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How to
Pray



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Chapter 1

The Introduction of his Eminence to the Prayers Section from his Book of Practical Laws

In the name of Allah, the most gracious, the most merciful.

Praise be to the Lord, Master of the universe, and peace and blessings be upon the most noble prophet and seal of Messengers Mohammad and his holy divine progeny; and the curse of Allah be upon all of their enemies till the Day of Judgment.

The prayer is one of the pillars of Islam; it is the second most important pillar after the pillar of faith. It is described as the foundation of Islam and the pillar of the religion. It is the last testament of our Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and that of all other Prophets. It is the first thing that all individuals will be questioned about on the Day of Judgment. All of the above are mentioned and explained in the narrations of the Prophet's and the Ahlulbait (peace be upon them). In some of them it is stated: whoever that does not pray deliberately, has no ties to the Islamic religion; that to neglect offering the prayers is the boundary between disbelief and faith; that the prayers is the link between the slave and his master and it is what reminds the slave of his master.

Considerable attention should be paid to the prayers. Prayer must be performed with full orientation and focus. The careful performance and completion of its various parts like bowing, prostrations and all other parts ensures its acceptance by almighty Allah. If prayer is accepted, other acts will be accepted, and if it is rejected, other acts will be similarly rejected.

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) said: "Our intercession will not be awarded to those who neglect the prayers".

It is rather difficult to fully cover all what has been reported on the superiority of the prayers and on the great rewards for performing it. It is enough to mention what has been narrated by Imam Mohammad al-Baqir (peace be upon him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: "If there was a river at the doorstep of your house, and you bathed in this river each day five times, would any dirt remain on your body?" His companion said: "No.", He, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: "prayer is like a running river; whenever one performs a prayer, the sins he committed between this prayer and the previous prayer are forgiven." And what is reported that Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) said: "Performing the obligatory prayer is rewarded more than going to pilgrimage (Hajj) twenty times. Going once to pilgrimage is rewarded more than a houseful worth of gold to be fully spent in charity".

It is regrettable that we see many followers of this religion neglect performing the prayers and to this we say "we are Allah's and unto him we will return".

We hope that what we have mentioned above becomes a deterrent to those who have neglected their prayers from doing so, and as a catalyst to have greater interest in this obligation as "*warning benefits believers*" (51:55).

Unto Him we seek the help and guidance and He is Sufficient for us, Most Excellent is He, in Whom we trust.

Chapter 2

Introduction to the Pillars of the Religion:

Dear Muslim brother/sister,

Before you learn about how to pray, you are advised to learn about the Pillars of your religion that makes up the correct belief that a human being should have in this life.

They are Five:

Monotheism:

Monotheism it is the belief and the acknowledgement of the existence of the Creator of this universe. The belief that he is One, and has no partner in being Creator and Lord and has no partner in being worshipped and that He is not divided into any parts.

Among the evidences of the existence of the Creator is the existence of this great world, the heavens and the earth and the wonders of the creations in them, in addition to the precision and organization. The mind acknowledges that there must be for these creations a great creator and a wise director that does not need a helper in His creation and nor can anyone dispute His directions. Almighty Allah said: *“In the creation of the heavens and the earth and (in) the difference of night and day are tokens (of His Sovereignty) for men of understanding” (3:190).*

The Almighty also said: "If there were therein gods beside Allah, then verily both (the heavens and the earth) had been disordered" (21:22).

Justice:

Justice is the belief that the Creator is not oppressive nor does He commit other vices, since whoever does so is deficient and in need. "*Lo! Allah, He verily is the Absolute, the Owner of Praise*" (22:64). So He is just in His decrees or decisions and does not ask his slaves what they could not afford nor does He punish them for what they have not committed. He rewards the obedient and can punish the disobedient. He said: "*Lo! Allah wrongs not mankind in aught; but mankind wrong themselves*" (10:44).

Prophethood:

This is a divine position and a noble mission that Almighty Allah chose for his perfect righteous slaves, whom Almighty Allah sent to people to convey the message of their Lord, and guide them to their benefits and interests in the world and Hereafter and betterment of humanity to its rightful perfection.

Almighty Allah has sent thousands of prophets throughout history to undertake this noble mission, and the seal of the prophets and the last messenger is our beloved prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him and his holy family). A prophet must be free of all imperfections and defects, errors and forgetfulness so as to be worthy of delivering the message of Allah on earth and being an ideal role model for people.

Imamate:

This is a general leadership which Almighty Allah chose for his perfectly righteous slaves, in order to succeed the Prophet in leading the nation, guiding it, defining the laws and making it content.

Therefore, Imamate is then a divine post. It is not proven unless the Imam is named and specified by the Prophet or the preceding Imam. The nation has no right to elect or choose an Imam. Almighty Allah said: *“And it becomes not a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His messenger have decided an affair (for them), that they should (after that) claim any say in their affair; and whoso is rebellious to Allah and His messenger, he verily goes astray in error manifest” (33:36).*

The Imam must be - like the prophet - free of all imperfections and defects and infallible from errors, forgetfulness and sins.

The imams after the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) are twelve imams. They are:

1. Prince of Believers, Ali bin Abi Talib (peace be upon him).
2. Al-Hassen bin Ali, Al-Mujtaba (peace be upon him).
3. Al-Hussein bin Ali, Master of Martyrs (peace be upon him).
4. Ali bin Al-Hussein, Zainul-Abideen (peace be upon him).
5. Mohammad bin Ali, Al-Baqir (peace be upon him).
6. Jafar bin Mohamad, Al-Sadiq (peace be upon him).
7. Musa bin Jafar, Al-Kadhim (peace be upon him).
8. Ali bin Musa, Al-Ridha (peace be upon him).
9. Mohammad Bin Ali, Al-Jawad (peace be upon him).
10. Ali Bin Mohammad, Al-Hadi (peace be upon him).
11. Al-Hassen bin Ali, Al-Askery (peace be upon him).

12. Mohammad bin Al-Hassen, Al-Mahdi (peace be upon him). He is alive, but he is in occultation. His location is not known, and he is unrecognizable, people could have seen him without realizing who he is. He will emerge at the time of injustice and oppression to fill earth with justice and equity. He was born in year 255 AH. It is not impossible for a man to live a long duration if almighty Allah wants this to happen, like what happened to Noah or Jesus, the son of Mary when almighty Allah raised him up to the heavens or what happened to Khidr. Almighty Allah said: *“The Originator of the heavens*

and the earth! When He decrees a thing, He said unto it only: Be! And it is.” (2:117).

Resurrection:

It is the return of the bodies - after almighty Allah has honored them with the grace of existence in this world - with the souls, to be questioned and judged so that the righteous person will be rewarded and the transgressor will be punished and the retribution against the oppressors will take place. This is not a hard thing for Almighty Allah as He is the one who created the creation first; He is then able to give life after death since giving life is easier than creating from non-existence. Almighty Allah said: “And he hath coined for Us a similitude, and hath forgotten the fact of his creation, saying: Who will revive these bones when they have rotted away? Say: He will revive them Who produced them at the first, for He is Knower of every creation” (36:78-79).

The Branches of The religion:

These are the religious laws that cover all aspects of life. A Muslim should learn about the religious laws that concern him/her. Amongst the most important Islamic religious laws after learning about the beliefs are:

1. Prayers.
2. Fasting.
3. Jihad.
4. Khums.
5. Zakat.
6. Pilgrimage
7. Enjoining the good.
8. Forbidding the evil.
9. Tawallie - Loving the Ahlulbait (peace be upon them) and their friends
10. Tabarri - Disassociating from the enemies of the Ahlulbait (peace be upon them) and their friends.

Chapter 3

The Prayers:

The Prayers:

The introduction of His Eminence mentioned above has explained the importance of prayers, so you should know how to pray and the conditions of the prayers.

The Obligatory Prayers:

1. The daily prayers: it is obligatory on everyone to pray five times a day. They are the morning, noon, afternoon, sunset and night prayers. We will explain them in details later.

2. The Friday prayer: if the conditions of the Friday prayers are met like the Adalah of the imam of the prayer and sufficient distance between two places where it is performed, and other conditions then it is obligatory on the noon of Friday to either offer the Friday prayer or to offer the noon prayer. You can refer to the detailed books of jurisprudence for the details.

3. The prayer of the signs or natural phenomenon: it is obligatory to offer it at the time of a solar or lunar eclipse and earthquakes and at every natural phenomena that cause fear to humans - by nature - like strong thunderbolts, black sand storms, etc. You can refer to the detailed books of jurisprudence for the details.

The Preliminaries and Conditions of the Prayer:

First: To be with Taharah (ritual incorporeal purity of the body). This Taharah may be lost by certain events, such as urination, excretion, being in the state of Janabah , etc. and one will need to restore his/her Taharah before prayers.

The body regains its lost Taharah by one of the following:

Wudhu. Ghusl and Tayammum.

Chapter 4

Wudhu (Ablution by Water):

You need to perform wudhu if your body lost its Tahara because of one of the following occurrences:

1. The release of urine.
2. The release of excrement.
3. The break of wind (from the usual place).
4. Sleeping that stops the faculty of reasoning.
5. Anything that stops the faculty of reasoning like sanity, fainting, intoxication and any other reason.
6. Minor or medium Istihadha. (as explained in details in books of religious laws).

How to perform Wudhu:

1. Intention: it is the intention to seek closeness to Almighty Allah when you wash your face and hands and wipe your head and feet. Before you start washing the face, it is recommended to wash your hands and state: bismillah wa billah, allahumma ija'alni minat-tawabeen waj'alni minal-mutatahireen. It is also recommended to rinse the mouth and nose thrice.

2. Washing the face: starting by washing the face with Tahir water from the top of the forehead, i.e. the hairline to the end of the chin vertically and what falls underneath the thumb and the middle finger of the outstretched hand horizontally. In other words, if you were to open your hand and place it on the top of your face in such a way that the tip of the thumb is on one side and the tip of the middle finger is on the other side and then wipe it downwards to the chin. All what it cover is

obligatory to wash. It is not mandatory to wash whatever is outside this area from the right or from the left. Note that you do not have to wash under the hair in your face like the moustache and the beard but wash the apparent part only.

3. Washing the hands: then you wash your hands from the elbow to the fingertips; starting with the right hand from the top of the elbow down to the end of the fingers. Note that it is not correct to wash from the bottom to the top, and doing so makes the Wudhu void. To make sure that the elbow is washed fully, you should begin wash from slightly above it. You, then wash the left arm in the same way as you did for the right arm.

4. Wiping the head: then you wipe the front part of your head which starts from the top of the head to the hairline above the forehead. Note that It is not obligatory to wipe the front part of the head perfectly. It is sufficient to wipe one finger wide. It is obligatory to wipe with the inside of the right hand while the hand is wet from washing of previous parts. Mixing such wetness with new water makes the Wudhu void.

5. Wiping the feet: then you wipe the foot from the toe to the ankle's talus. The right foot should be wiped with the inside of the right hand and the left foot should be wiped with the inside of the left hand. The right foot should be wiped before the left one.

The Conditions of Wudhu:

1. The sincere intention: It must be with the intention that it is sincere to Almighty Allah without any intention of showing off or any other intention.

2. The sequence: It should be sequential i.e. washing the face is before the right hand and then the left hand then the wipe of the head then the right foot then the left foot.

3. The succession: Performing the Wudhu should be uninterrupted. The succession between the washings and the wipes

should be without a time gap in such a way that the previous part is not fully dry before starting the next one.

4. Performing it by one's self: You should undertake the performing of all the parts of wudhu as long as you are able to do so.

5. Not performing it in a prohibited way: Like if performing the wudhu would cause forbidden harm that is prohibited to subject oneself to it, or if performing the wudhu would cause the usage of other's belongings without their approval or similar reasons. The said is true if you were aware of the prohibition since doing so prevents the sincere intention of the individual to seek closeness to Almighty Allah.

6. The purity of the water and the parts of body involved in the Wudhu: The water used to perform the wudhu should be Tahir and the parts of the body that are wiped or washed should be tahir too. It is not a condition in the rest of the body parts to be Tahir as well. Yes, during the prayer, the whole body should be pure as explained in more details in books of Islamic laws.

7. The water should be unmixed: The water that is used in wudhu should not be mixed with anything else, like the normal tap water or river water or sea water, and not mixed like orange juice or rose water or the like.

8. The removal of the barrier: It is obligatory in the wudhu to remove all barriers that block the water from reaching the body parts of the wudhu.

Chapter 5

Ghusl (Ritual Bath):

An individual is required to perform Ghusl when s/he lost the Taharah of the body by being subjected to the following five occurrences:

1. Janabah: The state of Janabah occurs after the release of semen, or with sexual intercourse if the foreskin part of the genitals has penetrated fully, even if the semen is not released. In the latter case Janabah occurs for both parties.

2. Menstruation: it takes place with the discharge of blood during the monthly menses.

3. Nifas: it takes place when the womb discharges blood of childbirth during it or after it.

4. Major and medium Istihadah: Istihadah happens when the womb releases blood that is not that of menstruation, Nifas, wound, ulceration or the one that is the result of the loss of virginity.

5. Touching of a corpse: This is when one touches a dead human body after it becomes cold and before it is bathed.

How to Perform Ghusl:

Intend to perform the ghusl – as you would for wudhu as explained above – and wash your body.

Ghusl can be performed in two ways:

A. Sequential: Firstly, the entire head and neck is washed, then the right side of the rest of the body, then the left side. It is also sufficient in this kind of Ghusl to wash the head first then the entire remaining body, if you want. Do not forget to wash the ears from inside and outside.

B. Immersion: The entire is submerged in the water in one go in such a way that the entire body is washed during such submergence.

Note: it is not a condition in Ghusl to wash the hair but having the water reach the skin under it.

The Conditions of Ghusl:

The Ghusl is conditioned with the same conditions of Wudhu like the sincere attention, not performing the Ghusl in a prohibited way, carrying it out by oneself, the purity of water, and the removal of the any barrier from the body, in addition to the condition of sequence which is applicable in the sequential method of Ghusl, and not in the Immersion method. However, it is not a condition to have the Ghusl done in succession. Unlike the Wudhu, one can have gaps in between the parts of the Ghusl.

Notes:

1. Kinds of Ghusl that are proven in the religion compensate for the Wudhu, whether they are obligatory - like, the Ghusl for Janabah, menstruation, Istihadha, etc. - or recommended like, the Ghusl on Friday, the one for the Eid, the one for the Ihram during pilgrimage.

2. If there were more than one reason to perform the Ghusl i.e. more than one Ghusl is required, it is sufficient to perform one to compensate for all of them.

Chapter 6

Tayammum (Ablution by Earth):

You are required to perform the Tayammum if you are required to perform the Wudhu or Ghusl, but do not have water. So Tayammum will be performed instead of the Wudhu or Ghusl.

When we said “you do not have access to water”, we don’t necessarily refer to the absence of water, but it includes the case when there is water but there are obstacles that prevent the individual from using it. Tayammum becomes required in such circumstances as explained below:

1. The amount of water is not sufficient to perform the Wudhu or the Ghusl.
2. It is prohibited to use the water like if its owner does not permit the individual to use it.
3. The use of water for Wudhu or ghisl might deplete its quantity in such a way it could not be sufficient to overcome one’s thirst, as well as the thirst of those you care for like your family members, relatives and even your animal that you look after.
4. There is another religious obligation other than Wudhu or Ghusl that require the use of water like purifying the mosque or purifying the clothes or body for performing the prayer and the water is not sufficient for both.

5. There is fear from using the water in Ghusl or Wudhu since such usage cause an illness, increase it or delay its healing.

How to perform Tayammum:

1. Intend to do the Tayammum for the sake of closeness to Almighty Allah.

2. Strike the earth (soil, sand, stone, gravel or soft rock) at once with the palms of both hands at once. It is not sufficient to place the hands on earth without actually striking it.

3. Wipe over the forehead with the inside of the hands together. The forehead is defined to be the area between the hairline at the top, the bones of eyebrows at the bottom and the temples on the sides. It is essential to start wiping from the top.

4. Wipe over the back of the right hand with the palm of the left, starting from the wrist to the fingertips.

5. Wipe over the back of the hand with the palm of the right, beginning with the wrist to the fingertips .

Note: it is essential to remove all the barriers that prevent the earth from reaching the body, such as your ring.

The Conditions of Tayammum:

They are similar to the conditions of the Wudhu including succession (uninterrupted sequence) plus the condition that the material used for Tayammum should not be mixed with what is not correct to use for Tayammum like mixing the earth with ash.

Chapter 7

The Rest of the Conditions:

We have mentioned the first condition of the prayer which was the Taharah of the body. The rest of them are as follows:

Second: The time:

The daily prayers are offered within designated times. The morning prayer is from dawn till the sunrise. The noon and afternoon prayers are from the mid-day to sunset time. The sunset and the night prayers are from sunset to the middle of the night.

Third: The Direction:

The prayer is offered facing the Qiblah which is the direction of the Holy Ka'bah in the city of Mecca.

Forth: The Place where prayer is offered:

The place where the prayer is offered should not be usurped. Also the spot of prostration especially should be Tahir, i.e. not Najis, and must be from earth or what naturally grows from it provided that it is not consumable by people or worn by them. It is better to prostration on earth and the best choice of that is the earth of Imam Hussein's grave (peace be upon him). Imam Jaafar al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) used to have a piece of earth from his grave for his prayers.

Fifth: The body:

The body should be free from Najasah during the prayer.

Sixth: The clothes:

It is obligatory for men to cover his private parts all the time and when offering prayer. The women have to cover the entire body excluding the face, the hands to the wrists and the feet to the ankles during prayer.

It is not permissible for men to wear gold or pure silk. Doing so during the prayer makes it invalid.

The clothes worn during the prayer should meet the following conditions:

- a. They should be Tahir i.e. not Najis.
- b. They should not be usurped.
- c. One should not carry during the prayer or wear anything that is part of an animal that is impermissible to consume if the animal has flesh like of a cat or of a whale also from the parts of an animal that is not slaughtered in accordance to religious laws even if the corpse is Tahir if it has a leather that is commonly used like the snake.

Chapter 8

The Adhan and the Iqamah:

It is highly recommended to recite the Adhan and the Iqamah especially for men before the evening and night, and morning prayers. Iqamah is even more strongly recommended than the Adhan.

How to recite the Adhan:

1. Allahu Akbar (God is Great) four times and the rest of the following phrases twice.
2. Ash'hadu Alla Ilaha Illallah (I bear witness that there is no god but Allah).
3. Ash'hadu Anna Mohammadan Rasoolullah (I bear witness that Mohammad is the Messenger of Allah).
4. Hayya Alas-Salah (Hasten to prayer).
5. Hayya Alal-Falah (Hasten to success).
6. Hayya Ala Khairil-Amal (Hasten to the best good deed).
7. Allahu Akbar (God is Great). 8. La Illaha Illallah (There is no god but Allah).

How to recite the Iqamah:

All the phrases are to be recited twice, except the last phrase which is recited once.

1. Allahu Akbar (God is Great)
2. Ash'hadu Alla Ilaha Illallah (I bear witness that there is no god but Allah).
3. Ash'hadu Anna Mohammadan Rasoolullah (I bear witness that Mohammad is the Messenger of Allah).

4. Hayya Alas-Salah (Hasten to prayer).
5. Hayya Alal-Falah (Hasten to success).
6. Hayya Ala Khairil-Amal (Hasten to the best good deed).
7. Qad Qamat is Salah (The prayer has begun).
8. Allahu Akbar.(God is Great)
9. La Ilaha Illallah (There is no god but Allah).

It is recommended to recite Ash'shadu Anna Aliyan Waliyullah (I bear witness that Ali is the friend of Allah), after the testimony of the prophecy of Mohammed (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) in both of the Adhan and Iqamah.

Chapter 9

How to Perform the Daily Prayer:

After you have fulfilled the conditions of the prayer and its preliminaries, you are ready to offer it.

Intention:

Intend to say the prayer you want to do it. By intention, we mean that you decide with yourself to perform the steps of the prayer with the intentions that it is for the sake of getting closer to Almighty Allah. If you intended to offer the morning prayer, you intend to do the actions of that particular prayer for the sake of getting closer to Almighty Allah. The same is said with regards to noon, afternoon, sunset and night prayers. It is not necessary to utter the meaning of the intention. However, it is recommended to pay attention to the prayer while offering it. Almighty Allah said: *“Successful indeed are the believers, who are humble in their prayers”* (23:1-2).

Takbeerat-ul-Ihram:

With the intention, you raise your hand as per the picture and recite: Allahu Akbar. This is called Takbeerat-ul-Ihram.

Notes:

1. The utterance should be in proper Arabic pronunciation.
2. The voice should be clearly heard even in a lower tone in such a way that you can hear it yourself.
3. The utterance should be while in a standing posture also with quietude and in quietude we mean the constancy of the prayer's position and body.

4. There must be a pause between the takbiratul Ihram and the recitation after it even by a slit period of time.

Recitation:

After the Takbeerat-ul-Ihtram, you recite Surat-ul-Fatiha then recite another full chapter after it, like Suratul Ikhlass for example.

Note that it is obligatory for recite Surat-ul-Fatiha and the proceeding chapter in an audible way during the morning prayer and during the first two units of the sunset and night prayers. Audible recitation is not obligatory for women. It is obligatory on both genders to recite in an inaudible voice in the noon and after noon prayers.

Bowing (Ruku’):

Then you will bow down before Almighty Allah in the way demonstrated in the photo. and say: "Subhana rabbi al-Adheemi wa bi-Hamdih" :Glory to my Lord, the great and praise be to him, or say "Subhanallah" three times: "Glory be to God".The following is obligatory in bowing:

Bending down to a level that will allow the fingertips of your hand to reach the knees.

Stillness during the above- mentioned recitation of bowing.

Then you raise your head till you stand upright and say: "Sami'Allahu liman Hamidah" :May God accepts from those who praise Him.

Prostration:

Then go down into prostration position and place your forehead, the palms of the hands, your knees and the big toes of your feet on the earth, in the way shown in the photo, and say: "Subhana Rabbi al-A'ala wa bi-Hamdih": Glory to my Lord, the most high, and praise be to him, or say: "Subhanallah" three times: "Glory be to God".

Then raise your head and sit up – as in the photo – and then go down again the second time to prostration, and recite what you recited the first time.

The following is obligatory in prostration:

1. Stillness during the above mentioned recitation of the prostration.

2. The place where you place your forehead should not be lower or higher than the places where you placed the knees, the palms and the big toes of your feet, by more than four finger-widths.

Then you will stand for the second Rak’ah (unit) of the prayer, so stand still; recite Suratul-Fatiha and another chapter, as you did in the first Rak’ah.

Qunnot:

In the second Rak’ah, before going to the bowing position, it is recommended to perform the Qunoot, which is turning to Almighty Allah in supplication, which can in any language.

When you have finished the Qunoot, perform the bowing, then stand up again and say: “Sami’Allahu Liman Hamidah”. Then go down for prostration and perform the two prostrations, as you did in the first Rak’ah, and when you sit up from the second prostration, you will recite the testimonies.

Testimonies (Tashahhud):

It is sufficient to Tashahhud to say: “Ash-hadu An-la Ilaha Il-lallahu Wahdahu La Shareeka lah, wa Ash’hadu Anna Mo-hammadan Abdahu wa Rasooluh. Allahumma Salli Ala Mo-hammsdin wa Aali Mohammad”.

If you were performing the morning prayers, you will proceed to the Salutations.

Salutation (Tasleem):

You will recite:

“Assalamu Alaika Ayyuhan-Nabiyyu wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.

Assalamu Alaina wa Ala Ibbadillah- is-Saliheen.

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh”.

By this, you have finished the morning prayer.

Notes:

1. The salutations are obligatory in every prayer and it is its very last part, and by it one completes the prayer.

2. Stillness is obligatory in both the testimonies and the salutations.

The Sunset Prayer:

If you are performing the sunset prayer, so because it has the three Rak’ahs, after completing the two Rak’ahs and the testimonies, don’t recite the salutations. Rather, rise up again for the third Rak’ah, stand still, and recite: “Subhanallahi, walHamdulillahi, wa La Ilaha Illallhu, Wallahu Akbar.” Recite this once, and it is better to recite it three times, and you may also recite Suratul-Fatiha instead. It is obligatory to recite this quietly, whatever you chose to recite.

Then bow down and then perform the two prostrations, followed by the testimonies again, and then the salutations; thus the prayer of sunset will be complete.

The Noon, Afternoon and Night Prayers:

These three prayers are of four Rak’ahs each. After the second Rak’ah and the two testimonies, you do not recite the salutations, but stand to perform two more Rak’ahs. In each of them, you recite when standing you are standing “Subhanallahi walHamdulillahi, wa La Ilaha Illallahu Waallahu Akbar,” or Suratul-Fatiha, as explained above. Then you bow and then prostrate twice as mentioned above. When you have completed these two Rak’ahs, you perform the testimonies and salutations, and you then have completed the four Rak’ahs of any of the noon, the afternoon or the night prayers.

The Excellence of Congregational Prayers:

It is recommended to perform the prayer in a congregation (Jama'ah), as it has a great reward. It has been narrated from the prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) that he said: "A Rak'ah performed by a believer behind an imam (of congregation prayer) is greater than a hundred thousand dinars given away in charity to the poor; and a prostration performed by a believer behind an imam in congregation prayer is greater than freeing a hundred thousand slaves".

Invalidators of Prayer:

Prayers become invalid and void by the following:

1. If your prayer has not fulfilled one of the required conditions of prayer, like if you prayed without Taharah, or without adequate clothing (i.e. that the man's private parts are not covered, for example).
2. If the Taharah has been voided by such an occurrence which requires Ghusl - like menses, Istihahadha or Nifas - or by an occurrence which has invalidated one's Wudhu - like the passing of wind or urination.
3. If you have turned your whole body away from the Qiblah, whether on purpose, by forgetfulness or by necessity.
4. Purposefully talking, even it may be necessary, except if it is the recitation of the Quran, or the mentioning to the name of Allah Almighty and the Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), or a supplication, or the return of a greeting.
5. Purposefully crying or laughing, with sound, if it is for a worldly matter.

Shortened Prayers:

If you have travelled to another town, which is not your home town in which you live, by a total distance of 46 kilometers, including the outgoing and return journeys, you must shorten your noon, afternoon and night prayers i.e. you should pray

them all with two Rak'ahs rather than four, just like the morning prayer. The details are mentioned in the books of Islamic laws.

Chapter 10

Doubts that can be Remedied and do not Invalidate the Prayers:

If you have doubts in the number of Rak'ahs you have performed in the noon, afternoon and night prayers, there are a number of circumstances as follows:

Type of Doubt

1. Doubt whether you have performed two or three Rak'ahs, after you have completed the obligatory recitation of the second prostration.
2. Doubt whether you are in your third or fourth Rak'ah, in whatever position you may be in.
3. Doubt whether you have performed two or four Rak'ahs, after you have completed the obligatory recitation of the second prostration.
4. Doubt whether you have performed two, three or four Rak'ahs, after you have completed the obligatory recitation of the second prostration.
5. Doubt whether you have performed four or five Rak'ahs, after you have completed the obligatory recitation of the second prostration

The Ruling

1. You assume that it is your third Rak'ah, and proceed to your fourth Rak'ah. After you have recited the salutations and completed the prayer, you immediately perform one Rak'ah prayer while standing; by reciting the Takbeer, then reciting Suratul-Fatihah only quietly, followed by

the bowing and the two prostrations, and the testimonies and the salutations.

2. You assume that it is your fourth Rak'ah. After you have recited the salutations, you perform one Rak'ah prayer while standing, as explained above, or two Rak'ahs prayer while sitting. You recite Suratul-Fatiha only quietly and complete the prayer with testimonies and salutations
3. You assume that you have prayed four Rak'ahs; after you have completed the prayer, you perform two Rak'ahs Prayer while standing.
4. You assume that you have prayed four Rak'ahs; after you have completed the prayer, you perform two Rak'ahs prayer while standing and then two Rak'ahs prayer while sitting.
5. You assume you have prayed four Rak'ahs. After you have recited the salutations, perform the prostrations of forgetfulness.

Notes:

How to Perform the Prostrations of Forgetfulness (Sujdoodul-Sahw)

With the intention, you go to the prostration position directly after prayers without Takbeer, and you recite: "Bismillahi wa Billah. Assalamu Alaika Ayyuhan-Nabiyyu wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh." Then raise your head from prostration and sit. Then go to prostration again and repeat the same phrase. Then sit up again and recite the testimonies and salutations.

Notes:

1. Apart from the circumstances outlined above, other doubts in regards to the number of Rak'ahs perform will cause the prayer to be voided.
2. It is not obligatory to remedy the doubts as explained above. It is permissible to break the prayer and to repeat it again.

3. Doubts that occur in sunset prayer and prayers of two Rak'ahs, such as morning prayer, in regards to the number of Rak'ahs performed, will cause the prayer to become void.

4. By doubt we mean that each of the possibilities has equal probability and you cannot decide from them. But if you don't have such a doubt, and you believe that one option has a greater probability, you should act on this belief. For example, if you have forgotten whether you are in the first or second Rak'ah, but believe that it is more probable that you are in the first Rak'ah, then you should assume that you are in the first Rak'ah.

Some Doubts Which Should Be Ignored:

1. Doubts about whether an obligatory part of prayer has been performed or not, and you have moved on to another part whereby you can't perform the doubted part of prayer. For example, while in prostration you doubt whether you performed the bowing or not.

2. Doubts about the correctness of the prayer after you have completed it.

3. Doubts about whether you have performed a prayer or not, after the time of that prayer has passed.

4. Doubts of those who doubt too much.

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*"Wisdom is the lost property of the Believer,
let him claim it wherever he finds it"*

Imam Ali (as)