

Performing Five Daily Prayers (Part II)



1 - Morning prayer [Salat-ul-fajr] consists of four rak'ats [1]. First, two rak'ats of the sunnat [2] prayer are performed. Then two rakats of the fard [3] prayer are performed. The sunnat (the first two rak'ats) is very important. Some scholars classify it as wajib [4].

2 - Early afternoon prayer [Salat-uz-zuhr] consists of ten rak'ats, the initial sunnat consisting of four rak'ats, the fard consisting of four rak'ats, and the final sunnat consisting of two rak'ats. The early afternoon prayer is performed in this order.

3 - Late afternoon prayer [Salat-ul-'asr] consists of eight rak'ats. First the sunnat, which consists of four rak'ats, and then the fard, which consists of four rak'ats, are performed.

4 - Evening prayer [Salat-ul-maghrib] contains five rak'ats. First the fard, which is composed of three rak'ats, then the sunnat, consisting of two rak'ats, are performed.

5 - Night prayer [Salat-ul-'isha] consists of thirteen rak'ats. The initial sunnat contains four rak'ats. The fard also contains four rak'ats. But the final sunnat has two rak'ats, while the Witr prayer has three rak'ats.

GLOSSARY

[1] Rak'at: In performing namaz, the actions of standing, bowing and putting the head on the ground twice are altogether called a rak'at. Most prayers of namaz consist of two or four rak'ats. One of them contains three rak'ats.

[2] sunnat: i) act, thing that was, though not commanded by Allahu ta'ala, done and liked by the Prophet ('alaihi 's-salam) as an 'ibada (there is thawab if done, but no sin if omitted, yet it causes sin if continually omitted and disbelief if disliked; the Sunna; i) (with fard) all the sunnas as a whole; ii) (with the Book or Qur'an al-karim) the Hadith ash-sharif; iii) (alone) fiqh, Islam.

[3] fard: an act or thing that is commanded by Allahu ta'ala in the Qur'an al-karim. Fard (or fard) means (any behaviour or thought or belief which is) obligatory. Islam's open commandments are called fard (pl. faraid).

[4] wajib: (act, thing) never omitted by the Prophet, so almost as compulsory as fard and not to be omitted. Wajib al-wujud: Being whose existence is indispensable and nonexistence is impossible.