling or rain. If the afternoon prayer is made during any of those times, it has been fulfilled properly. If all of those times pass and the sun has set, then one must make up the prayer."

On a cloudy day, it should be prayed earlier in its time. Buraidah al-Aslami reported, "We were with the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, during a battle and he said, "Hasten in praying on a cloudy day, for one who misses the afternoon prayer has destroyed all of his works." (Related by Ahmad and Ibn Majah.)

Of the subject, Ibn al-Qayyim says, "Leaving the prayer is of two types: leaving it completely and never praying it (which destroys all of one's deeds), and leaving it during a particular day, which destroys all of the deeds of that day."

The Afternoon Prayer is the "Mid-most" Prayer

Says Allah in the Qur'an, "Observe and guard the prayers and the mid-most prayer, and stand with total submission to Allah. Authentic hadith have made it clear that the afternoon prayer is the "mid-most" prayer.

'Ali reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said on the day of al-Ahzab (the battle of the clans), "May Allah fill their graves and houses with fire, as they kept us preoccupied from the "mid-most" prayer until the sun had set." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim. Muslim, Abu Dawud and Ahmad have "the afternoon prayer" inserted after "the mid-most" prayer.)

Explaining the context of this hadith, Ibn Mas'ud said, "The idol-worshippers kept the Prophet from the afternoon prayer until the sun had become reddish and yellowish. The Messenger of Allah said, "They kept us preoccupied from the "mid-most" prayer, the afternoon prayer--may Allah fill their bellies and graves with fire." (Related by Ahmad, Muslim, and Ibn Majah.)

The Time for the Sunset Prayer (Maghrib)

The time for the sunset prayer begins with the disappearance of the sun and lasts until the red twilight ends. 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "The time for the sunset prayer is when the sun has disappeared and the twilight has not gone." (Related by Muslim.) Abu Musa related that a man asked the Prophet about the prayer times, and he mentioned the hadith which states that he ordered the sunset prayer when the sun had set and, on the next day, he prayed it when the red twilight was ending and he said, "The time (for the sunset prayer) is between these two times."

An-Nawawi says in his commentary on Sahih Muslim, "It is the opinion of the research scholars of our companions (the Shaf'iyyah) that ... it is allowed to delay it as long as it is twilight. It is allowed to begin the prayer at any time during that period. There is no sin in delaying it from its earliest time." Concerning the earlier quoted hadith in which Gabriel led the prayers and prayed the sunset prayer at the same time on both days, it only shows that it is greatly preferred to perform the sunset prayer as early as possible. This point is made clear by some other hadith:

As-Sa'ib ibn Yazid related that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, "My nation will always be along the natural path as long as they pray the sunset prayer before the stars appear." (Related by Ahmad and at-Tabarani).

In Ahmad's Musnad it is related from Abu Ayyub al-Ansari that the Prophet said, "Pray the sunset prayer when the fasting person breaks his fast and when the stars are about to appear."

In Sahih Muslim it is related from Rifa' ibn Khadeej that "We prayed the sunset prayer with the Messenger of Allah, and one of us would leave (afterwards) and would still be able to see where he shot his arrow, (because there was still so much light left in the sky)."

In Sahih Muslim it is recorded from Salamah ibn al-Aku' that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, would pray the sunset prayer when the sun had set and disappeared (behind the horizon).

The Time of the Night Prayer ('Isha)

This prayer begins when the red twilight disappears and continues up to half of the night. Reported 'Aishah, "They used to pray the night prayer between the disappearance of the twilight and the final third of the night's beginning." (Related by al-Bukhari.) Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, "If it were not to be a hardship upon my nation, I would order them to delay the night prayer until a third or a half of the night had passed." (Related by Ahmad, Ibn Majah and at-Tirmizhi, who said it is sahih.) Reported Abu Sa'eed, "Once, we waited for the Messenger of Allah to lead the night prayer until half the night had passed, at which time he came and prayed with us. He said, 'Stay in your places of sitting while the people have gone to their places of lying down (for sleep), for you are in prayer as long as you are waiting for the prayer. If it were not for the weakness of the weak, the illness of the ill and the need of those who have needs, I would have delayed the time of this prayer to a half of the night."

As to the authenticity of this report, it is recorded by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Khuzaimah. Its chain is sahih). The hadith describes the best time to pray. As for the allowable time and the time due to need, it lasts until dawn. Abu Qatadah reported that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, "There is no negligence in sleeping, but the negligence lies in not praying a prayer until the time of the next prayer has come." (Related by Muslim.) This hadith shows that the time of every prayer continues until the beginning of the time for the next prayer, except for the morning prayer, as all scholars agree that its time lasts only until sunrise.

Delay is Preferred in the Isha Prayer

It is most virtuous to delay the night prayer until the end of the preferred time for it, which is half the night. Reported 'Aishah, "One night the Prophet, upon whom be peace, prayed the night prayer after most of the night had gone and most of the people in the mosque had fallen asleep. Then he came out, prayed, and said, "This would be the proper time if it were not a hardship on my nation." (Related by Muslim and an-Nasa'i.) The Prophet, upon whom be peace, did not do this on a regular basis, as he heard that it would be a hardship on his nation. He would take into consideration the situation of those in the mosque. Sometimes he would hasten in performing the prayer and at other times he would delay it. Said Jabir, "The Messenger of Allah would pray the noon prayer during the hottest time of noon, the afternoon prayer when the sun was clear, the sunset prayer when the sun had gone down, and the night prayer he would sometimes delay and sometimes hasten if he found people gathered (in the mosque). If he noticed that they were lingering, he would delay it. He would pray the morning prayer while it was still dark." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.)

Sleeping Before the Night Prayer Is Forbidden

One should not sleep before the night prayer, nor have discussions after it. Abu Barza al-Aslami related that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, loved to delay the night prayer (which was called darkness, al-'atmah) and he hated sleeping before it and talking or discussions after it." (Related by "the group.") In another saying by Ibn Mas'ud, it is reported, "The Messenger of Allah ordered us not to talk after the night prayer." (Related by Ibn Majah.)

The reasons behind this are: sleep may make a person miss the night prayer in its best time, or it may cause him to miss the congregational prayer, and talking and socializing afterwards would cause one to misappropriate a time from which he could greatly benefit. If one wants to sleep and has someone to wake him up, or he is discussing a beneficial matter, then it is not disliked. Said Ibn 'Umar, "The Prophet would discuss with Abu Bakr some of the affairs of the Muslims during the night, and I was with him." (Related by Ahmad and at-Tirmizhi, who said it is hassan.)

Reported Ibn 'Abbas, "I slept in the home of Maimunah one night when the Prophet, upon whom be peace, was there. I watched to see how the Prophet prayed during the night. He talked with his wife for a while and then slept." (Related by Muslim.)

The Time of the Morning Prayer (Fajr)

The time of the morning prayer begins with the true dawn and lasts until sunrise. It is preferred to pray it early in its permissible time. Abu Mas'ud al-Ansari reported that the Messenger of Allah prayed the morning prayer in the darkness (of the dawn). Another time, he prayed it when the dawn was shining (or glowing). Then after that, he always prayed in the darkness (of the dawn) until he died." (Related by Abu Dawud and al-Baihaqi. Its chain is sahih.) Said 'Aishah, "Believing women would pray the morning prayer with the Prophet, upon whom be peace, being enveloped in their clothing. They would return to their homes after the prayer and no one could recognize them due to the darkness (of the dawn)." (Related by "the group.")

Rafa' ibn Khadeej related a hadith in which the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "Make the morning prayer at daybreak, as your reward will be greater." In another version it states, "Make the morning prayer at the shining (time of the dawn), as your reward will be greater." (Related by "the five." At-Tirmizhi and Ibn Hibban grade it as sahih.) It refers to the time that one finishes the prayer, not the time when one begins it. That is, one should make the recital long so that one is in prayer until the dawn becomes "shiny." This is what the Prophet, upon whom be peace, used to do, for he would recite between 60 and 100 verses. It also means to make sure that the dawn has come.

Performing One Rak'ah During the Time of Prayer

Whoever catches a rak'ah of prayer before its time has expired has caught the entire prayer in its time. Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "Whoever catches one rak'ah of the prayer has caught the prayer." (Related by "the group.") This refers to any of the prayers. Al-Bukhari has recorded, "Whoever of you catches one prostration of the afternoon prayer before the sun has set should complete his prayer. If one of you catches one prostration of the morning prayer before the sun has risen, he should complete his prayer." Here the meaning of prostration is rak'ah. The clear meaning of the hadith is that one who catches one rak'ah of the morning or afternoon prayer should complete the prayer even if the sun is setting or rising, also those are times in which it is not liked to pray. If one rak'ah is performed, then the prayer is to be completed and the obligation of prayer will have been fulfilled, although it is not allowed to intentionally delay those prayers until such times.

Sleeping Through or Forgetting the Prayer

Whoever sleeps through or has forgotten to pray a certain prayer should pray it when he wakes up or remembers the prayer. Abu Qatadah related that sleeping through the prayer time was mentioned to the Prophet, upon whom be peace, and he said, "There is no negligence in sleep, but negligence occurs while one is awake. If one of you forgets a prayer or sleeps through its time, then he should pray it when he remembers it."

As to the authenticity of the report, it is recorded by an-Nasa'i and at-Tirmizhi, who said it is sahih.

Anas related that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "Whoever forgets a prayer should pray it when he remembers it, and there is no expiation for it save that." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.) Reported 'Imran ibn Husain, "We went with the Messenger of Allah during the night. When the last portion of the night came, we became tired and fell asleep. We did not wake until

we felt the heat of the sun. Some of us tried hurriedly to purify ourselves. The Prophet ordered us to be calm. Then we rode on until the sun had risen and we made ablution. He ordered Bilal to make the call to prayer, and then prayed two rak'ah before the (obligatory) morning prayer. Then we stood and prayed. We said, 'O Messenger of Allah, should we not repeat it tomorrow in its proper time?' He said, 'Would your Lord the Most High forbid you from interest and accept it from you?'" (Related by Ahmed and others.)

The Times in Which the Prayers are Prohibited

It is forbidden to pray after the morning prayer until the sunrise and from the sunrise until the sun has completely risen to the length of a spear above the horizon, and when the sun is at its meridian until it moves slightly to the west, and after the afternoon prayer until the sun sets. Abu Sa'eed reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "There is no prayer after the morning prayer until the sun rises." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.) 'Amr ibn 'Abbas related that he said, "O Prophet of Allah, inform me about the prayers." He said, "Pray the morning prayer and then abstain from prayer until sunrise and the sun has completely risen, for it rises between the horns of Satan. That is when the unbelievers prostrate to it. Then pray, as your prayer will be witnessed and attended to until the shadow of a spear becomes less than its length. At that time stop praying, for at that time the hell-fire is fed with fuel. When the shade comes, you may pray, for your prayer will be witnessed and attended (to by angels) until you pray the afternoon prayer. Then abstain from praying until the sun sets, for it sets between the horns of Satan, and that is when the unbelievers make prostrations to it." (Related by Ahmad and Muslim.)

Said 'Uqbah ibn 'Amr, "There are three times during which the Prophet prohibited us from praying or burying our deceased: sunrise until the sun has risen (some distance), when the sun is at its meridian, and when the sun is setting until it has completely set." (Related by "the group," except for al-Bukhari.)

Opinions of the Jurists Concerning Prayer After the Morning and Night Prayers

Most scholars agree that one can make up missed prayers after the morning or afternoon prayers. This is based on the Prophet's words, "If someone forgets the prayer, he should pray it when he remembers it." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.)

Concerning voluntary prayers, the following companions disliked such prayers during those times: 'Ali, Ibn Mas'ud, Abu Hurairah and Ibn 'Umar. 'Umar used to beat those who offered two rak'ah after the afternoon prayers (in the presence of other companions), and was not rebuked. Khalid ibn al-Waleed also used to do this. Those tabi'een who disliked such prayers were al-Hassan and Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyab. Abu Hanifah and Malik also hated such prayers. Ash-Sahf i reasoned that prayers at such times are allowable if the person has a reason for that prayer (the prayer of salutation to the mosque, or the prayers after one performs the ablution, and so on). He uses as a proof the fact that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, prayed the two noon sunnah rak'ah after the afternoon prayers. The Hanbaliyyah say that it is forbidden to pray during such times even if one has a reason to do so, except in the case of the two rak'ah for the circumambulation of the Ka'bah. This is based on the hadith from Jabir ibn Mut'am that the Prophet said, "O tribe of 'Abd Manat, do not prevent anyone from circumambulating this house (the Ka'bah) or from praying therein at any time they wish."

As to the authenticity of thie report, it is related by Abu Dawud, an-Nasa'i, at-Tirmizhi and Ibn Majah. At-Tirmizhi and Ibn Khuzaimah called it sahih.

About Praying at Sunrise, Sunset and While the Sun is at its Meridian

The Hanifiyyah are of the opinion that prayer during such times is not valid, regardless of whether the prayer was obligatory or voluntary, or if one was making up a prayer or fulfilling a requirement. But, they make an exception for the afternoon prayer of that particular day and the funeral prayer (if the funeral is at any of these times, the funeral prayer is still to be made). They also permit the prostration in response to Qur'anic recitation if the respective verses were recited at such times. Abu Yusuf also makes an exception for voluntary prayers on Friday while the sun is at its meridian. The Shariyyah say that voluntary prayers which are not offered for a particular reason are disliked at such times. Obligatory prayers, voluntary prayers because of some occasion, voluntary prayers on Friday when the sun is at its meridian and the prayer of the circumambulation of the Ka'bah are all permissible at such times without any disliked aspects. The Malikiyyah say that voluntary prayers during sunrise and sunset are forbidden, even if there is some occasion for them. The same applies to a prayer that was vowed, prostration owing to Qur'anic recitation, and the funeral prayer (unless they fear some decay or alteration in the deceased). But they always allow prayer, voluntary or obligatory, at the time when the sun is at its meridian. Al-Baji wrote in his commentary to alMuwatta, "In al-Mubsut it is related from Ibn Wahb that Malik was asked about praying at mid-day and he said, 'I found the people praying at mid-day of Friday. Some hadith do not consider it desirable (to pray at such times), but I do not stop the people from praying. I do not like to pray at that time because it is not desirable to do so.'" The Hanbaliyyah say that no voluntary prayers should be made during such times, regardless of whether or not there is a reason for such prayers, and regardless of whether it is Friday or not, save for the prayer of salutations to the mosque on Friday (they allow this without any dislike for it while the sun is at its meridian or while the imam is making his address). They also say that the funeral prayer is forbidden at that time, unless there is a fear of alteration or decay in the corpse. They allow the making up of missed prayers, the vowed prayers and the prayer of the circumambulation of the Ka'bah (even if it is voluntary) at any of these three times.

Voluntary Prayer at Dawn Before the Morning Prayer

Yasar, the client of Ibn 'Umar, said, "Ibn 'Umar saw me while I was praying after the dawn had begun, and he said, 'The Messenger of Allah came to us while we were praying at this time and he said, 'Let your witness reach those who are absent that there is no prayer after (the beginning of) the dawn except two rak'ah.'"

As to its place in the corpus of hadith, it is recorded by Ahmad and Abu Dawud. Although the hadith is weak, its numerous chains strengthen each other.

We can conclude from this that it is disliked to make voluntary prayers beyond the two sunnah rak'ah after the dawn has begun. This was stated by ash-Shaukani. Al-Hassan, ash-Shaifi, and Ibn Hazm say voluntary prayers are permissible at that time without any aspect of dislike. Malik openly allowed prayers during that time for those who missed the voluntary prayers during the night due to some excuse. It is mentioned that it reached him that 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas, al-Qasim ibn Muhammad, and 'Abdullah ibn 'Amar ibn Rabi'ah would pray the witr prayer after the dawn had begun. Said 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, "It does not bother me if they make the iqamah (the second call) to prayer while I am praying witr." Yahya ibn Sa'eed reported, "Ibadah ibn as-Samit was the imam for the people. One day he went to the morning prayer and the caller to prayer made the iqamah for the prayer. 'Ibadah kept quiet until he prayed the witr prayer and then he led them in the morning prayer." Sa'eed ibn Jubair reported that Ibn 'Abbas slept (one night), woke up and told his servant, "Look to see what the people are doing." (By that time he had lost his eyesight). The servant returned and told him that they were dispersing from the morning prayer. Ibn 'Abbas then stood, prayed witr and prayed the morning prayer.

Voluntary Prayers while the Iqamah Is Being Made

If the prayer has already started, it is disliked to preoccupy one's self with voluntary prayers. Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "If the prayer is beginning, there is no prayer save the obligatory one." In another narration it states, "Save for the one for which iqamah has been made." (Related by Ahmad, Muslim, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmizhi, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah.)

Reported 'Abdullah ibn Sarjis, "A man entered the mosque while the Prophet was leading the morning prayer. The man prayed two rak'ah at the side of the mosque and then entered (the congregation) behind the Messenger of Allah. When the Prophet had finished the prayer he said, 'O so and so, which of the two prayers do you count --the one you prayed by yourself or the one you prayed with us?'" (Related by Muslim, Abu Dawud and an-Nasa'i.) The Messenger objected to this act, but he did not order him to repeat his prayer. This shows that such a prayer is valid but disliked. Reported Ibn 'Abbas, "I was praying while the caller to prayer was making the iqamah. The Messenger of Allah pulled me and said, 'Do you pray four rak'ah for the morning (obligatory) prayer?'" The hadith is related by al-Baihaqi, at-Tabarani, Abu Dawud, at-Tayalisi and al-Hakim, who said it is sahih according to the criterion of al-Bukhari and Muslim. Abu Musa al-Ash'ari related that the Prophet saw a man praying two rak'ah of the morning prayer while the caller to prayer was making the (second) call. The Prophet touched his elbow and said, "Shouldn't this be before that?" (Related by at-Tabarani. Al-'Iraqi says it is good.)