

The Sunnah For the Fajr Prayer

Compiled and Translated By Abbas Abu Yahya



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By

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The Sunnah for the Fajr Prayer

1 – Giving Attention to the Two Rakat Sunnah for the Fajr Prayer[2]

a) From Ayesha -*Radi Allaahu anha*- who said:

‘The Prophet -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- was not more concerned and did not pay attention to any of the optional prayers like he did for the two Rakat of Sunnah for the Fajr prayer.’ [3]

b) From Ayesha from the Prophet -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- who said:

‘Two Rakat for Sunnah of Fajr prayer are better than the Dunyaa and everything that is in it.’ [4]

c) From Ayesha -*Radi Allaahu anha*- who said from the Prophet -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- that he said about the two Rakat when the Fajr prayer time comes in:

‘They are more beloved to me than the Dunyaa and everything that is in it.’ [5]

2 – Shortening the Sunnah of the Fajr Prayer

a) From Ayesha -*Radi Allaahu anha*- who said that the Messenger of Allaah -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- used to pray thirteen Rakah during the night, then he would pray two short Rakah once he had heard the call for the morning prayer.’ [6]

And in the narration of Abu Dawood:

‘The Messenger -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- would pray two Rakah between the Adhan of Fajr and the Iqamah.’

b) From Ayesha who said:

The Messenger of Allaah -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- used to pray two shortened Rakah which were before the morning (Fajr) prayer, he would shorten them so much that I would say: Did he recite Soorah Fatiha?’ [7]

Abu Tayeeb Atheema-a-Baadi said:

‘It is established from these Ahadeeth that the Prophet -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- used to pray them when the Mu’adhin had become silent after the Adhan, and when the time of Fajr had come in and Fajr had lit up. He -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- used to pray them lightly. As for the wisdom of them being a light prayer, then al-Qurtubi said in al-Mufhim: ‘so that the Messenger -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- could go to the morning prayer early at its beginning time.’

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Some of the scholars said: ‘So that the Messenger -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- could begin the prayer for the day with two light prayers, just as he would do for the night prayer.’ Therefore, praying them lightly is the Sunnah, and that is the clear truth.’

‘Shawkaani said in ‘Nail Awtaar’:

‘The Hadeeth indicates to the legislation of praying it lightly (i.e. not lengthening it). This was the opinion of the majority of the scholars, the Hanafeeyah opposed them and said that it is recommended to lengthen the recitation. This opposes the clear evidence.’

3 – What the Messenger -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- would Recite in the Two Rakah for the Sunnah of the Fajr Prayer

a) From Ibn Umar that the Prophet -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- used to recite in the two Rakat for Fajr, and two Rakat after Maghrib prayer: << Say to these O *Al-Kafiroon* >>[\[8\]](#) & <<Say: He is Allaah, (the) One.>>[\[9\]](#)

b) From Ayesha who said: ‘the Messenger of Allaah -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- used to pray four Rakat before Dhuhr, and two Rakat before Fajr and would not leave them, and she said: and he would say:

‘Two blessed Soorahs which are read in the two Rakat before Fajr: << Say to these O *Al-Kafiroon* >>[\[10\]](#) & <<Say: He is Allaah, (the) One.>>[\[11\]](#)

c) From Ibn Umar - *Radi Allaahu anhu* – that the Messenger of Allaah -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*-said:

‘<<Say: He is Allaah, (the) One.>> is equivalent to a third of the Qur’aan, and <<Say to these O *Al-Kafiroon* >> is equivalent to a fourth of the Qur’aan, and he would read both of them in the two Rakat of Fajr . . .’[\[12\]](#)

d) From the Hadeeth of Abu Hurairah - *Radi Allaahu anhu* – that the Messenger of Allaah -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*-read:

<< Say to these O *Al-Kafiroon* >>[\[13\]](#) & <<Say: He is Allaah, (the) One.>>[\[14\]](#)

in the two Rakah of the Fajr prayer.’ (i.e. the Sunnah of Fajr).[\[15\]](#)

e) From Abul-Gayth from Abu Hurairah that he heard the Prophet -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- recite in the two Rakah of Fajr:

<<Say: We believe in Allaah and in what has been sent down to us, >> [3:84] in the first Rakah, and in the other Rakah with this Ayaah:

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<<Our Lord! We believe in what You have sent down, and we follow the Messenger [‘Iesa (Jesus)]; so write us down among those who bear witness (to the truth i.e. *La ilaha ill-Allaah* - none has the right to be worshipped but Allaah). >> [3:53]

or:

<<Verily, We have sent you with the truth (Islaam), a bringer of glad tidings (for those who believe in what you brought, that they will enter Paradise) and a warner (for those who disbelieve in what you brought, they will enter the Hell-fire). And you will not be asked about the dwellers of the blazing Fire.>> [2: 119][16]

Atheem-a-Baadi said:

‘What is established from these Ahadeeth is that the Prophet -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- sometimes would recite << Say to these O *Al-Kafiroon* >> in the first Rakah, and <<Say: He is Allaah, (the) One.>> in the second Rakah.

And sometimes he would read in the first of the two Rakah:

<< Say: We believe in Allaah and that which has been sent down to us and that which has been sent down to Ibraheem, Isma’eel, Ishaq, Ya’qoob, and to *Al-Asbaat* [the twelve sons of Ya’qoob], and that which has been given to Moosa and ‘Iesa, and that which has been given to the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we have submitted (in Islaam). >> [2:136]

and in the second of the two Rakah:

<< Then when ‘Iesa came to know of their disbelief, he said: ‘Who will be my helpers in Allaah’s Cause?’ *Al-Hawarioon* (the disciples) said: ‘We are the helpers of Allaah; we believe in Allaah, and bear witness that we are Muslims (i.e. we submit to Allaah).’

Our Lord! We believe in what You have sent down, and we follow the Messenger [‘Iesa (Jesus)]; so write us down among those who bear witness (to the truth i.e. *Lâ ilâha ill-Allâh* - none has the right to be worshipped but Allâh). >> [3:52-53].

And sometimes recite in the first of the two Rakah:

<<Say: We believe in Allaah and in what has been sent down to us, >> [2:136]

and in the second of the two Rakah:

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<< Say: ‘O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allaah, and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allaah. Then, if they turn away, say: ‘Bear witness that we are Muslims.’>> [3:64].

And sometimes he would recite in the first of the two Rakah:

<<Say: ‘We believe in Allaah and in what has been sent down to us, and what was sent down to Ibraheem, Isma’eel, Ishaaq, Ya’qoob and *Al-Asbaat* [the twelve sons of Ya’qoob] and what was given to Moosa, ‘Iesa and the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between one another among them and to Him (Allaah) we have submitted (in Islaam).’>> [3:83]

and in the second Rakah:

<<Our Lord! We believe in what You have sent down, and we follow the Messenger [‘Iesa (Jesus)]; so write us down among those who bear witness (to the truth i.e. *La ilaha ill-Allaah* - none has the right to be worshipped but Allaah). >> [3:53]

or with this Ayaah:

<<Verily, We have sent you with the truth (Islaam), a bringer of glad tidings (for those who believe in what you brought, that they will enter Paradise) and a warner (for those who disbelieve in what you brought, they will enter the Hell-fire). And you will not be asked about the dwellers of the blazing Fire.>> [2:119].’

4 – Recommendation to Pray the Two Rakah at Home

Abu Tayeeb al-Atheem-a-Baadi said:

‘It is better to pray the two Rakah at home, because the optional pray at home is of a more complete status and has more reward than praying it in the Masjid. This is affirmed from the Prophet -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- from his actions and his statements.

As for his actions, is that the Prophet -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- used to pray them a lot of the time in his home, as has been mentioned in narrations from Ibn Umar, Ibn Abbas, Ayesha and others from the Companions. Actually it has not been affirmed that he performed them in the Masjid.

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As for his saying in the Hadeeth of Ibn Umar, as collected by Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi, Nisa'ee and Ibn Majah that the Prophet *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam-* said:

‘Perform some of your prayer in your homes, and do not take them as graves.’

The Hadeeth of Jabir collected by Muslim, and Muhammad bin Nasr from Jabir *-Radi Allaahu anhu-* that he said, the Messenger of Allaah *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam-* said:

‘If one of you has completed the prayer in his Masjid, then he should make a portion of his prayer for the house, since indeed Allaah will place goodness in his home from his prayer.’

Imam Nawawi said in the explanation of Muslim:

‘Indeed one is encouraged to pray optional prayer in the home due to it being more hidden away, further away from showing off, more protective from being cancelled out and that the home can get blessings, and that mercy can descend in the home, and the Angels, and that the Shaytaan runs away.’

5 – Lying down on the Right Hand side after the Two Rakah Sunnah of the Fajr

Abu Tayeeb al-Atheem-a-Baadi said:

‘It is the Sunnah to lie down on the right side after the Sunnah of the Fajr prayer, whether he performed Tahhajjud (the night prayer) or not, and this is the truth, and this has been narrated from the hadeeth of four people from the Companions of the Prophet *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam,* Ayesha, Abu Hurairah, Ibn Abbas and Abdullaah bin ‘Amr.

The Hadeeth of Ayesha, collected by Bukhari that she said:

‘The Prophet *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam-* used to lie down on his right side after praying two Rakats [Sunnah] of Fajr.’

Also, in Muslim from Ayesha the wife of the Prophet *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam-* who said:

‘The Messenger of Allaah *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam-* used to pray after finishing the Isha prayer, which the people call ‘al-‘Uttmah’ he would pray eleven Rakah till the Fajr prayer, he would give the Salaam between every two Rakah, and pray one Rakah Witr. And when the Muhaddin would finish from the call to the Fajr prayer, and it would be

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clear to the Messenger *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam-* that it is Fajr time and the Muhaddin would come to the Messenger *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam,* then he would pray a light two Rakah, then lie down on his right side, until the Muadhin would come to him *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam-* to make the call that prayer is established.’ [17]

- Laying down after the Sunnah prayer for Fajr is not done in the masjid

Shaykh Albaani commented on the Hadeeth of Aeysha *-Radi Allaahu anha:*

‘...then lie down on his right side, until the Muadhin would come to him *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam.*’

Shaykh Albaani said:

‘This is a clear proof of the permissibility of laying down between the Sunnah of the Fajr prayer and the obligatory prayer, however, it is not known that anyone from the Companions did so in the Masjid, but rather some of them disliked and criticised this. Therefore, it should be limited to what the Prophet did in his house as is his *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam - Sunnah.*’ [18]

- **The Messenger *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam-* used to say or talk after the two Rakah Sunnah for Fajr**

It has been collected by Bukhari, Muslim and Abu Dawood from Ayesha who said:

‘The Prophet *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam-* used to, once he had prayed the two Rakah of the Sunnah for the Fajr, he would talk to me if I were awake, otherwise he would lie down.’

Nawawi said in ‘al-Minhaaj Sharh Muslim bin al-Hajjaaj’:

‘In this narration is the proof that it is permissible to talk after the Sunnah of the Fajr prayer. This is our Madhab, and the Madhab of Malik and the majority of the scholars.’

Al-Qadi said:

‘The Koofeeyoon disliked it, and it is narrated from Ibn Mas’ood and some of the Salaf that this time between two Rakah of the Sunnah for the Fajr and the Fajr prayer is for seeking forgiveness. However, what is correct is that it is permissible due to the action of the Prophet *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam.* As for it being regarded as the recommended time for seeking forgiveness then that does not prevent the allowance to speak.’

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Al-Qastallani said in 'Irshaad as-Saari':

'In this Hadeeth, is that there is no problem with permissible speech after the two Rakah Sunnah for the Fajr. Ibn al-Arabi said: 'There is no mention or narration of an excellence of remaining silent at the time, rather that is after the obligatory Morning Prayer until sunrise.'

6 – The Dislike of Praying the Optional Prayer once Fajr Time has come in, other than the Two Rakah Sunnah for the Fajr Prayer

Abu Taeab al-Atheem-a-Baadi said:

'It is disliked to pray the optional prayer after Fajr time has come in, because the Prophet -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- did not pray more than the two Rakah of the Sunnah even though he had great concern over the prayer. Yet there is a prohibition from the Prophet -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- against this.

Muslim and Nisa'ee narrated from Hafsaah who said:

'If the Fajr time came in, the Messenger of Allaah -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- would not pray except for two light Rakahs.'

7 – The Dislike for the Worshipper to begin Praying Two Rakah Sunnah for the Fajr After the Muadhin began the Iqama for the prayer.

Abu Taeab al-Atheem-a-Baadi said:

'Know that it is disliked to perform the two Rakah of Sunnah for the Fajr after the Muadhin has begun the Iqama for the prayer, this is whether the worshipper is amongst the rows, or not in the row, whether he knows that he will catch the Rakah with the Imam or not. This is what has been narrated from the Hadeeth of Abu Hurairah, Abdullaah bin Malik bin Buhaynah, Abdullaah bin Surjiss, Ibn Umar, Jabir, Ibn Abbas, Anas bin Muhammad, Zayed bin Thabit, Abu Musa and 'Aeysha -*Radi Allaahu anhum*.

a) As for the Hadeeth of Abu Hurairah, collected by Muslim that the Prophet -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- said:

'If the prayer is established then there is no prayer except for the obligatory one.'

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b) Bukhari collected from Abdullaah bin Malik bin Buhaynah who said: The Prophet -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- passed by a man, and the prayer had just been established [the Iqama was called] while that man was praying two Rakah, after the Messenger of Allaah -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- finished, the people gathered around him, so the Messenger of Allaah -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- said:

‘Is the morning prayer four Rakahs? Is the morning prayer four Rakahs?’

Abu Taeab al-Atheem-a-Baadi discusses the general times that prayer is prohibited: ‘Five types, the prohibition to pray after Fajr and Asr, at the time of sunrise, at sunset, and when the sun has reached its highest point, and every one of these types has exceptions. So we say: from the specific times out of the general times is the Hadeeth of Abu Hurairah which was collected by Bukhari in the ‘Chapter: Whoever catches one Rakah from the Asr prayer before sunset.

Bukhari narrates from Yahya from Salmah from Abu Hurairah who said: The Messenger of Allaah -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- said:

‘If one of you catches a Sajdah from the Asr prayer before the sunsets, then he should complete his prayer. If one of you catches a Sajdah from the morning prayer before the sunrises then he should complete his prayer.’

An-Nawawi said:

‘This is a clear evidence that whoever caught and prayed a Rakah of the morning or Asr prayer, and then the prayer time finished before he gave Salam then his prayer is not null and void, rather he should complete it, and his prayer is correct. There is a consensus about this point regarding the Asr prayer, as for the morning prayer, then Malik, Shaafi’ee, Ahmad and all the scholars accept it except Abu Hanifah -*Rahimullaah*, since he says that the morning prayer is void due to sunrise, because the time where Salat is prohibited has entered, and this is in contrast to sunset, but the Hadeeth is an evidence against him.’

Abu Taeab al-Atheem-a-Baadi also mentions:

‘From those specific matters for the general prohibition is the Ahadeeth of Anas, Abu Hurairah and Abu Qatadah. As for the Hadeeth of Anas, then that has been collected by the six Imams [Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi, Nisa’ee and Ibn Majah] and Darmi from Anas from the Prophet -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- who said:

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‘Whoever forgets a prayer then he should pray it when he remembers, there is no expiation for the missed prayer except to pray it. << and perform the Salat for My remembrance>> [Taha: 14]’

8 – Praying two Rakah Sunnah for the Fajr Prayer after the Obligatory Prayer if You Cannot Pray Before it

Shaykh Muhammad Bazmool said:

‘Whoever misses the two Rakah [Sunnah] of the Fajr prayer

It is legislated for the person who misses the two Rakah of Fajr, that he can then pray them directly after the obligatory prayer or after the sun has risen, and what is better is to pray them after the sun has risen.

From Abu Hurairah -*Radi Allaahu anhu*- who said the Messenger of Allaah said:

‘Whoever did not pray the two Rakah [Sunnah] of Fajr; then he should pray them after the sun has risen.’ [\[19\]](#)

I [Bazmool] say: ‘The apparent meaning of the Hadeeth indicates that the Sunnah of Salat al-Fajr is obligatory to be prayed after the sun has risen if you had missed this Sunnah prayer, however, this verdict is shifted to a recommended act due to the proof from the following Hadeeth:

From Qays bin Qahd -*Radi Allaahu anhu*- that he prayed the Morning Prayer along with the Messenger of Allaah -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*, but he had not prayed the two Rakah for the Sunnah of the Fajr prayer. So when the Messenger of Allaah -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- gave the Salam from the prayer, Qays gave the Salam with him and then after that he stood and prayed two Rakah of the Sunnah for the Fajr, while the Messenger of Allaah -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- was watching him, and he -*sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam*- did not criticize him for it.’ [\[20\]](#)

The Hadeeth shows the permissibility of making up the Sunnah prayer of al-Fajr after the obligatory prayer for the person who had not prayed it before the obligatory prayer.’ [\[21\]](#)

All Praise belongs to Allaah, may His peace and blessings be upon our final Prophet Muhammad, his family, his companions and all those who follow his guidance.

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[1] The majority of this article has been compiled from the book: ‘A’laam Ahl-ul-‘Asr BiHaakaam Rakatay al-Fajr’ by Abu Tayyib Muhammad Shams al-Haqq al-Atheem-a-Baadi

[2] The Importance of the Sunnah of Fajr Prayer

Siddiq Hasan Khan said:

‘Some of the Mushayikh said: ‘The Sunnah of Fajr is starting of actions, and the Witr is ending of actions, this shows the certainty of having concern for these two prayers. This is the reason why it has been legislated to read Soorah Ikhlaas, and Soorah Kafiroom, due to them comprising of Tawheed al-Ilm (knowledge) and al-Amaal (action), and Tawheed al-Ma’rifah (acquainting) and al-Irada (want), and Tawheed al-Itiqaad (belief) and al-Qasd (Intent).’

[Taleeqat ar-Raddeeyah ‘ala Rowddat an-Nadeeya by Siddiq Hasan Khan 1/p.316]

[3] [Bukhari & Abu Dawood]

[4] [Muslim, Tirmidhi & Nisa’ee]

[5][Muslim]

[6] [Bukhari, Malik in al-Muwatta & Abu Dawood]

[7] [Bukhari, Muslim, Malik, Abu Dawood & Nisa’ee]

[8] Soorah Kafiroom

[9] Collected by Tabarani in ‘al-Mu’jam al-Kabeer’ from Ibn Umar & Albaani declared it to be Saheeh, in Silsilah Saheehah No.3328

[10] Soorah Kafiroom

[11] Collected by Ibn Khuzaimah from Ayesha & Albaani declared its Isnad to be Jayyid in Silsilah Saheehah No.636

[12] Collected by Abu Ya’ala with a Hasan Isnad, Tabaraani in ‘al-Kabeer’ & Albaani declared it to be Saheeh Lighayrihi in ‘Saheeh Targheeb wa Tarheeb’ no.583 by Albaani

[13] Soorah Kafiroom

[14] Soorah Ikhlaas

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[15] [Collected by Muslim, Abu Dawood, Nisa'ee and Ibn Majah]

[16][Collected by Abu Dawood & Albaani regarded it as Hasan no.1260]

[17][Muslim, Ahmad & Bayhaqi]

[18] From: 'Salat ul Taraweeh' p.90 by Muhammad Nasir ud-Deen al-Albaani]

[19] 'Hadeeth Saheeh, collected by Tirmidhi in 'Kitab as-Salah', Chapter: what is mentioned regarding praying them after sunrise, and authenticated by al-Haakim, Ibn Khuzaimah, Ibn Hibban in 'al-Ihsaan' and it is authenticated by the researcher of that book, and al-Albaani authenticated it in 'Saheeh Sunnan at-Tirmidhi', and also in Silsilah Saheehah No.2361

[20] Hadeeth Hasan Li Ghayri hi, collected by Tirmidhi in 'Kitab as-Salah', Chapter: what is mentioned about he person who misses the two Rakah before Fajr then he should pray them after the obligatory Fajr prayer.

Also collected by Abu Dawood in 'Kitab as-Salah' Chapter: whoever misses the prayer so that he has to make it up. Authenticated by al-Haakim, Ibn Khuzaimah and Ibn Hibban. It was authenticated by al-Allamma Ahmad Shakir in his checking of 'Sunnan Tirmidhi' and al-Albaani in 'Saheeh Sunnan Tirmidhi'.

A benefit: the Hadeeth shows the permissibility of praying the missed prayers at the time when prayer is prohibited.'

[21] [Taken from: 'Bugheeyah al-Muttatowa' fee Salat al-Muttatowa' by Muhammad Bazmool p. 28-29]

