



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE

SALAH

OF MEN & WOMEN



With Evidence

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*Published by Fiqh Council Birmingham
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

HOW TO OFFER SALAH IN 11 STEPS

This is just a brief overview of the Muslim prayer for absolute beginners; there are many other details and etiquettes related to Salah.. It is thus advisable that a person, as he/she progresses, also undertakes the study of a more detailed Fiqh book like Nur al-Idah or Al-Mukhtasar of Imam al-Qadoori. This should be done with a qualified teacher.



STEP 1

[Note: The Muslim prayer is made up of certain special postures and litanies to glorify Allah Almighty. There is a core part of the prayer that does not change no matter which of the daily prayers one is praying. However, one will see that sometimes the prayer can become longer. So in this booklet we restrict ourselves with outlining the very basic version of the prayer, which is the 2 unit prayer (or 2 Rakaahs) . Once a worshipper is familiar with the basics, it is simple to offer the longer forms of the 3 unit prayer or 4 unit prayers, as the core actions are the same.]

Stand straight with hands to one's side, make intention for the Salah and audibly (to oneself)

say **Allaahu Akbar**
(Allaah is the Greatest)



الله أكبر



[NOTE: The transliterated Arabic words shown in yellow should be memorised along with their meanings. If possible please find a qualified Imam or female scholar to check pronunciations are correct.]

Hadith:



Abdullah Ibn Masu'd رضي الله عنه saw a person standing in salah with his feet together. He judged this action against sunnah. Thereafter he advised the person that it would have been better for him to leave a small gap between the feet. (An-Nasai vol. 1 p. 142)

Athar: Women, however, must keep their legs together in the standing position (qiyam): Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه was asked concerning the (difference in) the Salah of women.

He replied: "She will keep (all her limbs) together and draw herself together (tajtamiu` wa tahtafizu)." (Musannaf of Ibn Abi Shayba, vol.1 p. 302)

Wail Ibn Hujar رضي الله عنه said, "I came to Madinah and I said to myself I must see how the Prophet ﷺ performs his salah. So when he started his salah, he said Allaahu Akbar and raised his hands and I saw his thumbs came near to the ears. (Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba 1/233, Baihaqi 2/28)

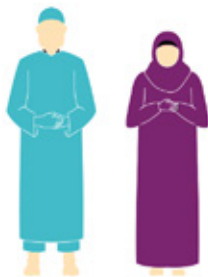
Abd Rabbihi Ibn Sulayman said, I saw Umm Darda رضي الله عنها [the wife of the Sahabi Abu Darda رضي الله عنه] at the time of starting the Salah she used to raise her hands up to the shoulders. Other narrations mention the two hands are joined together and raised in front of the chest. (Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba Volume 1 page 239).

¹An Athar is a report from a companion or a successor (Tabi'). It is impossible they would say something regarding an aspect of the religion they were not absolutely sure emanated from the Messenger ﷺ himself. Thus scholars consider such reports to have the binding strength of a hadith.

²Imam Abu Bakr Ibn Abi Shayba was a very early Muhaddith and a teacher of none other than Imam al-Bukhari himself.

STEP 2

Next the male worshipper will bring the hands down, the right upon the left, below the navel and for the female, on her chest.



Hadith:



The main evidence is the narration found in the work of the teacher of Imam al-Bukhari, Al-Imam al-Hafiz Abu Bakr Ibn Abi Shayba (Died 235 circa). In all the latest editions (20041 and 20062) of his *Musannaf*, the hadith of Wail ibn Hujr ra states: **"I saw the Prophet ﷺ placed the right hand upon the left in Salah below the navel"** (*Hadith no. 3959, vol. 3 p. 320*). Some manuscripts dropped this part. However, these most recent editions have shown that the **"below the navel"** words are firmly established, as they are found in multiple early manuscripts. The chain is *Sahih*, as confirmed by Imam Qasim Ibn Qutlubugha and Imam 'Abid al-Sindi (*Reference: Tawali' al-Anwar 'ala al-Durr al-Mukhtar, vol. 1 p. 620*).³

Another evidence is the saying of Ali رضي الله عنه, **"Verily, it is from the sunnah to place the one hand over the other hand under the navel"** (*Sunan Abu Daud, Hadith no.756 p. 118. The chain is Hasan through multiple supporting narrations*). It was because this evidence was deemed so strong and clear that two major schools of Islamic law, the Hanbali and Hanafi schools, both consider this to be the most correct place for placing the hands. Imam Ibn Hubaira al-Hanbali writes: "The most famous transmitted opinion from Imam Ahmad is the same as the position of Imam Abu Hanifa, and that was preferred by al-khiraqi (in his *Mukhtasar*)", (*Ref. Ijma al-Aimma al-Arbaah wa ikhtilafuhum, vol. 1, p. 144*).

A supportive evidence is that Salah represents a servant standing in front of his master. It is a place to show immense humility. In the dictionary of body language there are postures that exude humility and Salah has incorporated them all. For instance, it is universally understood that to bow or to prostrate before someone is a posture of humility. Similarly, to turn your back on someone is a posture of disrespect and arrogance. Allah Ta'ala has employed the first two postures in the Salah taught to us, in its *Rukoo'* and *Sujood*. When we turn to the question where should the hands be placed?, ask yourself is it more humble to stand with your hands on your chest or below the navel? Everyone who sees a person standing in front of his master with his hands under the navel will say that it is patently more humble and displaying respect than if he was standing there with his hands high upon his chest.

¹ The Maktaba al-Rushd edition published in Saudi Arabia in 2004 by the scholars Hamd Ibn Abdullah and Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim.

² The Dar al-Qibla edition published in Saudi Arabia in 2006 by the scholar Muhammad Awwamah.

³ But what of the narration that says that the Prophet ﷺ placed the hands "on his chest", narrated by Ibn Khuzayma? It is weak as it has Muammi Ibn Ismail in its chain and Imam al-Bukhari declared him Munkar al-Hadith – A Contradictor of firmly established narrations and Ibn Hajar said of him Sayyial-Hifdh – defective in his memory. The most critics could say of the Wail Ibn Hujr narration is that it is Mursal. That is 'Alqama never heard from his father, thus rendering the hadith weak according to some. But this is incorrect because Imam Muslim has explicitly recorded that he narrated from his father (see *Sahih Muslim Bab Sihhat al-Iqar bil-qafi, Hadith no. 4387 p.744*).

STEP 3

In this position they will recite the following:

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ، وَتَبَارَكَ اسْمُكَ، وَتَعَالَى جَدُّكَ،
وَلَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُكَ."

1. "Subhanaka allahumma wa bihamdika watabarakasmuka wa ta'la jadduka wa la ilaha gairuk"
[You O Allah do I sanctify and praise, and blessed is Your name, lofty is Your majesty and there is no object of worship except You]

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

2. "Auzu billahi minash shaitaanir rajeem"
[I seek protection with Allah from the accursed Satan]

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

3. "Bismillahir rahmanir raheem"
[In the name of Allah most Benevolent and the most Merciful]

Hadith:



Anas رضي الله عنه said, "I read salah behind Prophet ﷺ Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه, Umar رضي الله عنه and Uthman رضي الله عنه ; none of them used to read "Bismillah..." audibly in the salah."
(Ahmad 3/114, Nasaaee 1/144)

4. The first chapter of Al-Fatiha from heart completely. The worshipper is only required to recite if he is the Imam or is praying alone. If he is behind an Imam he will become silent after reciting no. 1 and imagine that he is standing before Allah Almighty .

Al-hamdu lillaahi rabbil 'alameen

Ar-rahmaanir-raheem

Maaliki yaumid deen

Iyyaaka na'abudu wa iy yaaka nasta'een

Ihdinas siraatal mustaqeem

Siraatal ladheena an 'amta' alaihim

Ghairil maghdubi alaihim waladaaleen

Aameen

All Praise is for Allah, Lord of the Worlds,
the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate,
Master of the Day of Judgement.

You alone do we worship and to You alone do we turn for help.
Guide us to the straight path, the path of those You have blessed,
and not those upon whom is your wrath and those astray. ⁴

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ
إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ
إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ
صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ
غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ .

STEP 3

5. After reciting Al-Fatiha the worshipper who is praying behind the Imam will recite AMEEN silently.

Hadith:



Reported by Wail Ibn Hujar رضي الله عنه that he read salah with the Prophet ﷺ and when he ﷺ reached ghairil maghdubi alaihim waladaaleen, he read AMEEN with a silent voice.

(Narrated in Jami al-Tirmidhi, p 63, Musnad Ahmad 4/316, Abu Dawud Tiyalisi p 138, Sunan al-Daraqutni 1/334, Mustadrak Imam al-Hakim 2/232, and it is a Sahih hadith.)

The worshipper will now recite a further chapter from the Holy Qur'an or at the minimum three short verses or one long verse from another chapter. For example the 113th Chapter (after reciting, Bismillah-hir-Rahman-nir-Raheem):

قُلْ اَعُوْذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ وَمِنْ شَرِّ
غَاسِقٍ اِذَا وَقَبَ وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ
وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ اِذَا حَسَدَ

**Qul a`uzu bi rabbil-falaq min sharri maa khalaq wa min sharri ghaasiqin idhaa waqab
wa min sharrin naffathaati fil uqad wa min sharri haasidin idha hasad.**

Say, "I seek refuge with the Lord of the daybreak from the evil of everything He has created, and from the evil of the dark night when it penetrates, and from the evil of the women who blow on the knots, and from the evil of an envier when he envies."

6. Again if the worshipper is praying behind the Imam he will not recite this also.



STEP 4

The worshipper will now leave the standing position and bow (Rukoo'). In going down and coming up there is no raising of the hands (Raf' al-Yadayn). In this position a person recites:

سبحان ربي العظيم

Subhaan rabbiyal-azeem x 3

(Pure and sanctified is my Lord the Great)

1 The Rukoo' of women



1 The Rukoo' of men



Hadith:



Narrated by Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه that when Prophet ﷺ used to stand for salah he should say Allahu Akbar and when he used to decline for rukoo' he used to say Allahu Akbar. (Bukhari 1/109, Muslim 1/169)

Athar of a Tabi', `Ataa said: "A women will keep together, when she is in Rukoo' she will make her arms close to her inner part keeping her limbs together as much as she can. When she performs the prostration, she will keep her arms next to her body, making the stomach and chest touch her thighs...." (Musannaf of Imam Abd al-Razzaq, hadith number 5069, vol.3 p137).

Ibn Masud رضي الله عنه said: "I prayed behind Messenger of Allah ﷺ, Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه and Umar رضي الله عنه and they did not raise their hands except at the beginning of Salah." (Sunan al-Bayhaqi, hadith no. 2534, vol. 2 p. 113, chain is Sahih)

Reported by Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه that when Prophet ﷺ used to make rukoo' he should make level his back in such way that if the water was poured on his back it would remain. (Majmauz Zawaid, on the authority of Tabrani 2/123. Sanad of this hadith is authentic)

Ibn Masud رضي الله عنه said: "Shall I not pray for you the Salah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He then prayed and did not raise his hand except the first time." ⁵ (Jami al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 257, p. 82, chain is Sahih)

Athar: Al-Aswad stated: "I saw Umar رضي الله عنه raise his hands for the first Allahu Akbar and then not do so again." (Sharh Ma'ani al-Athar, hadith no. 1364, vol. 1, p. 227, chain is Sahih)

Reported by Bara ibn Azib رضي الله عنه, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ opened Salah, he ﷺ would raise his hands to near to his ears and then not do so again. (Sunan Abu Daud, hadith no. 749, p118, hadith is Hasan)

STEP 5

He will rise up to the standing position with his hands now to his sides reciting:

سَمِعَ اللَّهُ لِمَنْ حَمِدَهُ

Sami`allaahuliman hamida

(Allah hears those who praise Him) and then

رَبَّنَا وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ

Rabbanaa wa lakal hamd

(Our Lord for you alone is praise) when he is upright.

If however he is praying behind an Imam, the Imam only will recite the first part and he second when he is upright.



Hadith:



Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that Rasulullah ﷺ said, "When the Imam says *samiallahuliman hamida* you say, *rabbana wa lakal-hamd*. If your saying this coincides with angels saying of this, all of your previous sins will be forgiven".

(Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 1 p. 109, Sahih Muslim vol.1 p.176)



STEP 6

He will then go on to his knees in prostration saying Allahu Akbar as he does so. Then in prostration he will at the minimum 3 X recite:

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْأَعْلَى

Subhaan rabbiyal-a`alaa

(Pure and sanctified is my Lord the Most High.) Women prostrate differently as shown in the image. The female will keep as close to the ground and as compact as she can;



Hadith:



Narrated by A'mr Ibn al-Harith that when the Prophet ﷺ used to prostrate he would keep his sides away from the armpits. So much so that whiteness from his armpits used to be seen. (Muslim 1/194)

Athar: Ibrahim Nakha'i also stated: "...when she goes in to prostration she will not make her limbs erect and spaced out (tatajaafaa) as the male does so that her buttocks are not raised." (Musannaf Abd al-Razzaq, 3/138)

Yazid Ibn Abi Habib states that Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed by two women who were performing their salah. He said to them, "When you prostrate, make part of your body touch the ground because a woman is unlike a man in these aspects." (Marasile Abu Dawud 118; Sunanul Kubra by Baihaqi 2/223)*

Athar: Ibrahim Nakha'i stated: "When a woman prostrates she must draw her thighs together and place her stomach on them." (Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba, 1/270)

COMMENT

*This hadith of Yazid Ibn Abi Habib is a Mursal hadith narration and declared sound by Shaykh Shoayb al-Arnaoot. It is just another proof that the claim made by the Non-Madhabists today that there is no material difference between the Salah of the genders is false. Indeed the classical works of thousands of leading scholars from all four schools testify that Muslim women throughout the ages and throughout the Muslim world have always been offering a distinctly different kind of Salah which though is the same in the essential points has some key differences.

STEP 7

The worshipper will then sit up saying

الله أكبر

Allaahu akbar,

as shown in the image. He will remain a moment in this posture and then make a second prostration exactly as the first one.



The first two images show the men's sitting position, the third image shows how women shall sit. In this brief sitting of 2-4 secs. As per the general evidences already mentioned, (see, Step 1) unlike the man, the female will keep her thighs and legs close together

For the brief moment between the two prostrations, the worshipper can optionally recite the following prophetic supplication:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي، وَارْحَمْنِي، وَاجْبُرْنِي، وَاهْدِنِي، وَارْزُقْنِي،

Allaahummaghfirlee war-hamnee wajburnee wahdinee warzuqnee
(Tirmidhi/Abu Daud)

"O Allah forgive me my sins, have mercy upon me, replenish me, guide me and bestow sustenance upon me."

(Jami al-Tirmidhi, Hadith no. 284 p. 89).

STEP 8

The worshipper will then, having performed the second prostration, arise once again saying

الله أكبر

Allaahu akbar,

to commence his second Rakaa` (unit of the Salah).



COMMENT

The Prayers are made up of either 2, 4 or 3 units. To arrive at Step 5 is one complete unit (that is to complete the rukoo`/bowing). the worshipper will have to perform another one (if it is a 2 unit salah), two (if it is a three unit Salah) or three units (if it is four unit Salah) to complete his Salah. For example if he was praying the Fajr (Morning) Prayer, which is two units, he will have one unit left; and if he was praying Zuhr (Midday) Prayer, which is four Units, he will have three units left etc.

STEP 9

The worshipper will in the 2nd unit (rakaa`) again recite the Fatiha and another chapter. Every time he stands for a unit this (Fatiha and another chapter or three verses) will be required.

The exception is if he is reciting the four obligatory units (rakaa`s) prayer of Zuhr (Midday), Asar (Late-Afternoon), Isha (Evening prayer), or the 3 unit prayer of Maghrib in which case in the third and fourth units (rakaa`s) one only recites the Bismillah... and al-Fatiha, without joining another chapter.



STEP 10

After completing the second standing and recital, he will bow (rukoo`) again as he did the first time and also perform the two prostrations (sajda) exactly as he did the first time.

This time (having completed two units) it is now necessary to sit and recite the Tashahhud which lasts for apprx. 15 secs. The sitting posture is the same as in step 7, with the same difference in the manner of sitting for males and females.



Hadith:

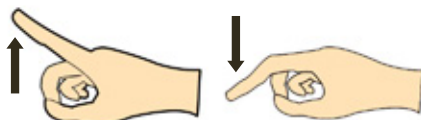


Narrated by Abdullah Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to sit in the salah, (to recite tashahhud) he used to place his right hand on his right thigh and his left hand on his left thigh. He would close his fingers together [of the right hand] and indicate with the finger that is near to the thumb. (Sahih Muslim 1/216, Muwatta Malik 71)

Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه states: "It is from the Sunna of Salah to lay flat the left foot whilst the right foot is made to stand up." (Sunan al-Nasai, 1/161, Hadith no. 1158)

Abdullah Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه was asked how the women performed their salah during the era of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ? He replied that initially they used to sit cross-legged. Then they were ordered to draw themselves close together and lean onto one side by resting on their left buttocks and completely contracting themselves. (Jamiul Masanid 1/400 Makkah Mukarramah edition)

STEP 10



(*Note: The index finger is raised in the manner shown upon saying "Laa ilaaha...." and set it down on the tips of the thumb and index fingers upon saying "ill-Allaah").

Hadith:



Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه said the Prophet ﷺ taught me the tashahhud with such great importance that He was holding my hand between His two blessed hands, like He was teaching me a verse from the Quran. Thereafter He said whoever sits in the salah for tasahhud he should say:

التَّحِيَّاتُ لِلَّهِ وَالصَّلَوَاتُ وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ
وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى عِبَادِ اللَّهِ الصَّالِحِينَ
أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

Attahiyatu lillahi was-salawatu wat-tayyeebatu, assalamu alaika ayuhan-nabiyyu wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh, assalamu alaina wa ala ibadillahis saltheen, ash-hadu al-laa ilaha ill-allaahu wa ash- hadu anna muhammadan abduhu wa rasuluh. (Muslim 1/174, Bukhari 1/926, Tirmizi p68)

TRANSLATION:

All greetings, blessings and good acts belong to you, my Lord. Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the mercy and blessings of Allah. And may peace be upon us, and upon the righteous servants of Allah. I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah. And I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger.

STEP 11

As in this example this description of the prayer is of a two unit prayer, this tashahhud will obviously be of the final sitting. Thus one will remain sitting and after reciting the above tashahhud the worshipper will have only three things to do.

1. To send Salat upon the Prophet ﷺ one recites:.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ
إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ، اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا
بَارَكْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ

"Allahumma salli ala muhammadin wa ala ale muhammad kama sallaita ala ibrahima wa ala ale ibrahim innaka hamidum majeed. allahumma barik ala muhammadin wa ala ale muhammadin kama barakta ala ibrahima wa ale ibrahim innaka hamidum majeed."

"O Allah, bless our Muhammad and the people of Muhammad;

As you have blessed Ibrahim and the people of Ibrahim.

Surely you are the Praiseworthy, the Glorious.

O Allah, be gracious unto Muhammad and the people of Muhammad;

As you were gracious unto Ibrahim and the people of Ibrahim.

Surely you are the Praiseworthy, the Glorious "

(This Hadith is reported in Bukhari 1/477, Muslim 1/175)

Hadith:



Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه reported that he said to the Prophet ﷺ "Teach me O messenger of Allah, the supplication that I may ask in my prayer. Upon which the Prophet ﷺ said: Read,

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي ظُلْمًا كَثِيرًا
وَلَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ فَاعْفُرْ لِي مَغْفِرَةً مِّنْ
عِنْدِكَ وَارْحَمْنِي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

Allahumma inni zalamtu nafsī zulman kathira, walaa yaghfiruz zunuba illa anta. fagh firtee magfiratam min indika war hamni. innaka antal gafurur raheem

(Bukhari 1/115, Muslim 2/347).

"O Allah I have oppressed myself much and none can forgive sins but You. So forgive me a forgiveness from Yourself and bestow Your mercy upon me for indeed You are the most forgiving, most merciful."

STEP 11

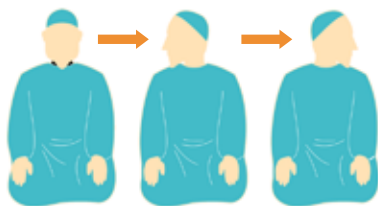
3. To conclude the prayer by saying:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

As-salaam alaykum wa rahmatullaah

(Peace upon you and Allah's mercy)

first as he turns his head from facing the front to his right shoulder, and then again when turning his head towards the left shoulder, intending this prayer of peace for those on either side of you.



At the end of prayer, before engaging in dua', the worshipper will immediately say:

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ **Allahu Akbar** and 3 times اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ **Astagfirullah** (I seek your forgiveness O Allah).

Then say,

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَنْتَ السَّلَامُ، وَمِنْكَ السَّلَامُ، تَبَارَكْتَ يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْاِكْرَامِ

Allahumma antas salaamu wa minkas-salamu tabaarakta ya dhal jalali wal-ikram

(O Allah You are Peace and from You is Peace. You are the Blessed O the Possessor of Majesty and Honour).

Thereafter, a person can recite the Tasbih Fatimi, which is:

33 X سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ **Subhanallah** (Goly Is To Allah)

33 X الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ **Al-Hamdulillaah** (All praise is to Allah)

33 X اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ **Allahu Akbar** (Allah is the Greatest).

There are other beautiful dhikrs and duas that can be said at this time which can be found in any Dua book.

COMMON QUESTIONS

In Sahih al-Bukhari it is narrated that the Messenger ﷺ said “Pray as you have seen me pray”. Thus does that not tell us there is no difference between the Prophet's ﷺ prayer and a female's?

Answer: No major authority in Hadith or Fiqh has understood this hadith like this. None of the great Hadith masters like Imams Ibn Hajr al-Asqalani, Badr al-Din al-Ayni, al-Nawawi or Ali al-Qari ever explained this hadith establishes that the Salah of men and women is entirely identical. Rather this is a modernist/literalist interpretation. The problems with this understanding are:

A) The hadith's words actually do not say that the Salah of Men and Women is identical in all respects? So to take a generally-worded hadith to establish specifics is taking liberties.

B) The reason why this is blatantly wrong is that it would lead a person to deny other sound evidences/hadith that categorically prove that the women's Salah is different. For instance, in Sahih al-Bukhari, hadith no. 1203, the Prophet ﷺ said: “[To alert to the mistake of the Imam] men will say Subhanallah and women will clap.” If the Sharia treated the Salah of men and women as being the same then there would only be ONE mode for correcting the Imam. So it is untenable to take the hadith that orders Pray as you have seen me pray, as proving that the Salah of men and women is fully identical. The other evidences that establish the difference have been mentioned in this booklet.



But in Sahih al-Bukhari it mentions that Umm Darda would sit in Salah “The sitting of a man” (Sahih al-Bukhari, p. 134, Chapter 145). Does this not show that the female Salah is the same as the male Salah?

Answer: Answer: This actually only proves that the Salah of women is different. For if it was the same then Imam al-Bukhari would never have said these words, as all the Muslim women of that time would have been praying like that (i.e. like men). He would have then said, **all the Muslim women sit in Salah like men**. His making special mention of what Umm Darda's mode of prayer can only be to state that her particular prayer differed from what the majority of Muslim women were doing.

Like if a teacher is speaking to a group of other teachers and says “and Zayd came into school wearing Jeans”. Is he telling them that all students wear jeans? No, rather it is understood from this expression that actually the accepted, dominant practice is NOT this and Zayd has departed from this norm by wearing jeans. So why then did Umm Darda pray differently? It could have been due to an illness that she found it difficult to lean on her left side as is the norm for women.

COMMON QUESTIONS

What is necessary to cover in Salah for a Muslim woman?

Answer: It will be necessary to cover everything except the hands, face and feet. The best garment in achieving modesty for a Muslim woman is the Jilbab, as it is sinful to wear skin-tight clothes that reveal the outline of the body in Salah or outside of Salah.

Can a woman do l'itikaf (in Ramadan) in her home, in her room?

Answer: Yes a woman may do litikaf in the last ten days in her room at home.

Is it permitted for a Muslim woman to cut her hair?

Answer: It is Islamically forbidden and sinful for a Muslim woman to cut her hair, except to trim split ends or an inch of hair during Hajj or Umra. Ali ؑ said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade women from cutting their hair (Sunan al-Nasai, p. 693, hadith no. 5052). Where it is narrated that the wives shortened their hair, the word used is yakhudhna. This does not suggest that they cut them but that, instead of making them into long plaits, they made them into buns at the base of the neck (*Fath al-Mulhim* vol. 1 p. 156).

Question: Should A Worshipper Keep Moving His Finger in Tashahhud?

Answer: The vast majority (jamhoor) of the Sunni Imams, including all Hanafis, Hanbalis and Shafi scholars, state the worshipper must not continuously move the finger, in any way. It is also the main opinion in the Maliki school. Imam al-Nawawi states **"...the sound opinion that the majority of scholars state definitively is that it will not be moved continuously"** (*Al-Majmoo'*, vol. 3 p. 301). The basic reason why this mode of raising the finger is incorrect is because it is simply not established by evidence. Clearly the ocean of great Imams of the four schools understood this. But for the benefit of readers we will outline the facts behind them rejecting this way of lifting the index finger. There are two main evidences that suggest it should be continuously moved. They and their replies follow:

1. Zaidah narrates from Asim Ibn Kulayb from his father from Wail Ibn Hujr ؑ that The Prophet ﷺ raised his index finger and I saw him moving it, doing Dua with it. (Reference: Sahih Ibn Khuzaima, Hadith no. 714, vol. 1, p. 376).

The Reason For Rejecting This Hadith

Ibn Khuzaima, the Muhaddith who narrates this hadith, himself suggests that it is not a reliable version. He writes:

"Apart from this single report the words *moving it* are not found in any of the other reports. Zaidah is the sole person to bring these words." (*Sahih Ibn Khuzaima, Hadith no. 714, vol. 1, p. 376*). The more authentically established reports include Ibn Zubayr's ra hadith: "The Prophet ﷺ would indicate using the index finger and would not continuously move it (*wa laa yuharikuhaa*)" (Reference: Sunan Abu Daud, Hadith no. 989, p. 150).

COMMON QUESTIONS

Question: Should A Worshipper Keep Moving His Finger in Tashahhud? - Continued...

2. Ibn Umar narrates ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Moving the index finger in Salah frightens Satan." (Reference: *Al-Sunan al-Kubra*, Hadith no. 2788, vol. 2, p. 189).

The Reason For Rejecting This Hadith

The main reason for this report being unreliable is that in its chain is Al-Waqidi who is weak. Senior Hadith experts Imam al-Bayhaqi, in *al-Sunan al-Kubra* (Under Hadith no. 16060, vol. 8 p. 101) and Imam Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani in *Mirqat al-Mafatih* (vol. 2 p. 583), and Imam al-Nawawi in *Al-Majmoo'* (*Al-Majmoo'*, vol. 3 p. 301) have confirmed Al-Waqidi and this narration to be weak. Even if it this narration is assumed to be sound, a single raising of the finger would suffice in instilling into Satan the fear it mentions. In conclusion, the many stronger narrations that support a single raising at the time of the negation of the Kalima (Laa Ilaaha) and setting down at the time of affirmation (illallaah), cannot be neglected due to odd narrations that are unreliable in both their authenticity and meaning.

Question: Should a male worshipper wear a hat in Salah?

Answer: Covering the head is from the best dress for Salah. It is supported by the Sunna. It is the practice of the whole Umma until recently. All four schools consider it praiseworthy. For it is firmly established by the hadith of Sahih al-Bukhari that Muslim men would cover their heads in their Salah. Hasan al-Basri states: "The Sahaba (lit. people) used to perform Sajdah (prostration) upon their turbans and hats..." (Reference: *Sahih al-Bukhari*, *Bab al-sujood 'ala al-thawb fi shiddat al-harr*, before Hadith no. 385, p. 68).

FOUR PRAYERS TO LEARN FOR LIFE & TEACH TO YOUR CHILDREN

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

**Rabbanaa aatina fid-dunya hasanatan wa fil-aakhirati hasanatan
waqinaa azaban naar**

Translation: "Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter; and protect us from the punishment of the Fire." [Al-Baqarah, 201].



اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ جَهْدِ الْبَلَاءِ، وَدَرَكِ الشَّقَاءِ، وَسُوءِ الْقَضَاءِ، وَشَمَاتَةِ الْأَعْدَاءِ

**Allahumma inni auzu bika min jahdil-balaa wa darkish-shaqaa sooil-qadhaa
wa shamaatil-aadaa**

Translation: "O Allah I seek refuge in You from the severity of the calamity, and the lowest wretchedness, and a bad destiny, and the gloating of enemies."



اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْهُدَى وَالتَّقَى وَالْعِفَافَ وَالْغِنَى

Allahumma inni as-alukal-huda wat-tuqa wal-afafa wal-ghina

Translation: "O Allah, I seek from You guidance, piety, chastity and wealth."



THE MASTER OF GAINING FORGIVENESS FROM ALLAH ALMIGHTY

[The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: Whoever makes this dua in the daytime, believing firmly in it, and then dies before nightfall, he/she will be from the people of Paradise (janna). And whoever says it in the night, firmly believing in it, and then dies before the next morning, he/she will be from the people of Paradise.] (Sahih al-Bukhari, hadith no. 6306, p. 1097)

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ رَبِّي، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ خَلَقْتَنِي وَأَنَا عَبْدُكَ، وَأَنَا عَلَى عَهْدِكَ وَوَعْدِكَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا صَنَعْتُ،
أَبُوءُ لَكَ بِنِعْمَتِكَ عَلَيَّ، وَ أَبُوءُ بِذَنْبِي، فَاعْفُ عَنِّي، فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ

**Allahumma anta rabbiy laa ilaaha illa anta khalaqtanee wa anaa abduka wa
ana ala ahdika wa wa'dika mas-tata'tu audhu bika min sharri maa sana'tu
aboou laka bi-ni'matik alayya wa aboou laka bi-dhanbee faghfir lee fa
innahu laa yaghfirudhunooba illa anta.**

Translation: "O Allah! You are my Lord, there is no god except You. You created me and I am your slave. I try to be upon my Covenant and promise to You as much as possible; and I seek refuge with You from the evil of what I have ever done. I acknowledge to You Your blessings upon me and I acknowledge my sins. So forgive me for there is none who can wipe away the sins except you."

SOME COMMON MISTAKES IN SALAH

Salah is a major act of worship and thus we should all make a real effort to perfect our Salah, especially by learning the rules and etiquettes that govern Salah. There are some glaring mistakes often seen in worshippers which require immediate correction.

By making a little effort in improving our Salahs, they will not only become more enjoyable, the spiritual benefit we gain from them will also be enhanced. Some of these mistakes are as follows:

1. For men to pray their five obligatory prayers at home. Men should pray these prayers in the Masjid and women are to pray in the privacy of their homes. The Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him) said: **"There is no prayer for one who is a neighbour to a masjid except in the Masjid."** (*Musnad Ahmad, Sunan al-Daraqutni*). The most rewarded place for women to pray is in their homes.
2. To place ones forearms flat on the floor whilst in Sujood, except for women as that is preferable for them.
3. To wear tight trousers. This is because this reveals the `Awra which needs to be covered. The revealing of the `Awra is not just that the trousers are tight-fitting but also because often in rukoo' the backside of the males gets exposed.
4. When entering the Salah to merely imagine the opening takbir (Allahu Akbar). It is necessary to actually audibly (to oneself) pronounce the takbir, otherwise the Salah will be void.
5. It is a major mistake to not stay still for a little time in rukoo', sujood and in their in-between straightening ups and sitting ups. Some people, in the manner a bird pecks, zip in and out of rukoo' and sujood. This ruins this act of worship and the person will be deprived of the reward and spiritual benefit. The Prophet ﷺ once said: **"The worst kind of thief is the one who steals from his Salah."** (*Musnad Ahmad*)
6. It also sinful to come to the Masjid smelling of bad odours. The angels and the other worshippers who are the guests of Allah Almighty are hurt by bad smells.
7. It is disliked for men to pray with their head uncovered. Mothers should teach their children the habit of wearing the correct clothing for prayer. The Prophet ﷺ said: **"You are all shepherds and you will be questioned by Allah Almighty regarding those in your charge...."** (*Sahih al-Bukhari*)
8. To fidget, look around, crack the fingers, play with clothing are all disliked in Salah and in fact ruins a person's reward.
9. Women who wear nail-varnish must be careful that it is totally removed before performing ablutions (wudhu). If it is not removed, it will prevent the water touching the nails thus preventing a proper wash of every part of the hands which is necessary condition for ablution.
10. It is also disliked for there to be a gaps in the rows of Salah. The best way to avoid gaps is to be close enough to the person next to you so that one's arm is touching his. It is not necessary for feet to touch the feet of the worshipper to one's side.



WITR & DUA QUNOOT

It should be noted that another prayer that is obligatory (wajib) to prayer is the Witr prayer, after Isha. It is three rakaa's and is offered like Maghrib prayer. The difference is that in the 3rd Rakaa a sura is added after the Sura al-Fatiha. After this sura, instead of going into rukoo', a person will raise his/her hands with a takbir and bring them down again in the folded position and then recite the Dua of Qunoot below. After the dua a person will go to rukoo and continue the prayer until the end in the normal manner:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْتَغْفِرُكَ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُكَ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِكَ
 وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْكَ وَنُثْنِي عَلَيْكَ الْحَمْدَ وَنَشْكُرُكَ
 وَلَا نَكْفُرُكَ وَنَخْلَعُ وَنَتْرُكُ مَنْ يَفْجُرُكَ
 اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَعْبُدُكَ وَنُصَلِّيُكَ وَنُسَبِّحُكَ وَإِلَيْكَ
 نَسْعَى وَنُخْفِدُ وَنَرْجُو رَحْمَتَكَ وَنَخْشَى عَذَابَكَ
 إِنَّ عَذَابَكَ بِالْكَافِرِ لَمُلْحِقٌ

Allahumma innaa nastaeenuka wa nastaghfiruka wa numinu bika wa natawakkalu alayka wa nuthnee alaykal-khayr wa nashkuruka wa laa nakfuruka wa nakhla-u' wa natruku man yafjuruk. Allaahumma iyyaka na'budu wa laka nusallee wa nasjudu wa ilayka nas-'a wa nahfidu wa narju rahmataka wa nakhshaa 'adhaabaka inna 'adhaabaka bil-kuffar mulhiq.

Translation: O Allah! We seek your help and ask your forgiveness. And we believe in You and we rely upon You. We praise You, and we thank You and will not be ungrateful to You. We will abandon those who disobey You. O Allah You alone do we worship, to you alone do we pray and prostrate. To You do we strive and hasten, and our hope is in Your mercy and we fear your punishment; for verily your punishment is to afflict the deniers.



DAILY PRAYERS AND TIMINGS

SALAH	PRE- SUNNAH	FARD	POST - SUNNAH	NAFL	WITAR	
FAJR	² EMPHASISED	2				
ZOHAR	⁴ EMPHASISED	4	² EMPHASISED	²		
ASAR	4	4				
MAGRIB		3	² EMPHASISED	^{2 + 2}		
ISHA	4	4	² EMPHASISED	²	³ COMPULSORY	TAHAJJUD ^{2 + 2 + 2 + 2}
JUMA	⁴ EMPHASISED	2	^{4 + 2}	²		



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE

SALAH

OF MEN & WOMEN

WITH EVIDENCE

