



Special Prayers

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 5

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Learn when Salātul Āyāt becomes obligatory
- Learn the method of praying Salātul Āyāt
- Learn about Salātul Mayyit and when it is prayed
- Learn the rules of Salātul Mayyit
- Learn about the significance and rewards of Salātul Layl
- Learn the method of performing Salātul Layl

- Solar Eclipse
- Lunar Eclipse
 - The prayer becomes obligatory even if the moon or the sun are partially eclipsed, and even if they do not cause any fear.
- An earthquakeⁱ
- Any abnormal phenomenon which would usually scare people (e.g. a very violent storm)ⁱⁱ

METHOD OF OFFERING SALĀTUL ĀYĀT

There are two methods of performing this prayer. In this lesson, we will learn the shorter one.

Salātul Āyāt consists of two Rak'at, but within each Rak'ah there are five Rak'at. It is performed in the following sequence:

- 1- Niyyah (intention)
- 2- Takbīr
- 3- Recitation of Surat Ḥamd
- 4- Recitation of one āyah from a ṣurah (e.g. first āyah of Surat Ikhlāṣ. Then performing Ruku' again
- 5- Then standing up after Ruku' and reciting the second āyah of the ṣurah. Then performing a second Ruku'
- 6- **This action should be repeated five times.**
- 7- Stand after the fifth Ruku'
- 8- Two prostrations
- 9- Perform the 2nd Rak'ah in the same manner as above.
- 10- After the 10th ruku' in total, complete the prayer in the way one completes a normal prayer with two prostrations, tashahhud and salām.

Special Prayers

SALĀTUL ĀYĀT (PRAYER OF THE SIGNS)

This is a prayer prayed when particular natural signs occur. Salātul Āyāt becomes obligatory in any of the following four conditions:



SALĀTUL MAYYIT ⁱⁱⁱ

Salat al-mayyit is wajib al-kifa'i, i.e. it is obligatory on every Muslim but as soon as it is performed correctly by one of them, it remains no more obligatory on others; but if no one offers the prayer everyone is a sinner.

If the deceased was six years old, the prayer for the deceased is obligatory. In offering this prayer, purity of the body or dress is not necessary; also ghusl, wudhu or tayammum is not obligatory. But the intention of the prayer (niyyah) and facing qibla is essential. The dead body should be placed in such a way that the head of the deceased remains on the right of those who offer the prayer. In the case of the dead body of a male, the Imam should stand near his waist; and in the case of a female, near the chest.

Prayer of deceased has 5 takbirs (including Takbiratul-Ihram).

After the first takbir (i.e., takbiratul-ihram) the Kalima al-shahadatayn is recited. After 2nd the takbir, salawat is recited. After the 3rd takbir, prayer is offered for all the believers and Muslims. After the 4th takbir, prayer is offered especially for the deceased one. Then the 5th takbir is said And the prayer comes to end.

The shortest method of offering this prayer is as follows:

Allahu Akbar;

Ashhadu an-la ilaha illallahu waḥdahu la sharika lah; Wa Ashhadu Anna Muḥammadan 'Abduhu wa Rasuluh;

Allahu Akbar;

Allahumma salli 'ala Muḥammadin wa Aali Muḥammad;

Allahu Akbar;

Allahummaghfir li'l Mu'minina wa'l Mu'minaat;

Allahu Akbar;

Allahummaghfir li haadha'l mayyit (In case the deceased is a female, say Allahummaghfir li haadhihi'l mayyit);

Allahu Akbar;

After the completion of the prayer recite "Rabbana ātina fid-dunya ḥasanatan wa fi'l ākhira ḥasanatan waqina adhaban-nār."

It is necessary to mention that even if this prayer is offered by jama'ah, everyone has to recite the whole prayer. It is not correct just to say 'Allahu Akbar' and remain silent between the takbirs. Such a prayer is invalid (batil).

SALĀTUL LAYL (THE NIGHT PRAYER)

Salātul Layl is a special recommended prayer. We can pray it any time from midnight until dawn. However, the closer to dawn time that we pray it, the more rewarding and special it is. This prayer is extremely rewarding, and our Prophet (saw) and Imams (as) never missed it. It is an opportunity to have our prayers answered, to speak privately to God, and to remember our sins and ask forgiveness for them.



The Prophet (saw) has said:

"Any man or woman that rises for the night prayers immediately becomes the Imam of nine rows of angels who stand behind him or her. Then Allah (SWT) says, now do you know why I created humans? The length of each row of angels is from the Far East to the far West..."^{iv}

Imam Sadiq [a] said: "Never miss Salātul Layl, because, in fact, the real loser is he who misses Salātul Layl"^v

Salātul Layl consists of eleven rak'at. However, even praying one or three raka't is very rewarding. In this lesson, we will learn how to perform the last three rak'at of Salātul Layl. These are the most significant and rewarding, and we should try to pray these regularly.

- The first 8 rak'at are performed in 4 set of 2. Each set of 2 is exactly like Fajr prayer except that we do not have to recite a second surah after Surat al-Ḥamd
- **The next two rak'at (al-Shaf')** are performed like a normal Fajr prayer. The only difference is after Ṣurat Ḥamd we recite Ṣurat al-Nās in the first rak'ah and Ṣurat al-Falaq in the second rak'at. We end this prayer like a normal prayer with Tashahhud and salām.
- **The third rak'ah (al-Witr)** is the most special. It is performed in the following way:
 - Recite Ṣurat Ḥamd
 - Recite Ṣurat Ikhḷās three times
 - Perform a **long qunūt**. This is the most special and rewarding part of the entire prayer. In this qunūt:
 - **Ask forgiveness for forty believers** that you know and pray for them
 - Seek forgiveness from Allah by saying **'astaghfirullāh wa atūbu ilayh' 70 times**
 - Then perform ruku', sujūd, tashahhud and salām as normal

This prayer is a very special opportunity for spirituality and attaining closeness to Allah (SWT). Its benefits are multiple and it should not be ignored or underestimated.

Memorisation Task:

استغفر الله و اتوب اليه

“I seek God’s forgiveness and I repent to Him”

ⁱ S. Sistani: Obligation Precaution, S. Khamenei: Obligation

ⁱⁱ S. Sistani: Recommended Precaution, S. Khamenei: Obligation

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.al-islam.org/elements-islamic-studies-allamah-saeed-akhtar-rizvi/lesson-53-prayer-deceased-salat-al-mayyit>

^{iv} <http://www.ihic.org.au/book.php?id=60&idt=11>

^v Bihar-ul-Anwar, vol. 83, p. 127