

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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TAHAJJUD PRAYERS

SALATUL – LAYL [NAMAZE – SHAB]

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسَىٰ أَن يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا
مَّحْمُودًا

“And (during part) of the night, abandon sleep and keep vigil to pray Salat, in addition to the regular obligatory prayer. Your Rabb (the Sustainer) may (as a reward) elevate you to the position of High Distinction, Glory and Praise.”

[THE HOLY QUR’AN: 17:79]

Selected References:



Nurul Hidayah – Risala of the Late Grand Mujtahid Ayatullah Seyyid Husayn Tabatabai Al-Burujardi



The Holy Qur'an –Arabic Text, English Translation and Commentary by Ayatullah Aqa Mirza Mahdi Puya,

IMPORTANCE

The Tahajjud Prayer (Namaz-e-Shab) ranks first and foremost in importance among all other optional (Sunnat) prayers. Tahajjud means to abandon sleep so as to pray Salat. The Qur'an refers to it in Surah 17:79 and says, "And (during part) of the night, abandon sleep and keep vigil to pray Salat, in addition to the regular obligatory prayer. Your Rabb (the Sustainer) may (as a reward) elevate you to the position of High Distinction, Glory and Praise." The Prophet (saww) said, "I will be at "Maqam-e-Mahmuda" on the Day of Resurrection when I will seek forgiveness for the sinners from the Rabb (the Sustainer) who does what He wills." We, as sinners, would also wish to receive intercession and are forgiven so as to be in the company of the Prophet (saww) on that Fearful Day. But, we need by working hard to attain the required spiritual level to qualify, while we are still living.

The verse quoted above which prescribes Salat-Layl has been placed immediately next to the verse (17:78) which prescribes the regular daily obligatory Salat. Therefore, it underscores the great importance of Salat-Layl. Although optional, Tahajjud is considered "nearest to obligatory (Wajib) prayer."

While advising Imam 'Ali (a.s.), the Prophet repeated three times, "Alayka Bis-Salatul-Layl" which means, "incumbent upon you (O! Ali) is Salatul Layl." This Hadith underscores further the importance of Salatul-Layl. Therefore, we should try never to miss it.

MERITS

By praying Salatul-Layl one's livelihood is increased, one passes easily through "Sakaraat" (great and grueling pain a dying person suffers at the time of death) and finds happiness in "Barzakh" (the Spiritual world where the departed souls stay either in happiness or misery, until the Day of Resurrection).

Imam Jaffar Sadiq (a.s.) quotes Imam Ali (as) as saying that the Prophet (saww) said that a person who prays Salatul-Layl gets the following twenty four kinds of benefits:

1. Secures Allah's pleasure.
2. Makes friendship with Angels.
3. Is the Sunnat of the Prophets (a.s.)
4. Provides the means to pursue knowledge.
5. Constitutes the root of our faith.
6. Keeps one physically fit.
7. Drives Shaytan away.
8. Protects one from enemies.
9. Serves as a means of acceptance of one's Duas and good deeds.
10. Increases one's livelihood.
11. Intercedes with the Angel of Death.
12. Lights up the grave.
13. Provides comfortable bedding in the grave.
14. Helps answering with ease the questioning of Munkar and Nakir in the grave.
15. Gives companionship in the grave.
16. Provides shelter on the Day of Judgment.
17. Crowns one on the Day of Reckoning.
18. Clothes one on the Day of Resurrection.
19. Provides one with light on the Day of Judgment.
20. Forms a barrier against the fire of Hell.
21. Gets Allah's pardon on the Day of Judgment.
22. Increases the weight of good deeds on the scale.

23. Helps one crossing the Bridge of “Siraat” without any difficulty.
24. Forms the key to the Paradise.

TIME

The time for praying Salatul-Layl is from midnight (midnight is reckoned as the time which is exactly half the time between sunset and the actual dawn) to the time of Adhan for Fajr prayers. However, it can be prayed at anytime after Isha prayers but it is better to pray during the last part of the night near to the time of Fajr prayers. If it is not possible to pray after midnight or before Fajr, then it can be prayed in the morning or any part of the day with the niyyah (intention) of Qadha. It is better to pray with the niyyah of Qadha during the day time than to pray in the early part of the night.

Note: According to Ayatullah Seestani, the time for Salatul-Layl is from midnight to the Adhan time for Fajr prayers. However, it is better to pray near the time of Fajr prayers. Anyone who finds it difficult to pray Salatul-Layl after midnight can pray before midnight.

METHOD

SALATUL-LAYL IS MADE UP OF ELEVEN RAK'ATS.

- The first eight Rak'ats are prayed as normal in pairs of two Rak'ats each with the niyyah of **Nawafilatul-Layl**.
- The next two Rak'ats are prayed with the Niyah of **Salatul Shaf'a**.
- The remaining one Rak'at is prayed with the Niyah of **Salatul Witr**.

In the last one Rak'at, Qunoot is recited before Rukuu and the Salat is completed as usual with Tashahud and Salaam. The last one Rak'at is prayed as follows:

Hold Tasbih in the right hand for keeping count of the dhikr mentioned below to be recited.

Make Niyah and say Takbiratul Ihram.

Recite: Surah Al-Hamd;
Surah Qul Huwallahu Ahad - three times;
Surah Qul-Audhubi Rabbil Falaq - once;
Surah Qul-Audhubi Rabbin Naas - once.

Note: If one does not know the last two Surahs mentioned above, then it is sufficient to recite Surah Qul Huwallahu Ahad, three times.

Say Takbir and raise both hands for Qunoot.

1. You may recite any Dua. However, it is recommended to recite the following Dua.

Laa ilaaha illallaahul Halimul Karim

Laa ilaaha illallaahul 'Aliyyul 'Azim

Subhaanallaahi Rabbis Samaawaatis Sab'

wa Rabbil 'Arzinas Sab'

wa maa fihinna wa maa baynahunna

wa Rabbul 'Arshil 'Azim

Wal Hamdul lillaahi Rabbil 'Aalamin

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْحَلِيمُ الْكَرِيمُ
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ
سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ السَّمَاوَاتِ السَّبْعِ
وَرَبِّ الْأَرْضِينَ السَّبْعِ
وَمَا فِيهِنَّ وَمَا بَيْنَهُنَّ وَ
رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ
وَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

There is none worth worshipping but Allah Who is Forbearing and Generous
There is none worth worshipping but Allah Who is Most High and Great
Glory be to Allah, Who is the Sustainer of the seven heavens and of the seven earth
And Who is the Sustainer of all the things in them, and between them,
And Who is the Lord of the great 'Arsh (Divine Center of Authority & Power)
And all praise for Allah, the Sustainer of the worlds.

2. Then, while holding the Tasbih in the right hand, raise the left hand and pray for forgiveness of forty [40] or more Mu'mineen/Mu'minaat who are either dead or living in the following manner.

Allaahummagh Firli... (Name)

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي...

O Allah, forgive ... giving the names of Mu'mineen/Mu'minaat.
(In each case saying, Allaahummagh Firli)

3. Continuing with the Qunoot, while still raising the left hand, recite the following Istighfar seventy [70] times:

Astaghfirullah Rabbi wa Atuubu Ilayh

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ

I seek forgiveness of Allah my Lord and I turn to Him

4. Still continuing further while raising the left hand, recite the following Dua seven [7] times:

Haadhaa Maqaamul 'Aaidhi Bika Minannaar

هَذَا مَقَامُ الْعَائِدِ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ

This is the position of one who seeks refuge in You from the fire [of Hell]

5. Continuing yet further while still raising the left hand, recite three hundred [300] times:

Al-'Afwa

الْعَفْوَ

(I ask for) forgiveness

Finally, complete the Salat in the normal way by going to Rukuu' followed by Sajdah, Tashahud and Salaam, ending Salat-ul-Layl.

As a Ta'kibaat after the Salat, recite

- Tasbih of Janabe Fatemah Zahra (a.s.),
34 times Allahu Akbar;
33 times Al-Hamdu Lillah;
33 times Subhanallah,
- followed by Sajdah of Shukr.
- Next, recite Ayatul Kursi.
- Finally, for the second time, perform Sajdah of Shukr, completing the Salat.

CONCLUSION

The blessed month of Ramadhan is at our doorstep. It offers a good opportunity and convenient time to pray Salatul Layl, especially when the time of commencing the fast is favorable. Allah [swt] gives abundant reward for all our acts of worship during this blessed month, therefore, we need to make special efforts to pray the Salaat and keep it up for the rest of the year to raise our level of spirituality.

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