

REVIVING A SUNNAH: THE DUHA PRAYER

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Names

Salaat ad-Duha (The forenoon Prayer), *Salaat al-Anwaabeen* (The Prayer of the penitent) and *Salaatul Isbraaq'* (The Prayer after sunrise) are different names for the same prayer.

It has been called 'the Prayer of the penitent' because the one praying cuts himself off from everything and turns to and focuses on obeying Allaah and worshipping Him, at a time when some of the people are preoccupied with their businesses and others are resting (*Tawdeeh al-Abkaam*, (2/445), slightly adapted).

Its Time

When the sun is near to a spear's length above the horizon and it continues until just before the sun reaches its meridian (*Tasbeel al-Ilmaam*, (2/391).

Shaikh Ibn `Uthaymeen -rahimahullaah- said, as occurs in 'Majmoo`ul-Fataawaa'(14/306/no.875):

"The time of the Duha Prayer is from when the sun has risen to the height of a spear, i.e. approximately a quarter or a third of an hour after having risen; until 'just before the zawaal', and 'just before the zawaal' means between ten and five minutes (prior to it).."

Abu Dardaa narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said that Allaah said:

¹ Some of the people of knowledge mention that this name particularly refers to this prayer if offered at the beginning of its time.

“O Son of Aadam, pray four *rak'ah* to me at the early part of the day...”
(Related by at-Tirmidhi no. 475; and declared authentic by Shaykh Naasir)

In another hadeeth: “...until the sun rises and then he prays two rak'ah.” (Part of a hadeeth Related by at-Tirmidhi no. 586, and declared hasan by Shaykh Naasir)

This hadeeth is referring to the two rak'ah of Duha.

The best time to perform the Duha Prayer is when the sun is very hot.

Zayd Ibn Arqam saw a people praying the Duha Prayer. He said: ‘Are they unaware that it is better to pray it at another time. The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: “The prayer of the penitent should be prayed (at the time) that a weaned camel would feel the heat of the sun.”’ (Related by Muslim no. 748)

The Wisdom behind this Prayer

A voluntary prayer has been legislated at this time because there is a long interval between the Fajr Prayer and the Dhuhur prayer. So this is to prevent there being such a big gap without any prayer, as not praying during this time may cause a person to be heedless of the remembrance of Allaah (*Tasbeel al-Ilmaam*, (2/391). And Allaah knows best.

A False Notion

Ibn Hajr in Fath al-Baaree (3/71) quotes Al-Haafidh al-'Iraaqee as saying: “It has become famous amongst the common people that whoever prays the Duha Prayer then abandons it will go blind. Thus, many of the people have abandoned it all together. What they have stated has no basis whatsoever. Instead, it seems that the devil placed this upon the tongues of the general masses to deprive them of this enormous amount of good.”

Its Virtue

There are numerous ahadeeth that highlight the excellence of this prayer. It suffices us here to mention a few.

Abu Dharr narrated that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: “In the morning charity is due from every joint of your body. Every *tasbeeh* (saying glory be to Allaah) is charity. Every *tahmeed* (saying all praise is due to

Allaah) is charity. Every *tableelah* (saying none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah) is charity. Every *takebeerah* (saying Allah is the Greatest) is charity. Enjoining the good is charity. Forbidding the evil is charity; and performing two rak'ah of Duha suffices all of this." (Related by Muslim no. 720)

Abu Hurairah narrated:

“My beloved friend ﷺ advised me to practise three things and I will not leave them until I die: to fast for three days every month, to pray ad-Duha and to perform Witr before sleeping.” (Related by Bukhari no. 1178)

Abu Hurairah also said that the Prophet ﷺ said:

“None is consistent with the Duha Prayer except the penitent.” He said ﷺ: “It is the Prayer of the penitent.” (Related by Haakim, al-Mustadrak (1/314), who declared it authentic. And Albaani declared it hasan (sound), silsilatul ahaadeeth as-Saheehah no. 1994)

An Innovated Prayer

“This hadeeth is a refutation upon those people who refer to the six rak'ah that they pray after Magrib as Salaat al-Awaabeen (The Prayer of the Penitent). **Calling it by this name has no basis and this prayer itself is not established (by any authentic text).**” (Saheeh at-Targheeb wa at-Tarheeb (1/423)

Our Shaykh, Muqbil Ibn Haadi al-Waadi'ee also stated that this prayer is not authentically established in Ijaabatus Saa'il, p. 77.

The Duha Prayer is found in the Quraan

Ibn 'Abbas was asked about the Duha prayer and he responded:

“It is found in the Book of Allaah...then he recited: “In houses which Allaah has ordered be raised, and in them His name is mentioned. Therein glorify Him in the mornings and in the afternoons or evenings.” (An-Noor: 36)”
(Reported by Ibn Abu Shaybah (no. 7872) with an authentic chain of narration)

Its Ruling

It is *mustahab* (highly recommended) to observe the Duha Prayer. Imam Nawawi entitles one of the chapter headings in Saheeh Muslim ‘The Recommendation to Observe the Duha Prayer.’

The ahadeeth relating to the Duha prayer reach the level of Mutawaatir (reported by such a large number of narrators it is near impossible for them to agree to fabricate a lie). (Sadeeq Hasan Khaan, ar-Rawdah an-Nadiyyah (1/316))

An-Nawawi, Sharh Muslim (5/237), said: “The majority of the scholars considered the Duha prayer to be *mustahab* (highly recommended).” In Majmoo’ Sharh al-Muhaddhab (4/43): “It is the position of the majority of the Salaf.”

However, there are various opinions on this matter. Zaad al-Ma’aad (2/330-348), Fath al-Baaree (3/68) and nayl al-Awtaar (5/211-212):

1. It is *mustahab*; which is the opinion of the majority of the scholars.
2. It is only legislated to observe this prayer for a reason, as it is argued that the Prophet ﷺ did not pray Duha except for a reason.
3. It is not recommended at all.
4. It is *mustahab* if offered in the home.
5. It is recommended to perform this prayer occasionally.
6. It is a bid’ah.

The difference of opinion arises because there are authentic ahadeeth that apparently negate the very existence of the Duha prayer, other ahadeeth show that it was observed for a reason and there are authentic ahadeeth that affirm it.

An important principle to understand is affirmation has precedence over negation (*Tasbeel al-Ilmaam*, (2/391).

The following points were raised by Ibn Khuzaimah, slightly adapted in places, in his Saheeh (2/231):

When Ibn ‘Umar stated that the Prophet did not perform the Duha prayer except when he returned from a journey he meant: “I did not witness him pray and a trustworthy individual has not informed me of this”...The same applies to the narration of ‘Aishah. [‘Aishah was asked: “Did the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ

used to observe the Duha prayer?” She replied: “No, except when he returned from a journey.” (Reported by Muslim no. 717)] The proof to support this type of explanation is that the Prophet ﷺ prayed the Duha Prayer on occasions where he had not returned from a trip.

Another angle:

It is not conceivable that ‘Aishah, the Mother of the believers, would continuously offer an act of worship that had not been legislated.

‘Aishah said:

“The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ used to give up a deed although he loved to offer it for fear that people might act upon it and therefore it be made obligatory upon them. I never saw the Prophet ﷺ pray the Duha prayer, but I perform it.” (Related by Bukhari no. 1128 and Muslim no. 718)

Some of the people of knowledge explain this to mean that ‘Aishah herself never saw the Prophet ﷺ offer this prayer but she was informed about it by other companions (Fath al-Baaree (3/69-70) and *Tasbeel al-Ilmaam*, (2/396)).

Another angle:

If there appears to be a contradiction between the saying of the Prophet ﷺ and an action, then precedence is given to the saying. Refer to *Tasbeel al-Ilmaam*, (2/393).

Ahadeeth where the Prophet ﷺ encouraged the people to pray the Duha prayer have already been mentioned earlier.

The number of rak’ah

Imam Nawawi entitled one of the chapters in Saheeh Muslim: The Recommendation to observe the Duha Prayer. Its minimum number of rak’ah is two and its maximum is eight, and between that there is four or six rak’ah.

1. Two rak’ah:

Abu Dharr narrated that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

“In the morning charity is due from every joint of your body. Every *tasbeeh* (saying glory be to Allaah) is charity. Every *tahmeed* (saying all praise is due to Allaah) is charity. Every *tahleelah* (saying none has the

right to be worshipped except Allaah) is charity. Every *takebeerah* (saying Allah is the Greatest) is charity. Enjoining the good is charity. Forbidding the evil is charity; and performing two rak'ah of Duha suffices all of this." (Related by Muslim no. 720)

2. Four rak'ah:

Abu Dardaa narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said that Allaah said: "O Son of Adam, pray four *rak'ah* to me at the early part of the day..." (Related by at-Tirmidhi no. 475; and declared authentic by Shaykh Albaani)

3. Six rak'ah

Anas Ibn Maalik said: "The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ used to pray Duha as six rak'ah." (Reported by at-Tirmidhi, Mukhtasir ash-Shamaa'il (p. 156); and declared (Saheeh ligayrihi) authentic due to supporting narrations by Albaani)

4. Eight rak'ah

Umm Haani narrated: "...Then the Prophet ﷺ prayed eight rak'ah of Duha." (Related by Bukhari (no. 1176) and Muslim (336).

When 'Aishah was asked about the number of rak'ah the Prophet ﷺ observed for the Duha Prayer she responded:

"He would pray four rak'ah and sometimes if he desired he would pray more [and this would be as many as Allaah wills]." (Related by Muslim no. 719)

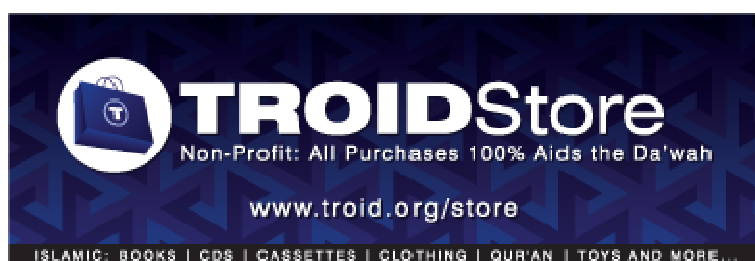
"This narration of 'Aishah should be understood in light of the previous ahadeeth." (Bughya al-Mutatawwi' fee as-Salaah at-Tatawu', p.86)

Especially when it is reported that 'Aishah, the narrator of this hadeeth, used to pray the Duha Prayer as eight rak'ah... (Related by Maalik, al-Muwatta (1/153), and it is authentic. Refer to Maa Sahha Min Athaar as-Sahaabah fil Fiqh (1/432))

"As for these rak'ah being prayed in pairs, then this is due to the hadeeth: 'The prayers of the night and day (should be observed) in pairs.' (Saheeh Sunan Ibn Maajah (1/221))"

(Bughya al-Mutatawwi' fee as-Salaah at-Tatawu', p.86)

Allaah is the grantor of success; whatever is correct is from Allaah and whatever is incorrect is from me and the Devil.²



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² Ibn Mas'ood said (Reported by Ibn Abu Shaybah in al-Musannaf no. 17286, and declared authentic by Ibn al-Qayyim in I'laam al-Muwaqqi'een): "...If it is correct it is from Allaah and if it is incorrect it is from me and the Devil."