



REVIVE A SUNNAH IN SALAH

*15 Prophetic Ways
to Propel Your Prayer!*

Khawlah b. Yayha

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Introduction

This compilation brings you a selection of fifteen, simple yet highly rewarding voluntary acts relating to the prayer, the salah. These sunan (plural of sunnah) are aimed to enhance your prayer and to help you build enriching, spiritual habits for life.

The Prophet, salallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said:

“Whoever performed a good sunnah in Islam will have the reward of it and the reward of those who perform it after him.”

[Muslim]

The Prophet, salallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, also said:

“Pray as you have seen me praying.”

[Al Bukhari and Ahmad]

Your prayer truly is a treasure chest of rewards - and the sunnah (non obligatory) parts of your salah are an opportunity to gain immense rewards, multiple times a day.

Fifteen sunan of prayer are carefully selected, supported by authentic narrations (ahadeeth) and supplemented with practical action points, to make implementation easy.

All supplications and phrases of remembrance are mentioned in Arabic, transliteration and translation in English.

At the end of the compilation, a printable with example '*Intentions for Salah*' and '*Intentions whilst reading the Qur'an*' has been added. This can be printed, cut in half, and where the '*Intentions of Salah*' can be hung on place(s) where one performs the prayer, the '*Intentions whilst reading the Qur'an*' can be kept inside one's mushaf (Qur'an).

The printable 'Daily Checklist: 15 Sunan' has been designed to gain a quick overview of all sunan, to be used as reminder on the wall before praying and to aid with memorisation.

Embark on this mission to not just revive a sunnah and make sure to inspire others to, but to revive the sunnah of a very pillar of Islam: The Prayer!

I pray this booklet will be a source of blessings, forgiveness, guidance and elevation for those involved. I ask Allah, the Most High, for ability (tafweeq) for all those who use this compilation to revive the sunan of salah, convey them to others and to be in the Highest Gardens of Paradise, in the company of our beloved Prophet Muhammad, salallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, ameen.

Khawlah b. Yahya - United Kingdom, Sha'baan, 1441 AH
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Sunnah 1

The Perfect Wudhu: Open the 8 Gates of Paradise!

Umar ibn al-Khattab, radiyallahu ‘anhu, reported: “The Messenger of Allah, salallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, said:

“Whoever performs ablution in the best manner and he says, ‘I bear witness there is no god but Allah alone, without any partners, and I bear witness that Muhammad is his servant and his messenger. O Allah, make me among those who repent and make me among those who purify themselves,’ then the eight gates of Paradise will be opened for him and he may enter through whichever he wishes.”

[At-Tirmidhi]

Action Points

- Take care of doing a complete wudhu and say after:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

Ash-hadu an-laa ilaahaa illAllah wahadahu laa shareeka lah wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan ‘abduhu wa rasooluhu. (I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah, alone without partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger).

[Muslim]

- Then supplicate:

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي مِنَ التَّوَّابِينَ وَاجْعَلْنِي مِنَ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

Allahumma-jalnee min at-tawwaabeen wa jalalnee min al-mutatahhireen. (O Allah, make me of those who return to You often in repentance and make me of those who remain clean and pure).

[At-Tirmidhi]

- Write them on a paper and hang them up near a place you make wudhu to memorise and remember them.

Extra

- Make multiple intentions whilst making wudhu, for example:
 - To fulfill Allah’s command
 - For your sins to fall off
 - To revive a sunnah
 - To be clean to stand before the King (Allah)
 - To gain the maximum reward for wudhu
- Make an effort to not waste water (don’t run the tap high, try to use a bowl).
- Aim to be in a state of wudhu - each time you break your wudhu, renew it. Ask Allah, the Most High, for tawfeeq (ability).

Sunnah

2

Start your Prayer with this for Multiple Rewards and extra protection!

The Prophet, salallahu 'alayhi wasallam, used this openings supplication at the start of prayer:

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ كَبِيرًا، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ كَبِيرًا، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ كَبِيرًا، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كَثِيرًا، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كَثِيرًا، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا (ثَلَاثًا) أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ: مِنْ نَفْخِهِ، وَنَفْثِهِ، وَهَمَزِهِ

Allaahu 'Akbar Kabeera, Allaahu 'Akbar Kabeera, Allaahu 'Akbar Kabeera, walhamdu lillaahi katheera, walhamdu lillaahi katheera, walhamdu lillaahi katheera, wa Subhaanallaahi bukratan waaseela (3x).

'A 'oodhu billaahi minash-Shaytaan: min nafkhihi, wa nafthihi, wa hamzihi.

(Allah is the Greatest, Most Great. Allah is the Greatest, Most Great. Allah is the Greatest, Most Great. Praise is to Allah, abundantly. Praise is to Allah, abundantly. Praise is to Allah, abundantly. Glory is to Allah, at the break of day and at its end. (Three times).

I seek refuge in Allah from shaytan, from his breath and from his voice and from his whisper).

[Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, Ahmad and Muslim]

Action Points

- **Make an intention to perform your prayer**, eg "O Allah, I'm praying Maghrib for you", then say the takbeer 'Allahu Akbar' (takbiratul ihram) to open your salah and use above dua' after the openings supplication you normally use. Most people use 'Subhanakallahumma wa bihamdika wa tabarakasmuka wa ta'ala jadduka wa laa ilaaha ghayruka'. The openings supplications at the start of the prayer are called du' a'-ul-istiftah.
- **Write it down and hang it where you and your family pray to memorise and remember.**
- **While you seek Allah's protection from shaytan, his breath, his voice and his whisper imagine it to be a weapon and say this dua' with conviction.**

Extra

- **Ibn 'Umar, radiyallahu 'anhuma, reported: While we said the prayer with the Messenger of Allah, salallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, one among the people said:**

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ كَبِيرًا، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كَثِيرًا، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا

Allahu akbar kabeeraa, wal hamdu lillaahi katheeraa, wa subhanAllahi bukratan wa aSeelaa.

(Allah is truly Great, praise be to Allah in abundance. Glory be to Allah in the morning and the evening).

The Messenger of Allah said: *Who uttered such and such a word?* A person among the people said: *It is I, Messenger of Allah (who have recited these words).* He (the Prophet) said: *It (its utterance) surprised me, for the doors of heaven were opened for it.* Ibn 'Umar said: *I have not abandoned them (these words) since I heard the Messenger of Allah saying this.*

[Muslim]

- **This dhikr is included in above dua' three times; intend to seek both rewards mentioned in the two ahadeeth with it!**

Sunnah

3

Say these three phrases of dhikr in both ruku' (bowing) and sujood (prostration)!

1. The Prophet, salallahu alayhi wasallam, said in the bowing position (ruku'):

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا وَبِحَمْدِكَ اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي

Subhaanaka Allahumma Rabbanaa wa bihamdika Allahum-maghfir lee.

(Glory is to You, O Allah, our Lord, and praise is Yours. O Allah, forgive me).

[Al-Bukhari, Muslim]

2. The Prophet, salallahu 'alayhi wasallam, also said this beautiful, short dhikr in ruku':

سُبُّوحٌ، قُدُّوسٌ، رَبُّ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّوحِ

Subboohun, Quddoosun, Rabbul-malaa'ikati warrooh.

(Glory (to You), Most Holy (are You), Lord of the angels and the Spirit).

[Muslim, Abu Dawud]

3. And the Prophet, salallahu alayhi wasallam, said this powerful dhikr in ruku':

سُبْحَانَ ذِي الْجَبَرُوتِ، وَالْمَلَكُوتِ، وَالْكِبْرِيَاءِ، وَالْعِظَمَةِ

Subhaana dhil-jabarooti, walmalakooti, walkibriyaa'i, wal'adhamati.

(Glory is to You, Master of power, of dominion, of majesty and greatness).

[Abu Dawud, An-Nasa'i, Ahmad]

Action Points

- Memorise them step by step and say it in ruku', after you say 'Subhana Rabbiyal 'Adheem'
- Get rewarded for glorifying, thanking and asking Allah for forgiveness
- Get forgiven insha Allah
- Write it on a note and hang it on the wall where you pray as consistent reminder

Extra

- Say these in sujood as well - it's sunnah to say the same phrases of dhikr while you prostrate (after saying 'subhana Rabbiyal 'Alaa'). So learn them once and use them in both ruku' and sujood!

Sunnah

4

Say this after ruku' to make the ANGELS race!

Narrated Rifa`a bin Rafi` Az-Zuraqi: *One day, we were praying behind the Prophet (salallahu `alayhi wa sallam) and when he raised his head from the position of ruku, he said:*

سَمِعَ اللهُ لِمَنْ حَمِدَهُ

Sami'Allaahu liman hamidah. (Allah hears the One who praises him).

A man from behind added:

رَبَّنَا وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ، حَمْدًا كَثِيرًا طَيِّبًا مُبَارَكًا فِيهِ

Rabbanaa wa lakal hamd, hamdan katheeran tayyiban mubaarakan feeh.

(Our Lord, all praise is due only to You, praise which is abundant, excellent and blessed).

When we finished the prayer, the Prophet said: 'Who spoke?' The man said: 'I did.' He, salallahu `alayhi wa sallam, said: I saw some thirty angels all scuffling to see which one of them could record it.

[Muslim]

Action Points

- **Memorize it and make it a habit to say:**

Rabbanaa wa lakal hamd, hamdan katheeran tayyiban mubaarakan feeh after you come up from ruku' and after you say *sami'Allahu liman hamidah*.

- Say it with feelings and visualize the angels race!
- Use a note on the wall where you pray as a reminder.

Sunnah 5

Say this in between sujood for 7 amazing gifts!

The Prophet, salallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said this comprehensive dhikr in between two sujood (prostrations) in prayer:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي، وَارْحَمْنِي، وَاهْدِنِي، وَاجْبُرْنِي، وَعَافِنِي، وَارْزُقْنِي، وَارْفَعْني

Allaahum-maghfir lee, warhamnee, wahdinee, wajburnee, wa 'aafinee, warzuqnee, warfa'nee.

(O Allah forgive me, have mercy on me, guide me, support me, protect me, provide for me and elevate me).

[At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah]

Action Points

- Memorise it and say it when you sit in between the two sujood (and usually say another sunnah dhikr which is: *Rabbi-ghfirlee, Rabbi-ghfirlee*).

So you've made 1 prostration and go back into sitting position -say above dhikr- and go into the second prostration.

- Take the opportunity to get rewarded for reviving a sunnah multiple times a day.
- Write it on a note and hang it on the wall where you pray as a consistent reminder.

Extra

Say it from the heart with yaqeen (certainty) and realize you'll be getting these amazing seven gifts by Allah's Will: forgiveness, mercy, guidance, support, protection, provision and elevation!

Do this to get rid of the shaytan in prayer!

‘Uthman Bin Abi Al-Aas, radiyallahu ‘anhu, came complaining to the Prophet, salallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, and he said:

The shaytan comes between me and my salat and causes me problems with my recitation.

So the Messenger of Allah said: That is a shaytan called Khanzab, so if you feel his presence, seek refuge in Allah and blow a mist to your left three times. He said: I applied this advice and Allah has rid me off him.

[Muslim]

Action Points

- **Don't despair or feel hopeless when you struggle with concentrating in salah**, this happened to the best generation in history of mankind, the Companions (Sahabah). But instead, put your trust in Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, and implement this powerful sunnah.
- **When you feel distracted by the shaytan in your salah, seek refuge in Allah from the shaytan's evil by pronouncing the words of the isti'adhah:**

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

Aoodhu billaahi min ash-shaytaanir-rajeem. I seek refuge in Allah from the cursed shaytan.

Say it with strength, as if it's a sword.

- **After you sought refuge , blow with mist to your left side three times.**
This is blowing air in a similar manner to spitting, but with a light mist of saliva.

Extra

- **Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen said:**
When praying in congregation, it is sufficient to seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Shaytaan without spitting dryly, so as to avoid bothering people around you.
[Fataawa Noor ‘ala al-Darb, 185/45]
- **Even in salah, get rewarded by not harming others:**
Intend to not cause any disturbance when praying in the masjid or with family members.

Get rewarded for taking a break!

Surah Al-Fatihah is a marvellous dialogue between the 'abd (slave) and his Lord; it's a conversation between you and the Divine, Allah the Most High.

There is a beautiful, thoughtful sunnah to revive to value this interaction even more.

When Umm Salamah, radiyallahu 'anha, was asked about the recitation of the Messenger of Allah, salallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, she said:

He used to pause after each verse: {Bismillaah Ar-Rahman Ar-Raheem} {Alhamdu lil-laahi Rabbil-'Aalameen} {Ar-Rahmaan Ar-Raheem} {Maaliki Yawmid-Deen}.

[Ahmad, Abu Dawud]

The Prophet, salallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: Allah the Exalted said:

I have divided the prayer (Surah Al-Fatihah) into two halves between Me and My servant. A half of it is for Me and a half for My servant, and My servant shall acquire what he asked for. If he says, "All praise and thanks be to Allah, the Lord of existence," Allah says, "My servant has praised Me." When the servant says, "The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful." Allah says, "My servant has glorified Me." When he says, "Master of the Day of Judgment." Allah says, "My servant has glorified Me." When he says, "You (alone) we worship, and You (alone) we ask for help." Allah says, "This is between Me and My servant, and My servant shall acquire what he sought." When he says, "Guide us to the straight path. The way of those on whom You have granted Your grace, not (the way) of those who earned Your anger, nor of those who went astray." Allah says, "This is for My servant, and My servant shall acquire what he asked for."

[Muslim, An-Nasaa'i]

Action Points

- Next time you recite Surah Al Fatihah pause after each ayah.
- Take this break as a moment to internalise that Allah the Most High answers each ayah.
- Feel Surah Al Fatihah in each prayer and realise you are making dua'. Do so passionately!

Extra

Surah Al Fatiha in congegration? When it comes to reading Surah Al-Fatihah while praying in congegration, the Fatwa of The Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Fataawa reads:

It is obligatory on the one led (in prayer) to recite Al-Fatihah – whether he recites it at the same time the Imaam recites Al-Fatihah in the loud prayers, or while the Imaam is reciting a Surah after Al-Fatihah, or during the Imaam's pause after reciting Al-Fatihah if he pauses. This is optional. It is better, though, to recite it during the Imaam's pause after finishing the recitation of Al-Fatihah, if he paused, so as to reconcile between the differing evidence concerning this.

Sunnah 8

Move it, after prayer!

Do you know that when you see people getting up after an obligatory prayer to pray their sunnah prayer in a different spot, they are actually reviving a sunnah?

The Prophet salallahu 'alayhi wa sallam ordered us to separate between prayers:

One prayer mustn't be joined with another until you speak or exit.

[Muslim]

According to the scholars this refers to the separation between your fardh (obligatory) and sunnah prayers by either speech, an action or movement.

Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him, said: . . . *he (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) prohibited that any [obligatory] salah be followed immediately by [optional] one; one should separate between them with speech or changing one's place.*

Action Points

- **Next time you finish a prayer, move it.**
It can be any place, even right next to where you prayed before. Or separate between your obligatory and sunnah prayers by reciting dhikr (like Ayatul Kursee) or another beneficial 'speech'.
- **Use a note with "swap place" in the room in which you normally pray until it is a habit.**

Extra

It's mustahabb (recommended) to separate between obligatory and naafil (voluntary) prayers by speaking or moving to another spot. Some of the scholars stated that the wisdom behind that is so as to increase the number of places where the Muslim prostrates, so that they will testify in his favour on the Day of Resurrection. Allah knows best.

Sunnah 9

Ask for this at the end of prayer!

The time just before the tasleem (final salam to end your prayer) is a time of rewards many don't utilise. The Prophet, salallahu 'alayhi wasallam, used to say after the final tashahud and before the salam (ending the prayer):

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ

Allaahumma 'innee 'as'alukal-jannata wa 'aoodhu bika minan-naar.

(O Allah, I ask You for Paradise and seek Your protection from the Fire).

[Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah]

Action Points

- Memorise it and say it at the end of any prayer after the last 'attahiyyaatu' or final tashahhud and before you end the prayer with the salam (tasleem).
- Get rewarded with Paradise and protection from the Fire and for reviving a sunnah, by Allah's will!

Extra

- When you ask Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, for Paradise and to protect you from the Fire three times day they supplicate for you.

Anas ibn Malik reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

"Whoever asks Allah for Paradise three times, Paradise will say: O Allah, admit him into Paradise. Whoever seeks protection from Hellfire three times, Hellfire will say: O Allah, save him from the Hellfire."

[At-Tirmidhi]

- Make a double intention to gain this reward as well, by saying above dua' in your prayer and revive this sunnah at the same time.

Sunnah 10

Say this at the end of prayer for multiple protection!

According to the Sahaba (Companions) the Prophet Muhammad, salallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, taught this supplication the way he used to teach a surah from the Qur'an. This indicated how important this dua' was; to such an extent that among the generation after the Sahaba (the Tabi'een) a father asked his son to repeat his prayer because he hadn't used it at the end of his prayer!

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عَذَابِ جَهَنَّمَ وَمِنْ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ وَمِنْ فِتْنَةِ الْمَحْيَا وَالْمَمَاتِ وَمِنْ شَرِّ فِتْنَةِ الْمَسِيحِ الدَّجَالِ

Allaahumma inni aoodhu bika min 'adhaabi jahannama wa min 'adhaab il-qabri wa min fitnat il-mahyaa wa'l-mamaat wa min sharri fitnat il-maseehid-dajjaal.

(O Allah I seek refuge in you from the punishment of hell, the torment of the grave, trial of living and dying, and from the evil trial of the Antichrist).

[Muslim]

Action Points

- Learn and use this dua' at the end of each prayer -after the final tashahud and before the salaam (tasleem at the end).
- Get rewarded for reviving the sunnah and at the same time get Allah's protection in against the hardships of: Hellfire, the grave, the trial of living and dying and the Dajjaal.
- Say it from the heart and make it a life-long habit from now onwards.
- Use a note on the wall where you pray to remind yourself.
- Teach others and make this an ongoing charity (sadaqah jaariyah) for you.

Sunnah 11

Say this at the end of prayer for the best worship!

Your dhikr feels empty, you complain more than you like about little things, you struggle to be grateful and you enter prayer and leave it without feeling much difference? You try for tears to roll down your cheeks when reading certain ayaat from the Quran, but they don't? Did the soul-shaking reality hit you that you are not remembering, giving thanks nor worshipping Allah in the way you hoped to? There is a 5 second sunnah for you to revive which can solve all above.

The Prophet, salallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, urged Mu'adh, radiyallahu 'anhu:

...I urge you, O Mu'adh, never to stop saying at the end of every prayer:

اللَّهُمَّ أَعِنِّي عَلَى ذِكْرِكَ وَشُكْرِكَ، وَحُسْنِ عِبَادَتِكَ

Allaahumma a'inee 'alaa dhikrika wa shukrika wa husni 'ibaadatika.

(O Allah, help me to remember You, give You thanks and to worship You in the best of manners)."

[Abu Dawud]

Action Points

- Say this dua' at the end of each prayer -after the final tashahud and before the salaam (tasleem at the end)
- Get rewarded for reviving the sunnah and at the same time get Allah's help in your: dhikr (remembrance of Him), shukr (gratefulness) and 'ibadah (acts of worship), by His will.
- Say it from the heart and Make it a life-long habit from now onwards.
- Use a note on the wall where you pray to remind yourself.
- Teach others and make this an ongoing charity (sadaqah jaariyah) for you.

Extra

What is meant by "at the end of the prayer" (*dibr as-salaah*) here is in the last part of the prayer before the salaam, because *dibr ash-shay'* (lit. the end of a thing) is part of it.

Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, said in *Zaad al-Ma'ad* (1/294):

"At the end of the prayer" may be understood as meaning before the salaam or after it.

Ibn Taymiyah regarded it as more likely that it is before the salaam. I asked him about that and he said:

Dibr kulli shay' (the end of everything) is part of it, like the *dibr* (rear end) of an animal.

End quote.

Sunnah 12

Say ameen out loud and from the heart!

Narrated Wa'il ibn Hujr, radiyallahu 'anhu:

When the Messenger of Allah recited the verse "Nor of those who go astray" (Surah al Fatihah, verse 7), he would say ameen; and raised his voice (while uttering this word).

[Abu Dawud]

Wa'il bin Hujr narrated:

"I heard the Prophet recite: (Not (the way) of those who earned Your anger, nor those who went astray) and he said: ameen. And he stretched it out with his voice."

[At-Tirmidhi] Note: this is for the imam, the one who leads a prayer.

Action Points

- **Saying ameen out loud by the followers:**

Narrated Abu Hurayrah, radiyallahu 'anhu, Allah's Messenger, salallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said:

Say ameen when the Imaam says 'Ghayri l-maghdoobi `alayhim walad-daalleen' (not the path of those who earn Your Anger (such as Jews) nor of those who go astray (such as Christians)); all the past sins of the person whose saying (of ameen) coincides with that of the angels, will be forgiven.

[Al-Bukhari]

- **Imagine this reward; say ameen as if your life depended on it!**

- **It was narrated from 'Aishah, radiyallahu 'anha, that the Prophet, salallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said:**

The Jews do not envy you for anything more than they envy you for the Salam and (saying) ameen.

[Ibn Majah]

- **Realise the value of ameen and say ameen with feelings and begging Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, for its blessings each prayer. Say your next ameen from the heart (also after dua')!**

Extra

The Standing Committee for Academic Research and Issuing Fatwas stated: *Saying ameen to dua' is prescribed, whether the one who is saying dua' is near or is far away and is being heard on a TV or radio show.*

The one who hears the dua' and would like to be one of those who are included in it, should say ameen.

By doing so he is asking his Lord to answer this dua' and fulfil what is in it, for He is the best of those who are asked.

But if the program is recorded, then it is not prescribed to say ameen to the dua'.

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas were asked: *If I hear a tape that was recorded a year or two ago, in which a shaykh is saying dua', should I say ameen to his dua'? They replied:*

Dua' and saying ameen to it are acts of worship; what is prescribed is to say ameen to the dua' of one who is saying dua' at that moment. As for a dua' recorded on a tape, it is not prescribed to say ameen to it, because there is not really a person who is saying dua'.

Sunnah 13

Focus that gaze!

You can increase your khushoo' (devotion and concentration) in prayer and get rewarded by focusing your gaze on the place of prostration.

'Aa'ishah, radiyallahu 'anha, said:

The Messenger of Allah, salallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, entered the Ka'bah and his gaze did not go beyond the site of his prostration until he came out.

[Ibn Hibbaan, Al-Haakim]

Action Points

- Intend to revive the sunnah by focusing your gaze on your place of sujood.
- Ask Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, to help you increase your khushoo' in your prayers.

Note: Focusing gaze on your index finger in the sitting position (tashahhud).

This is (above) what the scholars of the Standing Committee said is the view of the majority: Abu Haneefah, al-Shaafa'i and Ahmad. Some of them made an exception in the case of the tashahhud, when the worshipper should look at his finger. This is a sound exception, supported by reports in the saheeh Sunnah:

'Abdullah ibn 'Umar, radiyallahu 'anhu, described the way the Prophet, salallahu 'alayhi wa salam sat in the prayer. He said:

He placed his right hand on his right thigh, and pointed with his finger that is next to the thumb towards the qiblah, and he focused his gaze on it or thereabouts.

[An-Nasaa'i]

He (the Prophet) said:

The Sunnah is not to let one's gaze go beyond the pointing (finger).

[Abu Dawud, An-Nasaa'i]

Extra

- Don't let shaytan steal from your salah!

Without knowing or perhaps taking it seriously, we let shaytan 'steal' from our salah; and might be confronted with this on the Day of Judgement when we see the results of our prayers.

'Aa'ishah, radiyallahu 'anha, said:

I asked the Messenger of Allah, salallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, about looking around whilst praying, and he said: That is something that the shaytan steals from a person's prayer. [Al-Bukhari]

The Prophet, salallahu 'alayhi wasallam, also said: *Allah is turning towards His slave so long as he does not look around, so when you pray, do not look around. [Ahmad]*

Action Points

- Strive for Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, turning towards you!
- Realize the importance and feel the beauty of focusing your gaze in salah

Sunnah 14

Increase your tasbeeh and strive for more rewards!

Ibn Qudaamah, may Allah have mercy upon him, said:

The worshipper says Subhaana Rabbiyal-‘Adheem three times and this is the minimum level of perfection. If he says it once, it is enough..” He also said, “The worshipper says Subhaana Rabbiyal-A‘laa three times; and if he says it once, it is enough.”

[Al-Mughni]

Anas, may Allah have mercy upon him, said:

“I have not seen anyone whose prayer is more similar to that of the Messenger of Allah, sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam than this young man - meaning ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd Al-‘Azeez. We guessed that he says the Tasbeeh ten times in Rukoo‘ and ten times in Sujood.”

Imam Ahmad said:

Al-Hasan reported that the perfect manner in reciting the Tasbeeh in Rukoo‘ and Sujood is to say it seven times, the average is five, and the minimum is three times.

Action Points

- **Firstly; make an intention to revive the sunnah by saying tasbeeh.**
(Subhaana Rabbiyal-‘Adheem in rukoo‘ and Subhaana Rabbiyal-A‘laa in Sujood) once, twice, three times or more, if you wish.
- **Aim for the utmost level of perfection and reward**
- **Say tasbeeh a minimum of 1 time, 2, 3, 5 or more times;**
there is no maximum number of tasbeeh, so increase and gain rewards!

Extra

It is not a condition for the mentioning of Allah when bowing down or prostrating to be an odd number.

Ash-Shawkaani may Allah have mercy upon him said:

There is no evidence regarding the excellence of saying the mention a specified number of times, rather one should say ‘Tasbeeh’ as many times as possible according to the length of the prayer without any restriction to a specified number of times, and saying that it is desirable to say ‘Tasbeeh’ an odd number of times and not an even number of times if it is more than three times is something for which there is no evidence.

Sunnah 15

Put that barrier down!

Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri, radiyallahu 'anhu, said: The Messenger of Allah, salallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said:

When one of you prays, let him pray facing a sutrah and let him draw close to it. [Abu Dawud]. The Prophet also said: When one of you prays facing a sutrah, let him draw close to it so that the shaytan will not interrupt his prayer. [Abu Dawud]

What can you use as a sutrah? The Prophet, salallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said:

If any of you places something in front of him, [at least] equal [in height] to the back of a saddle, he should pray without caring who passes [in front of him] on the other (opposite) side of it. [Muslim]

An-Nawawi, may Allah have mercy on him, said:

In this hadeeth it is recommended to have a sutrah in front of the one who is praying, and it explains that the minimum sutrah is the back of a saddle, which is the length of the forearm, or approximately two thirds of a cubit. This purpose may be served by anything that he sets up in front of him. [Sharh Muslim]

Offering prayer behind a sutrah is a sunnah; during obligatory or voluntary prayers, whilst praying in a masjid or at home, while travelling or not, for the general meaning of the hadeeth: When one of you prays(the hadith).

Action Points

- Before you start praying, make the intention to revive a sunnah by putting a sutrah (barrier) in front of you.
- Ask Allah be rewarded for reviving a sunnah and gain protection from the shaytan.
- Know that the sutrah can be anything one puts in front of him, such as a wall, a long stick, or even a handbag!
- Use a sutrah anytime, anywhere!

Extra

The use of a sutrah is for both the imam and someone who is praying alone. As for those who are praying behind an imam, the imam's sutrah is (enough as) their sutrah.

This is as reported on the authority of Ibn Abbas, radiyallahu 'anhu, who said: “ I arrived at Mina when I was nearing puberty, while I was riding a female donkey. The Messenger of Allah salallahu 'alayhi wa sallam was leading the people in prayer. I passed in front of some of the rows (of those who were praying), then I climbed off (my donkey) and sent the donkey to graze. Thereafter, I joined one row and no one objected to my deed.” [Agreed upon.]

This hadith proves that it is allowed to pass in front of rows (of people praying) when they are following an imam and that you don't need to put down a sutrah when following an imam.

Appendix I: Intentions for Salah & Reciting Qur'an

From: Intention Reminder Strips by www.sistersproject.co.uk (print, cut and hang in appropriate places to be reminded)

Note: 'Intentions whilst reciting Qur'an' can be printed, and kept in the Qur'an, to be reminded each time it is used.

Intentions Salah:

- Fulfill command of Allah
- Establish Dhikr (remembrance) of Allah
- Revive the sunnah
- To have good prayers when asked 1st Day of Judgement > for all deeds to be good
- To get reward of 50 prayers
- To recite Quran & get its reward
- Inspire others by our salah
- To be saved on Day of Judgement
- To revive as many sunan of salah as possible



Intentions whilst reciting Qur'an:

- Fulfill Allah's command
- Intercession Day of Judgement
- To heal heart's diseases & cure body
- To fill heart with peace & tranquility
- To know Allah & increase in humility
- To memorise, act upon & ascend in Paradise
- To increase in reward
- To remove worries & anxiety
- To become of Allah's people
- To die whilst reciting
- To glorify Allah & encourage others
- To get guided