**Salah**

Salah ("Muslim prayer", ‏صلاة‎; informally pronounced as ṣalāt; pl. ‏صلوات‎ ṣalawāt), called namāz (Persian: نَماز‎‎) in some languages, is one of the Five Pillars in the faith of Islam and an obligatory religious duty for every Muslim. It is a physical, mental, and spiritual act of worship that is observed five times every day at prescribed times. In this ritual, the worshiper starts standing, bows, prostrates themself, and concludes while sitting on the ground.[1] During each posture, the worshiper recites or reads certain verses, phrases and prayers. The word salah is commonly translated as "prayer" but this definition might be confusing. Muslims use the words "dua" or "supplication" when referring to the common definition of prayers which is "reverent petitions made to God".

Salah is preceded by ritual ablution. Salah consists of the repetition of a unit called a rakʿah (pl. rakaʿāt) consisting of prescribed actions and words. The number of obligatory (fard) rakaʿāt varies from two to four according to the time of day or other circumstances (such as Friday congregational worship, which has two rakats). Prayer is obligatory for all Muslims except those who are prepubescent, are menstruating, or are experiencing bleeding in the 40 days after childbirth.[2] Every movement in the salah is accompanied by the takbir except the standing between the ruku and sujud, and the ending which has a derivation of the Muslim greeting As-salamu alaykum.

**Terminology**

Salah (ṣalāt) is an Arabic word whose basic meaning is "bowing, homage, worship, prayer". In its English usage, the reference of the word is almost always confined to the Muslim formal, obligatory worship described in this article.

Translating salah as "prayer" is not usually considered precise enough, as "prayer" can indicate several different ways of relating to God; personal prayer or supplication is called duʿāʾ (Arabic: دُعَاء, literally "invocation") in Islamic usage.

Muslims themselves use several terms to refer to salah depending on their language or culture. In many parts of the world, including many non-Arab countries such as Indonesia, the Arabic term salat or salah is used. The other major term is the Persian word namāz (نماز), used by speakers of the Indo-Iranian languages (e.g., the Kurdish languages, Urdu, Balochi, Hindi), as well as Turkish, Russian, Chinese, Bosnian and Albanian. In North Caucasian languages, the term is lamaz (ламаз) in Chechen, chak (чак) in Lak and kak in Avar (как).

**Salah in the Quran**

ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبُ لَا رَيْبَۛ فِيهِۛ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ

ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ وَٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ وَبِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ

— Qur'an 2:2-5

Translation:

2. This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allah -

3. Who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them,

4. And who believe in what has been revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what was revealed before you, and of the Hereafter they are certain [in faith

5. Those are upon [right] guidance from their Lord, and it is those who are the successful.

وَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَٱرْكَعُوا۟ مَعَ ٱلرَّٰكِعِينَ

— Qur'an 2:43

Translation: And establish Salah and give Zakah and bow with those who bow [in worship and obedience].

Guard your Salah and middle Salah; and stand before God devoutly obedient. Then if you fear on foot or riding; then when you become secure remember God as he has taught you that which you did not know previously. (Al-Quran 2:238-239)

And offer Salah at the two ends of day and at the approach of night; indeed good deeds remove bad deeds; this is a reminder for those who remember. (Al-Quran 11:114

offer Salah at the decline of the day until the darkness of night; and Quran at dawn; indeed Quran at dawn ever is a witness. And at night pray Tahajjud an extra for thee; it is expected that your lord raise you to praised station. (Al-Quran 17:78-79))

Say call God or call Merciful ; by whomever you call; He has good names; and do not make your Salah loud nor make silent and choose a path between them. (Al-Quran 17:110)

And offer Salah and pay Zakah and obey Messenger so that you may receive mercy.(Al-Quran 24:56)

And recite that is revealed to you as a book and offer Salah; indeed Salah prohibits immorality and wrongdoing; and remembrance of God is great; and God is aware of what you do. (Al-Quran 29:45))

**Purpose and importance**

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The chief purpose of salah is to act as a person's communication with and remembrance of God. By reciting "The Opening", the first sura (chapter) of the Quran, as required in daily worship, the worshiper can stand before God, thank and praise Him, and ask for guidance along the "Straight Path".

Under the Hanbali School of thought, a person who doesn't pray five times a day is an unbeliever. The other three Sunni schools of thought say that the person who doesn't pray five times a day is an unholy sinner. Those who prescribe to the Hanbali view cite a hadith from Sahih Muslim that states that prayer is a dividing line between a believer and a non-believer.

In addition, daily worship reminds Muslims to give thanks for God's blessings and that submission to God takes precedence over all other concerns, thereby revolving their life around God and submitting to His will. Worship also serves as a formal method of dhikr or remembering Allah.

Muslims believe that all prophets of Allah offered daily prayers and were humble in submission to the Oneness of Allah. Muslims also believe that the main duty of the prophets of Allah is to teach mankind to humbly submit themselves to Oneness of Allah, the God.[5]

In Quran, it is written that: "For, Believers are those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a tremor in their hearts, and when they hear His signs rehearsed, find their faith strengthened, and put (all) their trust in their Lord;"[6]

"To those whose hearts, when God is mentioned, are filled with fear, who show patient perseverance over their afflictions, keep up regular prayer, and spend (in charity) out of what we have bestowed upon them."

Salah is also cited as a means of restraining a believer from social wrongs and moral deviancy.

According to a hadith in the collection Sahih Bukhari, Muhammad considered salah "the best deed"

The importance of the Salah was further demonstrated by Muhammad who on his deathbed and in the pangs of death would announce: الصَّلاةَ ، الصَّلاةَ وَمَا مَلَكَت أَيْمَانُكُم. "The Salah, [I remind you of] the Salah; and [to treat well] those who are in your power."[10]

**Conditions**

At the bottom of the central nave of the prayer hall there is a niche (the mihrab) indicating the qibla. This compulsory act of worship is obligatory for those who meet these conditions:

are Muslim

are of sound mind

have reached the age of puberty (beginning at age seven is recommended).[12]

Elements that make salah valid:

**Confidence of the time of worship.**

Facing the qibla, with the chest facing the direction of the Kaaba. The ill and the old are allowed leniency with posture.

Covering the awrah

Clean clothes, body, place of prostration.

**Preparation**

Cleanliness and dress

Islam advises that salah be performed in a ritually clean environment.[18] When worshipping, the clothes that are worn and the place of prayer must be clean. Both men and women are required to cover their bodies (awrah) in reasonably loose-fitting garments. The well-known adage or hadith by al-Nawawi that "purity is half the faith"[19] illustrates how Islam has incorporated and modified existing rules of purity in its religious system.

**Ritual ablution**

Before conducting salah, a Muslim has to perform a ritual ablution. The minor ablution is performed using water (wudu), or sand (tayammum) when water is unavailable or not advisable to use for reasons such as illness. Wudu is performed by Muslims according to the instructions of God given in the Quran:

"O you who believe! when you rise up to prayer, wash your faces and your hands as far as the elbows, and wipe your heads and your feet to the ankles; and if you are under an obligation to perform a total ablution, then wash (yourselves) and if you are sick or on a journey, or one of you come from the privy, or you have touched the women, and you cannot find water, betake yourselves to pure earth and wipe your faces and your hands therewith, Allah does not desire to put on you any difficulty, but He wishes to purify you and that He may complete His favor on you, so that you may be grateful."

— Qur'an, sura 5 (Al-Ma'ida), ayat 6[18]

More specifically, wudu is performed by Muslims by washing the hands, mouth, nose, arms, face, hair (often washing the hair is merely drawing the already wet hands from the fringe to the nape of the neck), ears, and feet three times each in that order. (It is not obligatory to wash the hair three times, once is sufficient, and men must also wash their beard and mustache when washing the face).

**Call to prayer**

A muezzin calling the adhan.

Main articles: Adhan, Muezzin, and Iqamah

"Adhan" is the Islamic call to prayer, recited by the one known as the muezzin for the five obligatory prayers, traditionally from a tower called a minaret. A second call immediately before praying, known as the Iqama, is for the assembled Muslims in the prayer area to line up for the beginning of the prayers.

**Intention**

Main article: Niyyah

The person should be conscious and aware of the particular salah that is being offered, whether it is obligatory, if it is a missed (qadha) worship, performed individually or among the congregation, a shortened traveller's worship etc. The explicit verbalization of this intention is not required. The person should think his worship to be the Last Worship so that he may perform the best he can.

**Components**

Main article: Rakat

Each salah is made up of repeating units or cycles called rakats. The number of rakats for the five daily worships can be found below.