

PRAYER TIMES

أوقات الصلاة

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 3

LESSON 1: THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYING ON TIME

Prayer is the fundamental practical pillar of our religion. In this lesson we will discuss the obligation of prayers upon the believers and the times at which prayers have been made obligatory. We cannot afford to be careless about our prayers, as our entire religion is based upon this act of worship. Every single one of our days should be based around the prayer and the times allocated for prayer. Think of prayer as a meeting with Allah, the Almighty Lord, and so when we plan our day, we have to ensure that we meet this appointment with Allah at its prescribed time. Just as we know exactly when our soccer match is this weekend, or when our favorite television show is on, we should know exactly when the time for prayer will arrive, so that we can be ready for it.

To make sure we are fulfilling our obligation we must ensure that we have a clear idea of what the times of the daily prayers are.

THE DAILY PRAYER TIMES

Think of prayer as a check-point. We go about our daily lives performing certain actions. We become very occupied and because of this, we become oblivious of Allah, the Exalted. We also become unaware of whether actions we are performing are pleasing Him or displeasing Him. Prayer comes in at certain points throughout the day to remind us and give us some perspective. We recite words from Allah's Book and we speak to Him. This gives us some time out and allows us to reflect on our actions. Once we have reflected on our day, we can repent for the evil deeds we may have done, and thank Allah for the

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Know the five prayers and the three times at which we pray them
- Recognise the importance of praying on time
- Have an understanding of the sequence of the prayers and their rak'āt numbers.
- Have an understanding of the concept of Qaḍā prayer

good deeds we may have done. If we were to only pray when we felt like it, there would no longer be any check-point to help us reflect on our actions and fix them.

The Prophet (saw): "Prayer is as to religion as a head is to a body."ⁱ

Imam 'Ali (as), in the middle of battle, paused amongst all of the fighting and looked at the sky. Many of the companions were surprised by this action and questioned him. The Imam (as) was checking whether the time of the prayer had arrived. The companions of Imam Husayn (as) did the same thing in the midst of the battle of Karbala. In fact some companions of Imam Husayn (as) were martyred in Karbala to protect those reciting their prayers at the correct time. They showed us that we must not neglect our prayers even in the most difficult circumstances.

Review Questions

Q1. According to the Qur'ān, the time for prayer is:

- a) When we feel like we are ready
- b) At specific appointed times
- c) Any time during the day

Q2. The best time to pray

- a) Is the beginning of the prayer time
- b) As late as is allowed
- c) Whenever we are not tired



LESSON 2: THE PRAYER TIMES

Now that we know it is extremely important for us to offer our prayers on time, we must know the times for each prayer.



- The Fajr Prayer is prayed from the start of true dawn, until sunrise.
- The Ḍuhr and 'Aṣr prayers: the beginning of the time for these prayers is when the sun is directly overhead in the middle of the sky and then starts to come down. This is the (real) midday. It is the time halfway between sunrise and sunset. The end of the time for these prayers is sunset.
- The Maghrib and 'Ishā' prayers: the beginning of the time for these prayers is Maghrib, which is a little after sunset, when more than half the sky is dark. The end of the time for these prayers is (real) midnight (halfway between sunset and dawn).

You can refer to the prayers calendar for all of these times. We should make sure we are aware of all of the times of the prayer to ensure that we pray each of them on time.

Class Activity: Prayer Timetables

Ramadhan -	Date	- Fajr Prayer - (Fasting Begins)	Sunrise	- Zohr - (Noon Prayers)	Sunset	- Maghreb (Fasting ends)
1	Sat 22 Aug	5:02	6:26	11:58	17:31	17:51
2	Sun 23 Aug	5:01	6:25	11:58	17:32	17:52
3	Mon 24 Aug	5:00	6:23	11:58	17:32	17:53
4	Tue 25 Aug	4:59	6:22	11:57	17:33	17:53
5	Wed 26 Aug	4:58	6:21	11:57	17:34	17:54
6	Thu 27 Aug	4:56	6:20	11:57	17:34	17:55
7	Fri 28 Aug	4:55	6:18	11:56	17:35	17:55
8	Sat 29 Aug	4:54	6:17	11:56	17:36	17:56
9	Sun 30 Aug	4:53	6:16	11:56	17:36	17:57

The above is an example of a prayer calendar. Choose three of the days in the calendar above and see if you can identify the beginning of the time for each prayer and the times at which they end.

THE SEQUENCE OF PRAYERS

We should remember that although we can pray the prayers within this time frame we have to always maintain the sequence of *ṣalāt*. That means we cannot pray ‘*Aṣr* before *Ḍuhr* or ‘*Ishā*’ before Maghrib.

QADHA PRAYER

Missing one of the daily prayers *deliberately* is forbidden and a major sin. We must do our best to ensure that we pray on time. Apart from emergencies, there are no good excuses for missing one’s prayer. If someone does miss their prayer, either because of a good excuse or without one, they need to make up this prayer at a later time.

This is called offering *Qaḍa’* prayer.

For example, if it is night-time and for some reason I missed my ‘*Aṣr*’ prayer today, I need to pray it now to make up for the missed prayer.

Review Questions

Q1. The time for Fajr prayer is:

- a) Dawn till sunrise
- b) Midday
- c) Midnight

Q2. The time for *Ḍuhr* prayer is:

- a) When the sun is directly overhead, in other words midday
- b) An hour after midday
- c) An hour before midday

¹ (Nahj Al-Fasahah, Hadith number 1584)