

Salaat in the Qur'an

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1 Introduction

1.1 Approach

The guiding principle of Qur'anic explanation that I will follow is that the Qur'an is complete and fully detailed. As two examples of how I would apply these principles, consider the following: -

If a word can have more than one meaning, then I will choose the meaning that:

- Fits the context.
- Leads to the least ambiguity in the meaning of the verse or topic.
- Relies on the Qur'an for its explanation. By this I mean that you do not interpret it in a way that assumes sources for Islam outside of the Qur'an.

If it is not included in the Qur'an, then it is not Islam.

- By this I mean that the job of the Qur'an is not to confirm all the actions that are now practiced, the job of the Qur'an is to guide to the correct action and to rule against false action.

I think that what follows represents a logical way to understand the salaah verses in the Qur'an. My argument is powerful only in so much as I have properly and logically used the available evidence without leaving out important information.

I am human and imperfect, so in reading this document recall this ayah: -

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا

"And do not uphold what you have no knowledge of. For the hearing, eyesight, and mind, of all of these you are responsible."

(17:36)

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this article is to present the Qur'anic data on the topic of salaah. This is aimed at:

- Those among the sunni/shia that ask, "how can you pray without the hadith/sunnah?"
 - I seek to open their eyes to the simplicity of salaah in the Qur'an.
- Those among the people that only accept the Qur'an that want to have a useful reference.
- Those among the people that only accept the Qur'an that believe that salaah is not physical and timed prayer, but rather some other thing.
 - I seek to answer them here to show their error.

2 Salaat in History

2.1 Qur'an

It is interesting to note that salaat was known in the past to Ibrahim, Musa, Isa, Zakariyya, Shu'ayb etc... It is not some sort of innovation 1400 years ago. We will also see this when the Bible will be mentioned. Here are some examples: -

وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى وَعَهِدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَنَّ طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْعَاكِفِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ

And when We made the House (Kaaba) a place of return, a sanctuary for mankind: And take the place where Ibrahim stood (to pray) as a place of prayer (Musallah, a place of salaat). We contracted with Ibrahim and Isma'il: 'Purify My House for those who circle it, and those who stay there, and those who bow and who prostrate.'

(2:125)

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ وَأَخِيهِ أَن تَبَوَّآ لِقَوْمِكُمَا بِمِصْرَ بُيُوتًا وَاجْعَلُوا بُيُوتَكُمْ قِبْلَةً وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

And We inspired to Moses and his brother, "Set aside for your people homes in a delimited/bounded area and make your houses a **focal point*** [for worship] and make obligatory prayer and give good tidings to the believers."

(10:87)

[* Muhammad Asad has translated this similarly]

Qiblah has been translated as [a] 'prayer direction' and [b] 'place of worship'. I have however translated it as "a focal point" in a similar manner to Muhammad Asad.

[a] This does not make sense as while they are in their houses there will be no clear direction for the prayer, as where in the houses will they aim for?

[i] Another meaning I have come across for this is "make your houses face each other".

[b] This does not make sense as telling people to make all their homes places of worship and then also telling them to make obligatory prayer is repetitive. Also, it does not appear to be a natural translation in this context.

This was not religious guidance for the Israelites, rather it was a command from Allah to aid Musa in his mission while still under the yolk of Firoun.

وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ وَأَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا

('Isa said,) 'He has made me blessed wherever I am and directed me to perform prayer (Salaat) and give the alms as long as I live.'

(19:31)

قَالُوا يَشْعَبُ أَصْلَوَانِكَ تَأْمُرُكَ أَنْ تَتْرَكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا أَوْ أَنْ نَفْعَلَ فِي أَمْوَالِنَا مَا نَشَاءُ إِنَّكَ لَأَنْتَ الْحَلِيمُ الرَّشِيدُ

They said, 'Shu'ayb, do your prayers (Salaat) instruct you that we should abandon what our fathers worshipped or stop doing whatever we want to with our wealth? You are clearly the forbearing, the rightly-guided!'
(11:87)

فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَى مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا
وَخَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

The angels called out to him while he (Zakariyya) was standing in prayer (Salaat) in the Upper Room: 'Allah gives you the good news of Yahya, who will come to confirm a Word from Allah, and will be a leader and a celibate, a Prophet and one of the righteous.'
(3:39)

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ

"...and establish worship, pay the poor-due, and bow your heads with those who bow (in worship)."
(2:43) (Talking to the children of Israel).

2.2 Bible

Even if we look at the Old Testament [New International Version - NIV]:

" As for me, I call to God, and the Lord saves me. **Evening, morning, and noon** I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice."
(Psalms 55:16-17, NIV)

" Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. **Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed**, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before."
(Daniel 6:10, NIV)

But we must note that for the Arabs at the time of the prophet who worshipped at the Ka'bah, salaat was corrupted and empty of meaning, as Allah tells us: -

وَمَا كَانَ صَلَاتُهُمْ عِنْدَ الْبَيْتِ إِلَّا مُكَاءٌ وَتَصْدِيَةٌ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ

"Their prayer at the House (Ka'bah) is nothing but whistling and clapping. So taste the punishment because you disbelieved!"
(8:35)

2.2.1 Bakkah/Makkah

"How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord Almighty! My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young— a place near your altar, Lord Almighty, my King and my God. Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you (selah).

Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage. As they pass through the Valley of **Baka**, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools.

They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion. Hear my prayer, Lord God Almighty; listen to me, God of Jacob. (selah)”
(Psalm 84:1-8 NIV)

The NIV scholars rendered selah in the NIV bible as a footnote while the NRSV (New Revised Standard Version) scholars have it as Selah where I have them in brackets. This word is of unclear meaning to Bible scholars, however some of its meanings and the way it sounds (some variants of the pronunciation) sound a lot like salaah. Anyway, we have mention of people always praising Allah at the 'house of the Lord'.

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ
فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَن دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا ۗ وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ۚ
وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ

The first house established for mankind is the one at **Bakkah**; blessed, and guidance for all people. In it are evident signs; the Station of Abraham. Whoever enters it attains security. Pilgrimage to the House is a duty to Allah for all who can make the journey. But as for those who refuse—God is Independent of the worlds.

(3:96-97)

See section 3.7 for why Bakkah and Makkah are the same place.

3 Prerequisites of salaah

The following sections define the mindset and motivation one should have when performing salaah.

3.1 The State of Your Mind

Understand What You Are Saying.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَى حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ ...

O you who have believed, do not approach prayer while **your (mind is) clouded [a]** until you know what you are saying [b], ...
(4:43)

[a] See section 3.6.1.2 for more.

[i] Do not pray while your mind is clouded with emotion or anything which stops you from concentrating on what you are saying.

[b] We cannot use words we do not understand and should not be parroting words without thinking, we should speak and know what we are speaking about.

[i] For this reason I deduce that one may carry a Qur'an in salaah with a translation if needed. Salaah really cannot benefit our souls if our souls hear nothing but foreign noises. If you do not speak Arabic and do not know what you are saying, then you are not in fact fulfilling a fundamental requirement of Salaah.

How can you glorify Allah with your heart and soul if you are just parroting words that mean nothing to you? If they are just words without thought behind them? How can the recitation of Allah's book inspire awe and fear if you do not understand it? How can the words of remembrance reach your ear, if your heart is already filled with some other issue or passion?

3.2 Be Totally Devoted to Allah

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

"Say, "My salaah (Prayers), my worship practices, my life and my death, are all **devoted to Allah, the Lord of the universe.**

He has no partner. This is what I am commanded to believe, and I am the first to submit."
(6:162-163)

This is an absolute requirement. There is absolutely no one else deserving of our salaah and glorification. And if your prayer focuses on anyone other than Allah, you have failed in your salaah and you may have committed shirk.

3.3 Be Humbly Submissive to Allah

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ
الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ
"Successful indeed are the believers,
Who are **humble** in their prayer,"
(23: 1-2)

What kind of arrogance does not humble itself before the All-Mighty Creator and Sustainer of All that is? Surely one that, like Satan, is bound for Hell.

But the one that is humble before Allah has truly appreciated his/her position with respect to Allah and has as such truly brought Allah into remembrance. If you cannot be humble before Allah, then how can you truly worship Allah?

3.4 Do salaah to Remember Allah alone

إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي
"Indeed, I am Allah; there is no other god beside Me; you shall worship Me (alone), and observe the salaah (Prayers) **to remember ME.**"
(20:14)

Here Allah tells us why we do salaah. So take note if you wish for contentment of the soul and a path towards Heaven. If after your salaah you have not remembered Allah, then you have not performed salaah. You have performed some motions and made some noises and nothing else.

3.5 Do Not Do Prayer to Be Seen

فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ
الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ
الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَاءُونَ
"So woe to the praying ones,
Who are neglectful of their prayers (Salaah),
Those who (want but) **to be seen**"
(107:4-7)

To do salaah for show, indicates you fear people more than Allah. It shows insincerity.

3.6 The State of Your Body

3.6.1 Ablutions: Washing and purification

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَى حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّى تَغْتَسِلُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوْهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُورًا غَفُورًا

O you who have believed, do not approach prayer while **your (mind is) clouded** until you know what you are saying, and not (while in a state of) **junub**, except those who are travelling, until you have **washed [L]**. And if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself or you have (intentional and extended) **physical (sexual) contact [e.g. fondling]** with women and find no water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and your hands [with it]. Indeed, Allah is ever Pardoning and Forgiving.

(4:43)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوْهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوْهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهَّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

O you who have believed, when you rise to [perform] prayer, **wash** your faces and your forearms to the elbows and wipe over your heads and wash your feet to the ankles. And if you are (in a state of) **junub**, then **purify [L]** yourselves. But if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself or has had (intentional and extended) **physical (sexual) contact [e.g. fondling]** with women and do not find water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and hands with it. Allah does not intend to make difficulty for you, but He intends to purify you and complete His favour upon you that you may be grateful.

(5:6)

Note from [L], that purification and cleaning oneself refer to the same thing.

3.6.1.1 The basics

Do not approach prayer while your mind is clouded by emotions or otherwise.

Under normal circumstances, outside of the cases in (4:43), your standard ablutions involve the following acts with (at least) **water** if possible, from (5:6):

1. Wash your face.
2. Wash your hands up to your elbows.
3. Wipe your head/hair.
4. Wash your feet.

The events that necessitate additional targeted washing, minimally, of the impacted part(s) with **water** if possible:

1. Sexual intercourse among other things (junub), see section 3.6.1.3.
2. Sexual contact/fondling, see section 3.6.1.3.
3. Using a toilet.
4. Being ill.
5. Coming from a journey.

In the case there is no water then, using **clean earth**:

1. Wipe your face.
2. Wipe your hands.

If there is no clean earth or you cannot stop for any, then pray in any way you can, anywhere you can. See section 8.2.1.

3.6.1.2 Sakr

I translate this as I do (a clouded mind) because sakr has a use that is wider than being limited to intoxicants. Furthermore, alcohol was forbidden clearly in (5:90), the concept of abrogation has no basis in the Qur'an.

From Al-Mufradat fi Gharib al-Quran by Al-Raghib al-Isfahani:

سكر: السكر حالة تعرض بين المرء وعقله، وأكثر ما يستعمل ذلك في الشراب، وقد يعتري من الغضب والعشق

[Rough translation based on what is in Lane's Lexicon] Sakara: As-Ssukru is a state that intervenes as an obstruction between a man and his intellect; mostly used in relation to intoxicating drinks: but sometimes as meaning such a state arising from anger, or from the passion of love.

You can also see in (15:15), (15:72) and (50:19) in relation to this kind of use.

لَقَالُوا إِنَّمَا سُكِّرَتْ أَبْصَارُنَا بَلْ نَحْنُ قَوْمٌ مَسْحُورُونَ

They would say, "Our eyes have only been **dazzled/clouded**. Rather, we are a people affected by magic."
(15:15)

They are not complaining that their eyes are intoxicated from alcohol, rather that their eyes are not functioning as they should be due to being impacted somehow [by emotions or thoughts/biases] so that they cannot see clearly.

Furthermore, Muhammad Asad states the following in relation to this:

The reference to prayer at this place arises from the mention, in the preceding verses, of the Day of Judgment, when man will have to answer before God for what he did during his life in this world: for it is in prayer that man faces God, spiritually, during his earthly life, and reminds himself of his responsibility towards the Creator. As regards the prohibition of

attempting to pray "while in a state of drunkenness", some of the commentators assume that this ordinance represented the first stage of the total prohibition of intoxicants, and has been, consequently, "abrogated" by the promulgation of the law of total abstinence from all intoxicants (5:90). However, quite apart from the fact that the doctrine of "abrogation" is entirely untenable (see surah 2, verse 106), there is no warrant whatever for regarding the above verse as a "first step" which has become redundant, as it were, after total prohibition was ordained. It is, of course, true that the Qur'an forbids the use of intoxicants at all times, and not merely at the time of prayer; but since "man has been created weak" (4:28), his lapse from the way of virtue is always a possibility: and it is to prevent him from adding the sin of praying while in a state of drunkenness to the sin of using intoxicants as such that the above verse was promulgated. Moreover, the expression "while you are in a state of drunkenness (sukara)" does not apply exclusively to alcoholic intoxication, since the term sukr, in its wider connotation, signifies any state of mental disequilibrium which prevents man from making full use of his intellectual faculties: that is to say, it can apply also to a temporary clouding of the intellect by drugs or giddiness or passion, as well as to the state metaphorically described as "drunk with sleep"- in brief, to any condition in which normal judgment is confused or suspended. And because the Qur'an insists throughout on consciousness as an indispensable element in every act of worship, prayer is permitted only when man is in full possession of his mental faculties and "knows what he is saying".

3.6.1.3 Junub

Junub is a general term referring to [in this context] one who is distant from the state, physically as opposed to mentally, of prayer. The mental barrier to salaah being expressed as part of [(4:43), see section 3.6.1.2 in relation this this also] wherein we should not approach prayer if we cannot do so with minds clear enough to do it properly.

Even junub is not a barrier for one who is travelling and/or cannot properly wash him/her self. The word junub has the following basic meanings from Lane's Lexicon [refer to the lexicon for more]:

جَنَبَهُ - He placed, or put, at a distance, or he put, or sent, away, or far away, or far off, or he removed far away, alienated, or estranged, him, or it; (K;) as though he put him, or it, aside, or as though he walked aside;

جَنْبٌ, a word of well-known meaning; (S;) The side, or half, or lateral half, syn. شِقٌّ, (A, K,) of a man, &c.; as also جَانِبٌ ↓ and جَنْبَةٌ ↓: (K;) or the part of a man that is beneath the arm-pit, extending to the flank; as also جَانِبٌ ↓, because it is the side of the person: (Mṣb:)

جُنُبٌ, ... A stranger; (K;) as also جَنْيِبٌ ↓: (S;) or a man who is distant, or remote: (Mṣb:) or distant, or remote, in respect of relationship: ...

For examples of the use of this word as 'away/distant' see (28:11), (87:11), (92:17) ...

For examples of the use of this word as 'side' see (3:191), (4:103), (9:35) ...

A quick elaboration on what junub relates to:

- The state of Junub requires more than the wiping/washing of:
 - Face, hands/forearms, head and feet.
 - Junub refers to something physical, rather than a clouded mind [see section 4.6.1.2].
- It refers to a physical state that is because of something other than:
 - Illness.
 - Being on a journey.
 - Relieving oneself [toilet].
 - Intentional and extended physical contact (fondling and the like) with women [see section 3.6.1.3].

From this quick analysis we can see that junub refers to acts above and beyond those defined in (4:43)/(5:6). An example of this would be sexual acts beyond fondling, as this is a standard act (physical intimacy) that is not specifically mentioned. Other things may include coming from a dirty job, e.g. from an abattoir.

Muhammad Asad limits it to sexual intercourse and writes:

I.e., after sexual intercourse. The term junub (rendered by me as "in a state requiring total ablution") is derived from the verb janaba, "he made (a thing) remote", and signifies one's remoteness from prayer because of immersion in sexual passion.

3.6.1.4 Lams – sexual contact

My translation here is due to the meaning of the word used, from Lane's Lexicon:

لَمَسَهُ, (Ṣ, M, A, Mṣb, K,) aor. {يَلْمُسُ} (Ṣ, M, Mṣb, K) and {يَلْمُسُ}, (Ṣ, Mṣb, K,) inf. n. لَمْسٌ, (Ṣ, M, Mṣb,) He felt it; or touched it; syn. مَسَّهُ: (IAḡr, Az, IDrd, El-Farábee, A, Mṣb, TA:) or he felt it, or touched it, (مَسَّهُ,) with his hand: (Ṣ, Mṣb, K:) or he put his hand to it: (Mṣb:) or he felt it with his hand for the purpose of testing it, that he might form a judgment of it; syn. جَسَّهُ: (M, TA:) and لَامَسَهُ ↓ is syn. with لَمَسَهُ, (M, TA,) or مَاسَّهُ: (A:) لَمْسٌ and مَسٌ both signify the perceiving by means of the exterior of the external skin: (Er-Rághib, TA:) or they are nearly alike: (TA:) [generally, like the English words feeling and touching, respectively:] or the former is, originally, [the feeling] with the hand for the purpose of knowing the feel (مَسَن) of a thing: (IDrd, Mṣb:) or, with the hand, it is the seeking for [or feeling for] a thing here and there: (Lth, TA:)

It would make sense to translate this as 'fondling'. There is no clear Qur'anic basis to interpret this as sexual intercourse (although from use in the Arabic language, you could interpret the phrase as meaning sexual intercourse), as sexual intercourse has been directly referred to in the Qur'an, for example (الزَّفْتُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ).

The verb لَامَسْتُمْ is in its فاعل form, which indicates someone is doing the act in question to or with someone else in an active manner. Rather than just some accidental touch, this implies intentionality and effort. So rather than touched, perhaps 'fondled'/'caressed' etc could be used.

Lams can include a variety of acts such as kissing and fondling.

3.6.1.5 Summary

I believe that ablutions function as a separator between normal activities and the state of prayer. A mental trigger that is set off by a habitual physical activity.

While it has benefits generally in terms of cleanliness, the fact that it can be symbolically done with clean earth [or even not done at all, see section 8.2.1] is a good indicator to the additional symbolic function of ablution.

Not being able to do ablution, is not a barrier to prayer. If you want to pray and can pray, but have no means to cleans yourself, then pray in the best you can anyway.

3.6.2 Menstruation (Haydh)

Menstruation/period is directly mentioned in 2 places in the Qur'an: (2:222) and (65:4).

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ قُلْ هُوَ أَذًى فَأَعْتَزِلُوا النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّى يَطْهَرْنَ فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

“They will ask you about menstruation. Say, ‘It is a **harm/suffering/annoyance [a]**, so keep apart from women during menstruation and do not approach them until they **purify themselves [b]**. But once they have purified themselves, then go to them in the way that Allah has enjoined on you.’ Allah loves those who turn back from wrongdoing, and He loves those who purify themselves.”

(2:222)

[a] The word above used to describe menstruation (azzan = harm/suffering/annoyance) is different from the word (mardh) used for illness in the above ablution verses (4:43) and (5:6).

[i] Menstruation is not included in the explicit categories mentioned that require specific cleaning. Given that ~50% of the population have this for ~25% of their reproductive life, it would certainly have merited a direct mention.

[ii] See 3.6.2.1 for more.

[b] The purification here is used in the context of sexual intercourse and not in the context of prayer.

[i] See [a][i] above and 3.6.2.1.

3.6.2.1 What about purification?

One may say that (2:222) would indicate that a woman is impure, as the same word is used in (5:6)[L]. Therefore, in the same way that those categories in (4:43) are impure and in need of purification/cleaning before prayer, so too is the menstruating woman.

However there are 2 key reasons why this does not support stopping women from prayer.

1. Even with the guidance on cleaning and purity in (4:43) and (5:6), we still have the fact that ceremonial use of clean soil [if available] is sufficient to enable prayer. This ceremonial use does not clean or purify those parts of the body that would be implicated in (4:43)/(5:6).
 - 1.1. Therefore, even those that are dirty/impure, can pray without eliminating this impurity based on their circumstances.
 - 1.2. Please also note section 8.2.1 indicating those that might pray on foot or horseback.
2. Consider that one may pray when sick, if they perform ablutions when water is available.
 - 2.1. The sickness does not disappear after ablutions, and so they are sick (with what that may entail) when they pray.
 - 2.2. By analogy, the menstruating woman can do her ablutions, and pray even while she is still menstruating.

Based on the discussion in 3.6.1.3, Haydh (menstruation) could be in the category of ‘junub’ (as a physical condition) and may occasionally be in the category of ‘sahr’ (as an emotional condition) (section 3.6.1.2).

3.6.2.2 The state of the mind

See sections 3.1 and 3.6.1.2.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَى حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ ...

O you who have believed, do not approach prayer while **your (mind is) clouded** until you know what you are saying, ...
(4:43)

The one caveat on this that I can see, is in relation to the mental/emotional state of women in the times of a period. If some women become overwhelmed due to emotion because of their period [which might not be the case most of the time], then it may be that the first part of (4:43) becomes relevant.

She should then delay the prayer a little bit within its range or else perform a later prayer. Better still, she focuses her mind and tries to pray.

3.6.2.3 Summary

Menstruation is a creation of Allah in women, and it is out of their control. There is no explicit or implicit evidence from the Qur'an to stop women from prayer. It may be that at certain times they find it difficult, however the principle should be to perform the salaah if possible, see section 8.2.

3.7 Direction Of Prayer (Qiblah)

3.7.1 Verses

سَيَقُولُ السُّفَهَاءُ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَا وَلَّاهُمْ عَنْ قِبْلَتِهِمُ الَّتِي كَانُوا عَلَيْهَا قُلْ لِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

The fools among the people will say: "What hath turned them from the Qiblah to which they were used?" Say: To Allah belong both east and West: He guides whom He will to a straight path (2:142)

The word Qiblah means a/the direction to which someone turns his face/body and/or attention, and within the Qur'anic context it would be taken as the direction or focal point faced for prayer.

Qiblah does not mean religious orientation, as the Muslims would not have changed that, it is therefore a geographical orientation. Also note the mention that both east and west belong to Allah, further confirming that this is a direction in a geographical sense. Note also that the "fools" among the people would be able to tell that a change had taken place for something that Muslims did, this gives credence to something physical and obvious, Muslims can be seen praying in a direction very easily.

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعُ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِلَّ إِيْمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَّءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

"In this way We have made you a middlemost community, so that you may act as witnesses against mankind and the Messenger as a witness against you. We only **made [a]** the direction you used to face in order to know those who follow the Messenger from those who turn round on their heels. Though in truth it is a very hard thing—except for those Allah has guided. Allah would never let your faith go to waste. Allah is All-Gentle, Most Merciful to mankind."

(2:143)

[a] Allah brought about the situation (made it to be - جَعَلْنَا) so that the Muslims followed the Qiblah (direction of prayer) of the people of the book.

[i] To note, Allah did not **reveal** it to be the case, rather he **made** it to be the case. This is an important distinction.

The change in the direction of the Qiblah was to test the followers of the messenger. These would most likely have been referring to Jewish and Christian converts or other followers of the messenger, as they would have had their own Qiblah from before, perhaps Jerusalem.

قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ

"We have seen you looking up into heaven, turning this way and that, so We will turn you towards a direction which will please you. Turn your face, therefore, towards the Sacred Mosque. Wherever you all are, turn your faces towards it. Those given the Book know it is the truth from their Lord.

Allah is not unaware of what they do."

(2:144)

They were to turn to (the Ka'bah contained in) the Sacred Mosque. [An example of the two being linked in (5:2), but even just the fact that the Mosque surrounding the Ka'bah is called "The Sacred Mosque" is clear].

وَلَيْنِ أَتَيْنَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ بِكُلِّ آيَةٍ مَا تَبِعُوا قِبْلَتَكَ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَتَهُمْ وَمَا بَعْضُهُمْ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَةَ بَعْضٍ وَلَئِنِ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِنَّكَ إِذًا لِّمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

And if you brought to those who were given the Scripture every sign, they would not follow your Qiblah. Nor will you be a follower of their Qiblah. Nor would they be followers of one another's Qiblah. So if you were to follow their desires after what has come to you of knowledge, indeed, you would then be among the wrongdoers.

(2:145)

We are told that the Jews and Christians would not turn towards the Sacred Mosque, away from the Qiblah/direction(s) they followed.

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ
الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ
وَلِكُلٍّ وِجْهَةٌ هُوَ مُوَلِّئُهَا فَاسْتَثْبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يَأْتِ بِكُمْ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ
وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِنَّهُ لِلْحَقِّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ
وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيْكُمْ حُجَّةٌ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِي وَلَئِي نَمُنَّ بِعَلَيْكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ

Those whom We have given the Book recognize him as they recognize their sons, and a party of them most surely conceal the truth while they know (it).

The truth is from your Lord, therefore you should not be of the doubters.

And everyone has a direction to which he should turn, therefore hasten to (do) good works; wherever you are, Allah will bring you all together; surely Allah has power over all things. And from whatsoever place you come forth, **turn your face towards the Sacred Mosque**; and surely it is the very truth from your Lord, and Allah is not at all heedless of what you do.

And from whatsoever place you come forth, **turn your face towards the Sacred Mosque**; and wherever you are turn your faces towards it, so that people shall have no accusation against you, except such of them as are unjust; so do not fear them, and fear Me, that I may complete My favour on you and that you may walk on the right course.

(2:146-150)

Wherever we decide to travel to on earth we are to direct ourselves toward the Qiblah, the Sacred Mosque. But turn to the Qiblah why? What is the only thing that Muslims do that would require them to need a direction that ALL Muslims would turn to?

If you think about it, there is no other action other than the physical action of salaah. In salaah we stand, bow and prostrate, but in what direction? The Qiblah is the only conceivable answer given the fact that Allah repeatedly emphasises that Muslims turn to it.

Either that, or you believe that Allah wants us to walk sideways always directing ourselves to the Ka'bah. That makes no sense. But never forget that: -

لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ أَنْ تُولُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ
وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي
الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالصَّرَاءِ وَحِينَ
الْبَأْسِ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ

“It is not devoutness to turn your faces to the East or to the West. Rather, those with true devoutness are those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Prophets, and who, despite their love for it, give away their wealth to their relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to travellers and beggars and to set slaves free, and who perform prayer and give the alms; those who honour their contracts when they make them, and are steadfast in poverty and illness and in battle. Those are the people who are true. They are the people who guard against evil.”
(2:177)

Let's look at the next verse: -

وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى وَعَهِدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَنَّ
طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ

Remember We made the House a place of assembly for men and a place of safety; and take ye the station of Abraham as a place of salaah; and We covenanted with Abraham and Isma'il, that they should sanctify My House for those who compass it round, or use it as a retreat, or (those who) bow (and) prostrate themselves (therein in prayer)
(2:125)

We are reminded that people pray at the Ka'bah. Do they pray in every direction, to and away from the Ka'bah? We are told that Allah told Abraham and Ismail to purify the house (the Ka'bah) for 3 reasons: -

1. For those who circle around it.
2. For those who stay for worship in the Sacred Mosque (compare to 2:187)
3. For those who bow and prostrate (in salaah).

All of these three directly relating to the Ka'bah. Here we have an unquestionable link between salaah and the Ka'bah (something which defines a geographical orientation for our salaah). Similarly with: -

وَإِذْ بَوَّأْنَا لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ مَكَانَ الْبَيْتِ أَن لَّا تُشْرِكْ بِي شَيْئًا وَطَهِّرْ بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ

And We located the position of the House for Ibrahim: 'Do not associate anything with Me and purify My House for those who circle it, and those who stand and bow and prostrate.'

(22:26)

I believe that the information above is sufficient to conclude that Qiblah makes no sense except for the direction for prayer (within the above context at least).

3.7.2 The first Qiblah?

As a final point consider: The prophet and his followers followed the Qiblah that others did (or were 'used to') (2:142), but they probably just took it as they had not yet received any guidance, or they wanted the Ka'bah (2:144) but were unsure (2:144) possibly due to the idols.

The fact that they were unsure PROVES that Allah DID NOT reveal to the prophet a Qiblah before this (hence we don't need other sources). Additionally, if Allah had commanded that they turn elsewhere before, we would assume that the messenger would submit absolutely, instead of acting like a weak Muslim hoping and wishing it was in another direction. These two points are enough to bury any opinion that the old Qiblah they prayed towards was revealed to the messenger/Muslims.

Allah created this situation (that it was the only well-known one, for example among the people of the book) to test the believers once he finally assigned the Ka'bah as the Qiblah (2:142).

3.8 The Call for Prayer

وَإِذَا نَادَيْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ اتَّخَذُوهَا هُزُوءًا وَلَعِبًا ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ

When you call to prayer they make a mockery and a game of it. That is because they are people who do not use their intellect.

(5:58)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ فَإِذَا

"O you who believe, when the salaah is announced on Friday, you shall hasten to the commemoration of God, and drop all business. This is better for you, if you only knew."

(62:9)

It is clear that the call for prayer is not specified in the Qur'an. Certainly the one now used is not in the Qur'an. The Qur'an only acts to guide us to call to prayer and guides us to not associate with Allah. Any call for prayer that fulfils both of these is Qur'anically allowable. Let us not forget that Muslims judge by consultation and so it must be widely known and acknowledged. I would favour removing the reference to Muhammad in the Azaan.

وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ

"And those who answer the call of their Lord and establish salaah, and whose affairs are a matter of counsel, and who spend of what We have bestowed on them..."

(42:38)

Calling to prayer is not specified in words, however we could easily create one that is Qur'anic in nature and fulfils the function: (5:58) and (62:9) both mention calling to prayer. The words used are (نَادَيْتُمْ and نُودِيَ), literally to call people to come to prayer, reminding them about prayer. So as a basic call we could say:

- Come to salaah!
- "Believe in your Lord!" (3:193)

- “Surely salaah is a timed ordinance for the believers.” (4:103)
- “Surely prayer (Salaah) keeps (one) away from indecency and evil, and certainly the remembrance of Allah is the greatest” (29:45)

Like with salaah, and Hajj and other topics, we have been trained by habit to expect more detail and more guidelines. There is no need to complicate what is easy.

4 Timings of Salaat

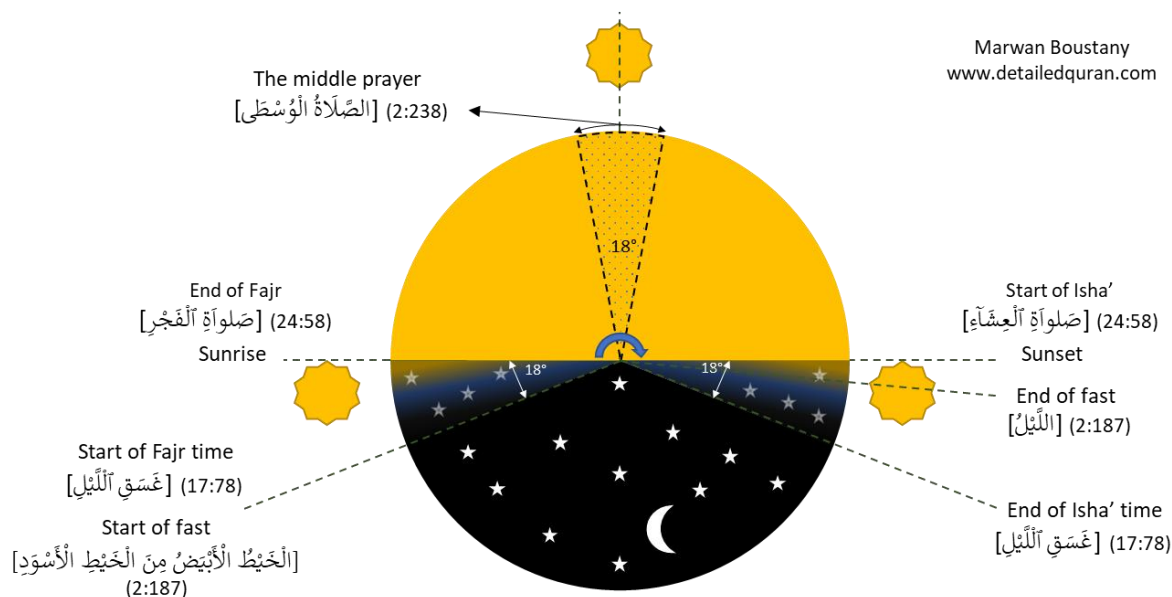


Figure 1: The times of salaat

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ
كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَّوْقُوتًا

Then when you have finished the prayer, remember Allah standing and sitting and reclining; but when you are secure (from danger) keep up prayer; **surely prayer (Salaat) is a timed ordinance for the believers.**

(4:103)

It is clear from this verse [and based on the approach mentioned in section 1.1], that we must indeed be able to derive timing information for salaat from the Qur'an.

This generally is the most contentious topic if you were to talk to the average Muslim, he would suggest that there should be 5 prayers: morning (Fajr), noon (Dhuhr), afternoon (Asr), evening (Maghrib) and night (Isha'). My current understanding leads me to believe that there are only 3 obligatory salaat in the Qur'an, Fajr, Wusta and 'Isha' (Isha having a different time range than in Sunni thinking, namely the period after sunset until the darkness of night).

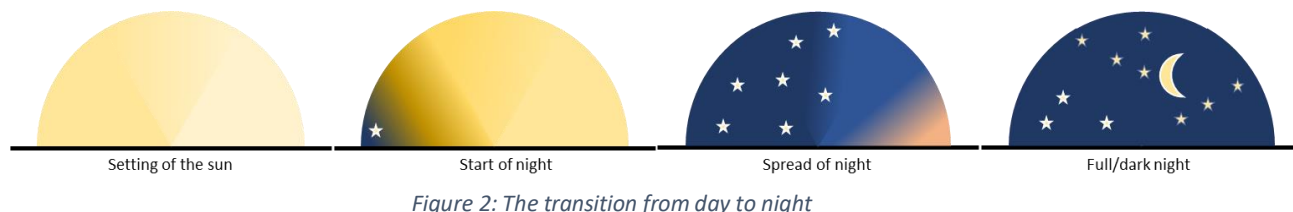
I will present the relevant verses and give what I believe to be the Qur'anic guidance on prayer times. Once again, we must recall that the Qur'an is complete and sufficient.

I should state that the approach taken is to use only those verses that are seen to refer to salaat in a clear manner. There are many verses about praising and glorifying Allah at many times. I make a distinction between glorification and salaat verses, because though one Glorifies Allah in salaat, one does not need to perform salaat to glorify Allah, hence one does not necessarily imply the other. I deal briefly with some of the Glorification verses in the Appendix.

When the night starts

The night starts once it enters into the day (57:6), and is visible on the horizon opposite to the sunset.

It then spreads across the dome of the sky [observable to us] (39:5)(57:6) until the whole sky has been covered and we come to the point of full darkness (17:78)



4.1 The Ends of The Day

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ وَزُلْفًا مِنَ اللَّيْلِ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرٌ لِلذَّاكِرِينَ

“Perform **salaat** at both ends of the day [a] and (in the periods/times) close to the night [b]. Good actions eradicate bad actions. This is a reminder for people who pay heed.”

(11:114)

This verse is traditionally¹ thought to refer to morning and evening prayer, as well as noon and ‘asr prayer. And regarding the times in closeness to the night, this was thought to refer to maghrib and ‘Isha.

- [a] The beginning and end of the nahar (daytime).
 - [i] If we just take tarafay (it is the dual plural of tarf) then this is specifying two points/sides/edges at the ends of the day, but this defines no actual periods of prayer, so we take this expression with the next one to define the period...
- [b] This tells us that the time of prayer is from the edge of the day and into the period of the approaches of the night.
 - [i] From (17:78) below we learn that the end point is at the point of full darkness of the night.

In the current translations we usually see that this verse is translated as talking about both sides of the day and some hours of the night. The ‘approaches of the night’ thought to refer to either ‘ishaa or maghrib and some include asr too... But what is the two sides of the day referring to? All say morning and then some say the other end is either asr or maghrib. So this verse is ambiguous if it is understood traditionally. These translations (and hence the traditional understanding for them) are ambiguous.

The next verse: -

أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِدُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا

¹ <https://www.alim.org/quran/tafsir/ibn-kathir/surah/11/114/>

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

“Perform **salaat** from when the sun declines/sets [a] until the [intense] darkness of the night [b], and also the recitation at dawn. The dawn recitation is certainly witnessed.”

And from [part of] the [dark] night, remain awake [for salaat] as additional [worship] for you; it is expected that your Lord will resurrect you to a praised station.

(17:78-79)

[a] Here we are told of two periods, first from the setting of the sun to the darkness of the night, second in the dawn period. ‘liduluki-shams’ has been interpreted in two ways (both of which can be found in Dictionaries):

[i] The setting of the sun from the midday point, that is, the meridian.

[ii] The setting of the sun in the evening time.

The basic meaning of the word dalaka is ‘to rub’ or rubbing. So I will interpret duluk as the setting of the sun (when the sun is rubbing with the horizon), as this then does not introduce the ambiguity associated with a period stretching from noon (zuhr) until night (layl) with respect to salaat. We must choose the meaning of the word that **removes ambiguity**, not adds it.

So this verse defines the period mentioned in (11:114) as the times close to the night. Namely, the time where the sun has set until the darkness of the night. This actually also defines the fajr prayer by symmetry.

If we understand it as it is usually translated (decline from midday). Then traditionally this period is referring to zuhr, asr, maghrib and ‘ishaa. But we are not informed what period is for what prayer either directly or indirectly. From (11:114) if you understand it as I wrote it above then you will know the ‘traditional’ periods for maghrib and fajr, but not Ishaa’, Asr or zuhr.

If we then take this traditional understanding for (17:78) along with the traditional understanding of (11:114), we are left in a state of confusion regarding the timing of the obligatory prayers. Though note that it is thought that one or both of the above verses may have come before the command for 5 prayers came in the ‘night journey’. See my book (section 9.4.2) for a discussion of this narrative.

Under the guidance of the Qur’an (4:103) we should at least be able to derive some specific understanding from these verses, so we must reject the understandings given by the previous interpreters (based on hadith) as they lead to ambiguous understandings. My above translations can at least lead to a clear understanding, and hence they are more likely to be true.

4.2 The Middle Prayer

حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ * وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ

“Safeguard the **salawaat***—especially the middle **salaat**. Stand in obedience to Allah.”
(2:238)

*Salawaat: This is the plural of salaat, which is greater than two. This implies at least 3 salaat (singular), implying there must be a middle one.

This prayer, the middle prayer, is to be taken as the mid prayer of the day, time wise and position wise. We can and must understand it in this way because there are no other details to expand or contradict this information and approach.

So by taking the Qur'an as complete (based on its internal evidence), we must take that in its description as the middle prayer we have a complete description of its timing and period. So if we fully make use of the meaning of wusta in the sense of middle, then we can derive that the time of this middle prayer can be defined as follows.

It makes sense to think that the middle prayer cannot be in an instant, hence it is not between two specific points, so what is it in the middle of? It would have to be in the middle of the two periods we already have defined.

We already have 4 points defined by the Qur'an, 2 points for each of the dawn and sunset periods. The period defining the middle prayer can have its two end points defined by: -

- The midpoint between first light (the start of the fajr prayer period) and the point of sunset (the start of the 'isha prayer period). This gives the start of the middle prayer period.
- The midpoint between sunrise (the end of the fajr prayer period) and night (the end of the 'isha* prayer period). This gives the end of the middle prayer period.

* 'isha is the name of the post sunset prayer, not 'maghrib', see the discussion for (24:58).

Stated otherwise, the time range is the same duration as the sunset/sunrise time range (which should be pretty much the same), which is a consequence of the middle prayer time range being centred between the other two. This means that this is a short time range, generally a couple hours placed around the midday point.

Some have used the following verse to try and refute having 'Salaatul wusta' at around midday by using the following verse and saying there is no mention of salaat: -

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِيَسْتَأْذِنَكُمْ الَّذِينَ مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَبْلُغُوا الْحُلُمَ مِنْكُمْ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ مِّن قَبْلِ صَلَاةِ الْفَجْرِ وَحِينَ تَضَعُونَ ثِيَابَكُمْ مِّنَ الظَّهْرِ وَمِنَ الْعِشَاءِ ثَلَاثُ عَوَرَاتٍ لَّكُمْ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا عَلَيْهِمْ جُنَاحٌ بَعْدَهُنَّ طَوَافُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

O you who believe! Let those whom your right hands possess and those of you who have not attained to puberty ask permission of you three times; **before the morning (fajr) salaah [a]**, and

when you [pl.] set aside off your clothes due to the midday (heat) (zzahira) [b], and after the evening ('ishaa') salaah [c]; these are three times of privacy/nakedness for you [d]; neither is it a sin for you nor for them besides these, some of you must go round about (waiting) upon others; thus does Allah make clear to you the communications, and Allah is Knowing, Wise.

(24:58)

This ayah clearly indicated that salaah is a physical and timed ordinance as it is associated with two time periods in this verse.

- [a] This refers to the period **before** the fajr salaah. At the time when you are likely to be changing from bed clothes to day clothes.
 - [i] From section 13.1 on page 41, we see that you are going from the time of sleep/night into the start of your day.
 - [ii] So from the time of undress or partial undress due to being in bed to changing into the daytime clothing.
- [b] Time of potential undress if you take your clothes off due to relaxing at home during the midday heat.
- [c] **After** the time or period of the 'isha salaah, when you may change into your evening or bed clothing from your day clothing.
- [d] See also (24:31) in relation to the term (عَوْرَاتٍ) referring to nakedness, especially of the private parts.

Some say that salaah is not mentioned at the time when zuhr is mentioned above, but the point to be noted here is that Allah is taking about potential times of undress, not prayer times. You would not need to change your cloths for salaatul wusta... but you might if you intended to get into bed or to get out of it.

To finish:

حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ

"(You shall) safeguard the prayer, and (especially) the middle prayer, and stand before God in submission."

(2:238)

We should not allow the hustle and bustle of our day to artificially delay the prayer, as we could easily miss it due its timing and duration.

Please see the appendices for more discussion on timing as it relates to salaah.

4.3 An Additional Night Prayer?

I do not believe another salaah is mentioned here, rather the recitation/consideration of the Qur'an. One may perform the motions of salaah as they please.

أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا
وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسَى أَنْ يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُودًا

“Perform **salaah** from when the sun declines/sets until the [intense] darkness of the night. And the [recitation of] Qur'an at dawn, truly the dawn [recitation of] Qur'an is certainly witnessed. [a]”

And from [i.e. part of] the [dark] night [b], remain awake as **additional** [worship through recitation][c] for you; it is expected that your Lord will resurrect you to a praised station.

(17:78-79)

[a] Recital in the morning and evening prayers is done out loud (17:110), and Allah tells use that the morning one is notably witnessed.

[b] The standard dusk prayer is held between the setting of the sun and the full darkness of night. The standard dawn prayer is held between the full darkness of night and the rising of the sun.

[i] Hence this must refer to a time in the full darkness of night.

[c] I interpret this as relating to recitation/consideration of the Qur'an as the context of (17:78), (50:39-40) and (73:1-6) indicate as much.

فَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغُرُوبِ
وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَأَدْبَارَ السُّجُودِ

“So be patient over what they say, and exalt [Allah] with praise of your Lord before the rising of the sun and before its setting,

And glorify Him during the night and at the ends of your prostration.”

(50:39-40)

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَرْمَلُ
قُمْ اللَّيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
نَّصْفَهُ أَوْ انْقُصْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا
أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا
إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا
إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْئًا وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلًا

O you who wraps himself [in clothing],
Arise [to pray] the night, except for a little -
Half of it - or subtract from it a little

Or add to it, and **recite the Qur'an** with measured recitation.

Indeed, We will cast upon you a heavy word.

Indeed, the hours of the night are more effective for concurrence [of heart and tongue] and more suitable for words.

(73:1-6)

See also (73:20)

4.4 Duration of Salaat

The duration of salaat can be derived by considering the very purpose of salaat, namely, to bring Allah to remembrance.

إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي

"I am God; there is no other god beside Me; you shall worship Me alone, and observe the salaat (Prayers) to remember ME."

(20:14)

This implies directly that salaat must be performed until one has properly brought Allah to remembrance. It is the state of mind that is the goal in salaat and not the performance of 3 or 4 rak'as.

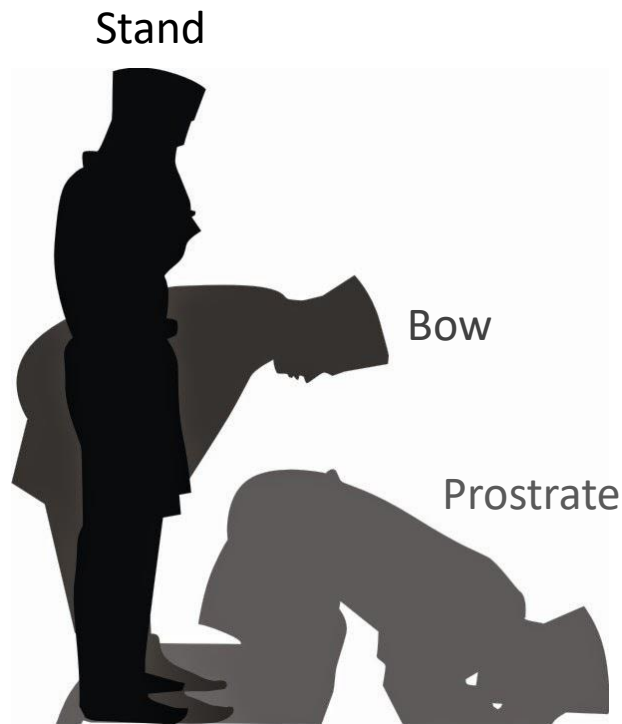
And so one should not rush salaat under normal circumstances. But we are allowed to shorten our salaat at times when extending them could cause unease in us due to fear of attack, Allah describes this when we are on a journey and we fear the possibility of attack.

وَإِذَا ضَرَيْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَقْصُرُوا مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ إِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ كَانُوا لَكُمْ عَدُوًّا مُبِينًا

"When you are travelling in the land, there is nothing wrong in your shortening your prayer if you fear that those who do not believe may harass you..."

(4:101)

5 Positions for Salaat



وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ

And perform salaat and give the alms and **bow** with those who bow.

(2:43)

وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى وَعَهِدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَنَّ
ظَهَرَ بَيْتِي لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْعَاكِفِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ

And when We made the House (Kaaba) a place of return, a sanctuary for mankind: They took the place where Ibrahim stood (to pray) as a **place of prayer** (Musallah, a place of salaat). We contracted with Ibrahim and Isma'il: 'Purify My House for those who circle it, and those who stay there, and **those who bow and who prostrate.**'

(2:125)

The place where Ibrahim established was to be a place of prayer, where people bow and prostrate. A physical location is linked to physical actions.

فَإِ حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ
فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَأَدْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ

Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers and [in particular] the middle prayer and **stand** before Allah, devoutly obedient.

And if you fear [an enemy, then pray] on **foot** or **riding**. But when you are secure, then remember Allah as He has taught you that which you did not know.

(2:238-239)

And when you journey in the earth, there is no blame on you if you shorten the salaah [a], if you fear that those who disbelieve will cause you distress, surely the unbelievers are your open enemy.

Then when you have **finished the salaah** [e], remember Allah standing and sitting and reclining; but when you are secure (from danger) keep up prayer; surely **prayer is a timed ordinance** [f] for the believers.

- [a] If you can shorten salaah, then it is something that is performed in a period of time.
- [b] Standing is part of a time constrained activity.
- [c] The salaah, a physical and timed ordinance, begins with standing and ends with prostration.
- [d] Another group comes to perform the timed and physical act of salaah.
- [e] The salaah will be completed at a certain point in time when all have performed it.
- [f] Because salaah is a timed ordinance, you should attempt to perform it even in the midst of danger.
 - [i] Otherwise, why not just set it aside until safety?

“Those who repent, those who worship, those who praise, those who fast, those who **bow**, those who **prostrate**, those who command the right, those who forbid the wrong, those who preserve the limits of Allah: give good news to the believers.”

And [mention, O Muhammad], when We designated for Abraham the site of the House, [saying], "Do not associate anything with Me and purify My House for those who perform Tawaf and **those who stand [in prayer] and those who bow and prostrate.**"

(22:26)

Here we have salaah as involving standing, bowing and prostrating being linked with the Qiblah of the Sacred House.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ارْكَعُوا وَاسْجُدُوا وَاعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ وَافْعَلُوا الْخَيْرَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

O you who have believed, **bow and prostrate** and worship your Lord and do good - that you may succeed.

(22:77)

وَالَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَامًا

And those who spend [part of] the night to their Lord **prostrating and standing** [in prayer]

(25:64)

إِنَّمَا يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهَا خَرُّوا سُجَّدًا وَسَبَّحُوا بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ

“Only those believe in Our verses (ayaat) who, when they are reminded of them, fall down **prostrate** and exalt/glorify with/by praise of their Lord, and they are not scornful”

(32:15)

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِّنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ ذَٰلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْأَهُ فَآزَرَهُ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ سُوقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيُغَيِّظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; and those with him are forceful against the disbelievers, merciful among themselves. **You see them bowing and prostrating** [in salaah], seeking bounty from Allah and [His] pleasure. **Their mark is on their faces from the trace of prostration.** That is their description in the Torah. And their description in the Gospel is as a plant which produces its offshoots and strengthens them so they grow firm and stand upon their stalks, delighting the sowers - so that Allah may enrage by them the disbelievers. Allah has promised those who believe and do righteous deeds among them forgiveness and a great reward.

(48:29)

Here we have Allah linking a mark on the faces of people from the impact of prostration [which remember may not have been on soft carpet]. A physical act with a physical consequence. One may argue a more abstract meaning, however I believe Allah points this out as something observable to people.

6 Words For salaat

Below are some examples of what we could say: -

قُلْ أَدْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوْ أَدْعُوا الرَّحْمَنَ أَيًّا مَا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى وَلَا تَجْهَرُ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا تُخَافُتْ بِهَا
وَأَبْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا

وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ شَرِيكٌ فِي الْمُلْكِ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ وَلِيٌّ مِّنَ الدُّنْيَا وَكَبَّرَهُ تَكْبِيرًا

Say: "Call upon Allah, or call upon Rahman: by whatever name ye call upon Him, (it is well): for to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names. **Neither speak thy prayer (Salaat) aloud, nor speak it in a low tone, but seek a middle course between.**

And say: "Praise be to Allah, who begets no son, and has no partner in (His) dominion: Nor (needs) He any to protect Him from humiliation: yea, magnify Him for His greatness and glory!"

(17:110-111)

When we pray alone (this is my assumption) we should vocalise our recitation and glorification.

When we pray in groups this is impractical and so there should be one reciter etc... Like we now have in the Friday prayer. The Friday is also likely to be the best-preserved practice of salaat through the ages given that it was most likely, it was widely practiced in any Muslim grouping.

أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ

"You shall recite what is revealed to you of the Scripture (the Qur'an) and establish the salaat. Indeed, salaat prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows that which you do."

(29:45)

An important attribute of Qur'an is to be a reminder [zikr] about Allah and our relationship with Him (3:58 and 15:9). The purpose of salaat is to bring Allah to remembrance (20:14). It is therefore logical that the Qur'an is read/recited in prayer.

إِنَّمَا يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهَا خَرُّوا سُجَّدًا وَسَبَّحُوا بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ

Only those **believe in Our verses who, when they are reminded by them**, fall down in prostration and **exalt [Allah] with praise of their Lord**, and they are not arrogant.

(32:15)

We may be reminded of Allah's ayaat by their recitation when standing for prayer [either our recitation or that of others], and the natural following motions would be to move towards prostrations [likely via bowing].

Examples could include:

فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ

"Then celebrate with praises the name of thy Lord, the Supreme!"

(56:74)

سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى
"Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High,"
(87:01)

Note also: -

فَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغُرُوبِ
وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَأَدْبَارَ السُّجُودِ
"So be patient over what they say and exalt [Allah] with praise of your Lord before the rising of the
sun and before its setting,
And glorify Him during the night and at the ends of your prostration."
(50:39-40)

We must glorify Allah and recite the Qur'an with the goal of remembering Allah. We must glorify and talk only to Allah, our salaah should be devoted solely to our Creator and Sustainer.

Let us once again recall: -

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ
"Say, "My salaah, my worship practices, my life and my death, are all devoted absolutely to Allah, the
Lord of the universe.
He has no partner. This is what I am commanded to believe, and I am the first to submit."
(6:162-163)

Let us shun idolatry in personality or object. No more words of praise or blessing to any prophet in our prayers. They are only men with no power to do anything for us other than guarantee us hellfire if we join them with God in our worship.

If we are to make a proclamation of witness to our belief in Allah, then we can do it as Allah has mentioned in the Qur'an: -

شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُوا الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ
Allah (Himself) is Witness that there is no ilah (deity) save Him. And the angels and the men of
learning (too are witness). Maintaining His creation in justice, there is no ilah (deity) save Him, the
Almighty, the Wise.
(3:18)

The Qur'an is truly an essential part of salaah, its recitation brings us in awe and remembrance of our creator, so that we feel ever more compelled to bow and prostrate while praising and glorifying Allah the exalted.

6.1 What About the Tashahhud?

We are supposed to say, "Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and Allah's mercy and blessings." in the first tashahhud (or the first part of the tashahhud).

In the Qur'an, the times when salaam is said of prophets after they die do not include more immediate and personal terms like 'you'. Read surah 37, examples are 'Peace upon Elias', 'Peace upon Ibrahim'... So the way this salaam is sent on the prophet Muhammad has no precise Qur'anic basis. I think that it is overly personal, like Muhammad is there to hear... He is not.

Did the prophet also say this when he prayed? I'd say no. Can you imagine him saying this to himself on a daily basis? This same argument can be said about the second part of the tashahhud where "O Allah, send Grace and Honour on Muhammad and on the family and true followers of Muhammad just as you sent Grace and Honour on Ibrahim and on the family and true followers of Ibrahim etc..." is said...

Did Muhammad say that? How is this bringing Allah into remembrance? It's not. Recall that this is the function of salaah. We cannot say that remembering Muhammad makes us remember Allah as there is no intermediary to the remembrance of Allah.

Does Allah tell us to do this as part of our salaah? No. It therefore cannot be a required part of salaah, as Muhammad has no authority to create any new Islamic rules/laws.

6.2 The Conclusion of Salaah

Two other issues to do with the ending of salaah (apart from the words of the tashahhud) are raising the index finger when saying, "I bear witness that there is nothing worthy of worship other than Allah" etc... This cannot be a required part of salaah as it is not mandated by Allah.

Saying salaam to the recording angels at the end of each prayer. This is not mandated by Allah and is a practice that cannot be said to be a part of salaah.

7 Benefits of Salaat

أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ

“Recite that which has been revealed to you of the Book and establish prayer (Salaat); surely prayer (Salaat) keeps (one) away from indecency and evil, and certainly the remembrance of Allah is the greatest, and Allah knows what you do.”

(29:45)

And remember: -

إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي

"I am God; there is no other god beside Me; you shall worship Me alone, and observe the salaah (Prayers) to remember ME."

(20:14)

So salaah brings Allah to remembrance, and the remembrance of Allah keeps away from indecency and evil. This is indeed a multifaceted benefit.

8 Commands on Salaat

8.1 Get The Family to Pray

وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا لَا نَسْأَلُكَ رِزْقًا نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكَ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلتَّقْوَى

Instruct your family to perform prayer (Salaat) and be constant in it. We do not ask you for provision. We provide for you. And the outcome rests on doing your duty.

(20:132)

8.2 Always Keep Your Prayers

حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ

“Safeguard prayer—and note the middle one. Stand in obedience to Allah.”

(2:238)

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَوَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ

“Those who safeguard their prayer:”

(23:9)

رِجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ يَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ الْقُلُوبُ وَالْأَبْصَارُ

“(They are) not distracted by trade or commerce from the remembrance of Allah and the performance of prayer and giving alms; fearing a day when all hearts and eyes will be in turmoil.”

(24:37)

الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ دَائِمُونَ

“Those who perform prayer and are constant in it.”

(70:22)

8.2.1 Even if in difficulty, danger or transport

فَإِ حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ

فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَأَدْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ

Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers and [in particular] the middle prayer and **stand** before Allah, devoutly obedient.

And if you fear [an enemy, then pray] on **foot** or **riding**. But when you are secure, then remember Allah as He has taught you that which you did not know.

(2:238-239)

If it is at all possible to do salaah, we must even if we have some worry of our surroundings. Even if it means we do it while walking or if we are in or on some form of transport. Of note here is that there is no mention of stopping for wudu or tayammum. It is so important to bring Allah to remembrance with salaah, and with the praise and glorification of Allah always.

9 Summary on Salaat

1. You start the salaat by standing (see (4:101-103) where we see that the salaat starts with standing, see also (2:125,238)) and reciting from the Qur'an (29:45), in an audible voice (17:110).
2. After the recitation you go to bowing and then prostrating (2:43, 125), (32:15), see also (22:26, 77).
 - 2.1. Glorification of Allah during bowing and prostration is valuable (32:15) and (50:40).
3. The salaat ends on a prostration, see (4:101-103) we see here that after a/the sujud the salaat ends.
4. From (2:239), we know that salaat can be completed in any way we can manage if circumstances force it, for example, times of danger.

There is no indication as to how many times to do a "rak'a" or even what a "rak'a" is. Salaat works by inspiring remembrance of Allah and his greatness through the recitation of the Qur'an while standing, we then bow and prostrate to physically express the feelings of humbleness /gratitude /fear /love /submission/etc. that the Qur'an has inspired in us and to glorify and praise Allah. As the following verse indicates: -

إِنَّمَا يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهَا خَرُّوا سُجَّدًا وَسَبَّحُوا بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ

"Only those believe in Our verses (ayaat) who, when they are reminded of them, fall down prostrate and exalt/glorify with/by praise of their Lord, and they are not scornful"

(32:15)

How many "rak'a"? If we are to understand the term "rak'a" as the series of motions from standing, bowing and prostrating as a "rak'a", then as Allah does not stipulate a number, then there is no specified number that MUST be performed except 1 which is the absolute minimum unless with the exception even to doing a "rak'a" as given by (2:239). But there is no reason why for the sake of communal salaat we cannot agree upon a number. As I stated earlier, the best-preserved physical practice of salaat is likely to be the Friday prayer as this was communally done from the very start.

To those who say that as you can shorten the prayer then it must be at least 2 "rak'a", the following two points can be made: -

- No such thing as a "rak'a" concept in the Qur'an
- You shorten your prayer when you are traveling and fear an enemy, and at such times you can pray on horseback/car/bike or even when just standing. So the concept of a "rak'a" does not even come into it!

We note in the Friday prayer the vocalised recitation of the Qur'an, which is not practiced in the currently performed zuhr and 'asr salaat, against Allah's command in (17:110). This is one point in support of its greater authenticity.

Qur'anically there is no harm in doing 2, 3 or 4 "rak'a". So there is not a problem in praying with other Muslims for the most part and Allah knows best.

The prayer times are the dawn period, the sunset period and the period that is precisely between them temporally. Pray until you have remembered Allah properly.

We must not dedicate our salaam to any other than Allah, so no salaam to Muhammad or any prayers for him to be blessed etc... Also the practice of saying salaam to the recording angels has no Qur'anic basis and adds nothing towards remembering and glorifying Allah. Just always keep in mind during salaam, "who am I glorifying by this action and word?"

Remember always: -

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

"Say, "My salaam (Prayers), my worship practices, my life and my death, are all **devoted to Allah, the Lord of the universe.**

He has no partner. This is what I am commanded to believe, and I am the first to submit."
(6:162-163)

Your salaam is ONLY for Allah.

10 If the Qur'an is fully detailed where are the details for salaah?

This question is the common reaction of those that find difficulty in accepting the direct words of Allah. It manifests itself in questions like: -

- Where are all the details of salaah?
- Where are all the details of Hajj?
- Where are all the details of the allowed and forbidden foods?
- Where are all the details on how much zakah to pay?
- Etc.

The fundamental error in all such questions is that it is assumed that whatever is currently accepted as Islamic practice is necessarily correct or even required. What then happens is that the completeness of the Qur'an is not judged by its own testimony and contents; rather, it is judged by the accepted practices which should have been derived from the Qur'an in the first place.

This trend is old, among Muslims and those before them. Muslims took on practices/beliefs in their religion that had no basis in the Qur'an and then used them to try to justify the need for hadith. The correct question is, "Are the current practices of Muslims derived from and/or supported by the Qur'an?"

These kinds of questions as justifications for hadith found forceful presentation in the works of al-Shafi'i: -

One of al-Shafi'i's strongest arguments in favour of the need for Hadith had to do with the details of obligatory religious practices. More than half of Kitab Jima'al-'ilm and much of the Risala are devoted to this issue, and this reasoning has been accepted and used by Muslims ever since.

'Hadith As Scripture', pg. 90, Aisha Y. Musa

The question of 'what is enough detail?' should be answered simply by looking at the Qur'an. It is called detailed, therefore the detail in it is enough. The logic is simple and consistent.

What has happened to Islam is reminiscent of what happened to the Jewish religion. Where additional sources were called upon to expand, explain and details beliefs and practices.

We even have an indication of this mentality from the New Testament:

"So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, "Why don't your disciples live according to **the tradition of the elders** instead of eating their food with defiled hands?"
Mark 7:5 (NIV)

Here the oral traditions that the Pharisees held up with the 'Taurat', are the traditions found in the Mishnah/Talmud now. Having read the above passages, consider what Allah says about the revelation given to the Jews in the Qur'an, you find it described similarly to the Qur'an:

ثُمَّ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ تَمَامًا عَلَى الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ وَتَفْصِيلًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّعَلَّاهُمْ بِلِقَاءِ رَبِّهِمْ
يُؤْمِنُونَ

Then We gave Moses the Scripture, making complete [Our favour] upon the one who did good and as a **detailing of all things** and as guidance and mercy that perhaps in [the matter of] the meeting with their Lord they would believe.
(6:154)

قَالَ يَمُوسَىٰ إِنِّي أَصْطَفَيْتُكَ عَلَى النَّاسِ بِرِسَالَاتِي وَبِكَلَامِي فَخُذْ مَا آتَيْتُكَ وَكُن مِّنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ
وَكَتَبْنَا لَهُ فِي الْأَلْوَاحِ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَّوْعِظَةً وَتَفْصِيلًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَخُذْهَا بِقُوَّةٍ وَأْمُرْ قَوْمَكَ يَأْخُذُوا بِأَحْسَنِهَا
سَأُورِيكُمْ دَارَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

[Allah] said, "O Moses, I have chosen you over the people with My messages and My words [to you].
So take what I have given you and be among the grateful."
And We wrote for him on the tablets **of all things - instruction and detailing for all things**, [saying],
"Take them with determination and order your people to take the best of it. I will show you the home of the defiantly disobedient."
(7:144-145)

And yet they felt they needed the Talmud [Mishnah] ('Oral revelation' and its explanation) and the words of the Rabbis to explain it and fill in the details. See also Qur'an (5:44-45 in section **Error! Reference source not found.** on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**) in which are commands similar to what Muslims were given to judge only by what was revealed.

The patterns of ignoring the word of Allah and adding to the religion is an old and powerful one, Muslims fell into it with nearly as much zeal as did the Jews. In fact, as the above quote from the Jewish professor indicates, the same reasons used by Muslims can be found in the argumentation of the Talmudic Jews. What follows is an excerpt from "Book of the Wars of YHWH" by Salmon ben Yeruham who was a Karaite (scripturalist) Jew of the 10th century arguing against the Talmudic Jews of his day². A part of this is 'Refutation of Sa'adiah's 7 Arguments' which fit in quite nicely with the series of common questions asked by Muslims seeking to find the Qur'an incomplete.

An excerpt follows: -

[I] May thy steps be hampered in walking, When thou sayest that my congregation has need of the Mishnah, In order to know the precise measurements of the ordinances of the ritual fringe, the lulab, and the booth

And that this is why they arranged it and set it down in writing. Thou has written lies, for not all ordinances have a definite measurement, And that is why the length of the fringe is not specified in the Law. If one should forcefully exhibit this argument, how wilt thou distinguish, And what answer wilt thou make to him, out of the words of the Divine Testimony?

[II] To heap up more lying words, thou has written and set forth further, And has said, secondly, that the Mishnah is ancient, Because in it is explained the precise amount of the heave offering, So that Israel might know what part of what amount they are to give.

² https://www.karaite-korner.org/salmon_ben_yeruham.shtml

This argument is identical with the preceding, And the answer to the former argument applies to the latter as well; No precise amount or sum has been specified for it; Rather each person is to give as much as he wishes and will meet with no complaint.

[III] Thou has said, thirdly that we have need for the inherited tradition,

In order that we might know what day of the week is Sabbath, so that we might keep it holy. But the Sabbath is known to all the inhabitants of the world as a day of rest, From the factual knowledge and reasoning, not merely from reckoning by three, five, and six.

[IV] Though has turned from the right road and has labored much, When thou has said, fourthly, that we need the Mishnah to know which vessel is capable of becoming ritually unclean. But thou has erred, For thou hast not considered the verse, whatsoever vessel it be, wherewith any work is done (Lev. 11:32)

All such vessels are specified in the Law, if thou wouldst but turn thy heart to it.

[V] Still thou holdest fast to broken arguments,

And hast said, fifthly, that there are ordinances which we must observe, and which are not explained in the Law -

Such as prayers, and other ordinances -

Yet the prayers are not mentioned in Scripture. *Thy mouth has not considered the verse, and ye shall pray unto me (Jer. 29:12); And prayers are mentioned also in many other places. Thus, thou hast not remembered, when thou has spoken, the prayer of Daniel, the man greatly beloved of God.*

Therefore I reject from before me all ordinances and statutes which are not written in the Law.

But where are the details for salaah? Spoken also by those who promoted the Talmud as a critical source of guidance in Judaism and those who promoted the Hadith as a critical source of guidance in Islam.

The point here is that the pioneers of the hadith movement, as represented by shafi'i and his like, before and after him, used the same arguments, almost precisely as the promoters of the Talmud in the Jewish religion did. It is truly sad and impressive at the same time. It is truly wrong.

For an extensive treatment on this topic, please see my book, Guidance according to the Qur'an: Returning the Qur'an to its rightful position as the only guidance³.

³ <https://www.detailedquran.com/What%20is%20Guidance/Guidance%20in%20the%20Qur'an.html>

11 Problematic Verses?

Among the standard arguments made for the need for hadith in Islam is the one relating to missing details of practices. In this case, as it relates to prayer/salaah, however it can apply to hajj, zakah etc. The claim [by some] for the following ayah is that “as He has taught you that which you did not know” refers to Salaah and that this information is not in the Qur’an.

For more discussion on this see my book⁴.

حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ
فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُمْ مَا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ

Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers and [in particular] the middle prayer and stand before Allah, devoutly obedient.

And if you fear [an enemy, then pray] on foot or riding. But when you are secure, then remember [a] Allah as He has taught you that which you did not know.

(2:238-239)

[a] The word used here is [فَأَذْكُرُوا] which means to bring Allah to remembrance. This is not the same as a command to pray [do salaah], even though it is a purpose of prayer.

[i] The Qur’an itself contains zikr and knowledge for us and is enough to fulfil this purpose.

[ii] The Qur’an also contains the fundamentals needed for salaah.

⁴ <https://www.detailedquran.com/What%20is%20Guidance/Guidance%20in%20the%20Qur'an.html>

12 Conclusion

My method has been to find the most unambiguous understanding of the primary verses. I take it as a Qur'anically defined axiom that the Qur'an is complete and detailed, I will therefore seek to interpret and understand it in a manner that is in harmony with this axiom.

This has been my approach, and the document above represents my efforts in that direction. I pray I have not made errors, and if I have, I pray Allah helps me see them, either by my own effort or by the words of another.

All praise to Allah the Creator and Sustainer of all that Exists. The One who creates every moment of our existence and who is closer to us than our jugular veins.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

13 Appendices

13.1 Layl and Nahar in the Qur'an: Astronomical

Definitions

In dictionaries of classical Arabic the following is the meaning given to the words لَيْل and نَهَار:

نَهَار [Nahar]: Day as opposed to Layl (night). It tends to be defined as from sunrise to sunset or from dawn until sunset. Though some defined it as the time of the spreading ['flowing'] and dispersion (some say 'its collecting together') of the sight giving light.

Lane's Lexicon:

نَهَرَ

(S, Msb,) aor. نَهَرَ, (Msb,) It (water) ran upon, or along, the ground, (S, TA,) and made for itself a نَهْر [or channel like that of a river]. (S.) See also 10. ____ It (anything, as in one copy of the S, or anything copious, as in another copy of the S and in the TA) ran, or flowed; (S, TA;) as also استنهر (S,) or انتهر (TA.) ____ It (blood) flowed with force: (Msb:)

نَهَار Day; or day-time; contr. of لَيْل (S, TA:) or broad daylight, (Mgh,) from sunrise to sunset: (Mgh, Msb, K:) this is the original signification: (TA;) or this is the signification in the vulgar conventional language: but in the classical language it signifies the time from the rising of the dawn to sunset: (Msb:) or the light between the rising of the dawn and sunset: (K:) and so accord. to the lawyers: (TA:) in the trads., it is the whiteness of the نَهَار, and the blackness of the لَيْل; and there is nothing intervening between the لَيْل and the نَهَار: but sometimes the Arabs amplified, and applied نَهَار to the time from the clear shining of the dawn to the setting [of the sun]: (Msb.) or (so accord. to the TA. but in some copies of the K, and) the spreading of the light [which is a cause] of sight and its dispersion: (K:) in this explanation in the L, in the place of وَأَفْتَرَأَهُ we find وَأَجْتَمَعَهُ [and its collecting together]:

لَيْل [Layl]: Night. It tends to be defined as from sunset to dawn or from sunset to sunrise. It is treated as what is the opposite of day [Nahar]. It is also defined as a time of darkness or blackness. If we define it as the opposite of the time of the spreading/flowing and dispersion of the sight giving light into our area, then it would mean the time when the light flows away and there is no sight giving light in the sky.

There is no unanimous and unequivocal single meaning assigned to these words in the Arabic dictionaries. I am of the opinion that these meanings are affected by what became the practice of fasting, as notice that both the definitions of night and day conveniently can have the night starting and day ending at sunset whereas the night ends and the day starts at dawn. This is an oddly unsymmetrical understanding of day and night.

From Lane's Lexicon:

مُبْصِرٌ

Making, or causing, to see, or to have sight: and hence, giving light; shining; illumining: and conspicuous; manifest; evident; apparent: also making, or causing, to have mental

perception, or knowledge, or skill. وَالنَّهَارُ مُبْصِرًا, in the Ḳur [x. 68, &c. (in the CK ↓ وَالنَّهَارُ مُبْصِرًا)], means, And the day [causing to see; or] in which one sees; (Ḳ;) giving light; shining; or illumining. (TA.) And فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْهُمْ آيَاتُنَا مُبْصِرَةً, also in the Ḳur [xxvii. 13], † And when our signs came to them, making them to have sight, or to have mental perception, or knowledge, or skill; expl. by تَجْعَلُهُمْ بُصْرَاءَ: (Akh, Š, Ḳ:) or giving light; shining; or illumining: (Š:) or being conspicuous, manifest, or evident: or we may read ↓ مُبْصِرَةً, meaning having become manifest, or evident. (Zj, M.) And آتَيْنَا ثَمُودَ النَّاقَةَ مُبْصِرَةً, also in the Ḳur [xvii. 61], † And we gave to Thamood the she-camel, by means of which they had sight, or mental perception, or knowledge, or skill: (Akh:) or a sign giving light, shining, or illumining; (Fr, T;) and this is the right explanation: (T:) or a manifest, or an evident, sign: (Zj, L, Ḳ:) and some read ↓ مُبْصِرَةً, meaning having become manifest, so as to be seen. (Zj, L.) And جَعَلْنَا آيَةَ النَّهَارِ مُبْصِرَةً, also in the Ḳur [xvii. 13], ‡ We have made the sign of the day manifest, or apparent. (K, TA.)

From Lane's Lexicon:

جَلَا

[aor. {يَجْلُو}.], inf. n. جَلَاءَ, (Mšb,) It (a thing, and † an affair, or a case, Mgh, or † information, or tidings, Mšb,) was, or became, clear, unobscured, exposed to view, displayed, laid open, disclosed, or uncovered, لِلنَّاسِ to men, or the people; (Mšb;) as also تَجَلَّى, said of a thing: it († information, or tidings, Š, Mšb, or † an affair, or a case, Mgh,) was, or became, apparent, or plainly apparent, overt, conspicuous, manifest, notorious, plain, obvious, or evident,

Day and Night described in the Qur'an

The descriptions of night and day [as observable phenomena] by Allah seem to be focused on how these phases appear to us, rather than as some abstract description.

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ لِتَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ

He it is who has appointed for you the night that you should rest therein and the day **enabling sight**.

Surely, in that are signs for a folk that listen/consider.

(10:67)

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لِيَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

Do they not see that We made the night that they may rest therein and the day **enabling sight**?

Indeed in that are signs for a people who believe.

(27:86)

See also (40:61), (17:12).

The day enables vision/perception/sight; you can see things during day due to the light of the sun.

وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَاهَا
وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَاهَا
وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَاهَا
وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا

By the sun and its brightness,
by the moon when it follows it[a],
by the day when it **displays it [b]**,
by the night when it **covers it [c]**
(91:1-4)

[a] The moon follows the sun in 3 ways:

- [i] It is the most visible body in the night sky, as the sun is the most visible body in the day sky.
- [ii] As the sun is a means of seeing during the day, the moon is a means of seeing during the night.
- [iii] The light of the moon also follows the sun's light in that it reflects it.

[b] The day [nahar] is the time when the sun is displayed.

[c] The night [layl] is when the sun is concealed.

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَىٰ
وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّىٰ

By the night when it **conceals [a]**
And [by] the day when it makes [things] **apparent [b]**
(92:1-2)

(92:1-2) follows on from (91:3-4) using the same words in relation to layl and nahar. However, without direct reference to the sun, it focuses on the phenomena of day and night by their effect on visibility.

[a] I take this to mean that at night [layl], our surroundings become concealed/covered from vision due to insufficient sunlight.

- [i] The word [غشى] means to cover or conceal something, [غَشَانِي اللَّيْلُ]: The night covered me, or concealed me. [Lane's Lexicon].

[b] The day [nahar] is that which makes things apparent (due to the light), (27:86) and (40:61) support this.

Surah 91 focuses on the sun, the source of light, its presence and absence. (91:1-6) Is in the context of the signs: earth, the sky and heavenly bodies (sun and moon), (91:7) then refers to the human self/being as another sign.

Surah 92 focuses on the impact of the presence and absence of the light itself, namely the product/impact/action of the sun. (92:4-10) seem to focus on product/action/impact of the nature of the human self.

Surah 92 verses are the more comprehensive from the observational perspective than those of surah 91.

فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ اللَّيْلُ رَأَىٰ كَوْكَبًا قَالَ هَٰذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَا أُحِبُّ الْآفِلِينَ

So when the **night covered him (Ibrahim) [a]**, he saw a glistening/gleaming heavenly body. He said, "This is my lord." But when it set, he said, "I like not those that disappear".

(6:76)

[a] [جَنَّ] is used in relation to veiling, concealing, covering.

[i] So when the night [layl] covered Ibrahim, in darkness, his ability to see stars or planets was enabled.

The relationship between Day and Night in the Qur'an

وَأَيَّةٌ لَهُمُ اللَّيْلُ نَسْلَخُ مِنْهُ النَّهَارَ فَإِذَا هُمْ مُظْلِمُونَ

And a sign for them is the night. We **remove/peel/draw** from it the day, so they are **in darkness**.
(36:37)

خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ يُكَوِّرُ اللَّيْلَ عَلَى النَّهَارِ وَيُكَوِّرُ النَّهَارَ عَلَى اللَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ
الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۖ أَلَا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفَّارُ

He created the heavens and earth in truth. He **wraps the night over the day and wraps the day over the night** and has subjected the sun and the moon, each running [its course] for a specified term.

Unquestionably, He is the Exalted in Might, the Perpetual Forgiver.

(39:5)

يُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ وَهُوَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ

He causes the night to **enter in the day** and causes the day to enter in the night, and he is Knowing of that within the breasts.

(57:6)

These three verses let us know that in the dome of the sky that we observe [our 360 degree horizon], we will see:

1. The night enter into the day [on the horizon opposite the setting sun] and then
2. Wrapped around the dome of our visible sky [to the horizon of the previously setting sun].
 - 2.1. This will appear to us like the light of day is being peeled away and replaced by darkness.
3. The day enter into the night [on the horizon the sun rises on] ...

This means that the night will not arrive to the whole sky at any one point, rather it will arrive on one side of the horizon and spread across to the other.

أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِدُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُوداً

Establish prayer at/from the setting of the sun [a] until the [full/intense] darkness of the night [b].

And the recitation of dawn, indeed, the recitation of dawn is ever witnessed.

(17:78)

[a] Some take this to refer to the setting of the sun from the mid-day point [perhaps motivated by finding justification for the 5 prayers].

[i] However, the word has the fundamental meaning of rubbing, and the setting of the sun can be seen as the rubbing of the sun with the horizon.

[b] The adjective [غَسَقَ]/[full/intense darkness] implies not just night, but to a fully dark phase of night.

- [i] If *layl* started at the time of full/intense darkness, then the adjective is unnecessary. This implies that *layl* also stretches into the dawn/dusk period.
- [ii] If we visualise the darkening of the sky from one horizon [opposite to the sunset] to the other [the sunset horizon], then the full darkness of the night takes place when the light has fully left the sky. This is commonly considered to be the case when the centre of the sun passes 18 degrees below the horizon.

When the night starts

The night starts once it enters into the day (57:6), and is visible on the horizon opposite to the sunset.

It then spreads across the dome of the sky [observable to us] (39:5)(57:6) until the whole sky has been covered and we come to the point of full darkness (17:78)

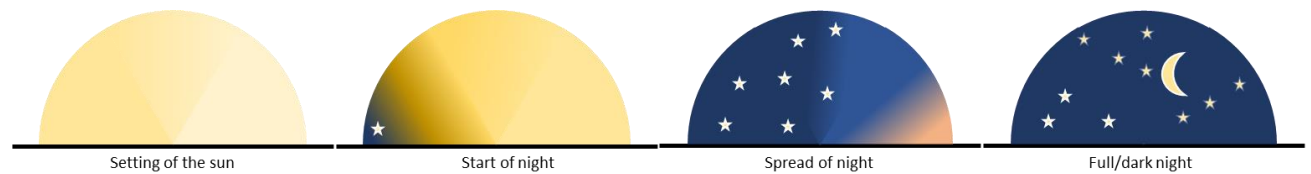


Figure 3: The transition from day to night

13.2 Layl and Nahar in the Qur'an: Functional

In times when the day is impractically long or technically too long [when there is no astronomical twilight], it is worth considering that Allah has associated a function and purpose to the day/nahar and night/layl for us. One that allows us to look at layl and nahar not from an astronomical perspective but from a functional perspective.

فَالِقُ الْإِصْبَاحِ وَجَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ سَكَنًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ حُسْبَانًا ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ

[He is] the cleaver of day [nahar] break [out of the night [layl]] and has made the **night [layl] for rest** and the sun and moon for calculation. That is the determination of the Exalted in Might, the Knowing.

(6:96)

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ لِتَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ

He it is who has appointed for you the **night [layl] that ye should rest therein** and the day [nahar] enabling sight. Surely, herein are signs for a folk that heed.

(10:67)

وَجَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ آيَتَيْنِ فَمَحَوْنَا آيَةَ اللَّيْلِ وَجَعَلْنَا آيَةَ النَّهَارِ مُبْصِرَةً لِّتَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلِتَعْلَمُوا عَدَدَ السِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابَ وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ فَصْلَنَاهُ تَفْصِيلًا

And We have made the night [layl] and day [nahar] two signs, and We erased the sign of the night [layl] and made the sign of the day [nahar] the enabling of sight, **that you may seek bounty from your Lord** and may know the number of years and the account [of time]. And everything We have set out in detail.

(17:12)

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا وَالنَّوْمَ سُبَاتًا وَجَعَلَ النَّهَارَ نُشُورًا

And it is He who has made the **night [layl] for you a covering and sleep [a means for] rest** and has made the day [nahar] a resurrection.

(25:47)

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لِيَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

Do they not see that We made the **night [layl] that they may rest therein** and the day [nahar] enabling sight? Indeed in that are signs for a people who believe.

(27:86)

[See also (40:61)]

وَمِن رَّحْمَتِهِ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ لِتَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِن فَضْلِهِ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

And out of His mercy He made for you the **night [layl]** and the **day [nahar]** that you may **rest therein** and [by day [nahar]] **seek from His bounty** and [that] perhaps you will be grateful.

(28:73)

إِنَّ لَكَ فِي النَّهَارِ سَبْحًا طَوِيلًا

Indeed, for you by day [nahaṛ] is prolonged **occupation**.

(73:7)

وَجَعَلْنَا نَوْمَكُمْ سُبَاتًا

وَجَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا

وَجَعَلْنَا النَّهَارَ مَعَاشًا

And made your sleep [a means for] rest

And made the night [layl] a covering

And made the day [nahaṛ] for **livelihood**

(78:9-11)

We learn from these ayaat that Allah has specified or linked purposes with the nahaṛ and layl. Namely:

1. **Nahaṛ**: A time for seeking Allah's bounty, for seeking and/or earning your livelihood.
 - 1.1. Time of travel to work, work, other day time tasks and time of travel back home.
2. **Layl**: A time for rest and sleep, presumably at home.
 - 2.1. The time of settling, eating, relaxing and sleeping.

This Qur'anic perspective fits naturally with the geography of Mecca and other regions in and around the equator. The days are more balanced with the night and more typically reflect the work rest cycle that would have dominated historically. We can extract principles from this to deal with any geographic and astronomical situation.

13.3 What about very long/short days/nights?

When considering if and when the astronomical or functional perspective makes sense, some interesting questions come to mind.

Extreme days. If we consider Reykjavik in Iceland, it can have day lengths from about 4 hours and 10 minutes up to about 21 hours and 8 minutes.

- Neither of these day lengths matches with the natural working patterns of life for the majority of people.
- Your prayers are either excessively separated or condensed in such an environment. Furthermore, the purpose and benefit of prayer is not served as intended by Allah.

Different work patterns. If you sleep all day and work all night, does:

- Does waking to pray, then going back to sleep 1 – 3 times, make sense?
- Praying once or less during the hours of your waking and work, make sense?

If prayer is to be a reminder of Allah in your work/waking hours, what is the point of surrounding prayer during the hours of your sleep? Is the benefit of prayer for our waking time or our sleep?

13.3.1 Purpose of Salaah

إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي

"I am God; there is no other god beside Me; you shall worship Me alone, and observe the Salaah (Prayers) to remember ME."
(20:14)

أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ

"Recite that which has been revealed to you of the Book and establish prayer (Salaah); surely prayer (Salaah) keeps (one) away from indecency and evil, and certainly the remembrance of Allah is the greatest, and Allah knows what you do."
(29:45)

13.3.2 [Functional] Times of key prayers

A key function of Salaah is to bring about remembrance of Allah and to have that remembrance impact our waking thoughts and actions. Thereby helping to keep us away from the evil that lives in the forgetting of Allah.

Allah defined it on both ends of our [work] day and in the middle of it. Something that in the average workday, would happen approximately once every 6 hours while awake. In days of great length or shortness, it would serve the spirit and logic of Allah's guidance to pray, at least, these functionally timed periods:

1. Before starting the workday.

2. In the middle of the workday.
3. At the end of the workday.

13.4 The Friday Salaat

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ
فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ
وَإِذَا رَأَوْا تِجَارَةً أَوْ لَهْوًا انفَضُّوا إِلَيْهَا وَتَرَكُوكَ قَائِمًا قُلْ مَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ اللَّهْوِ وَمِنَ التِّجَارَةِ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ

O you who believe! when the call is made **for prayer on Friday**, then hasten to the remembrance of Allah and leave off trading; that is better for you, if you know.

And when the prayer is ended, then disperse abroad in the land and **seek of Allah's favour/bounty [a]**, and remember Allah much, that you may be successful.

But when they **see merchandise or some amusement [b]**, they break up for it, and leave you standing. Say: What is with Allah is better than sport and (better) than merchandise, and Allah is the best of Sustainers.

(62:9-11)

[a] This is the same bounty referred to in (17:12) below, the bounty that the daytime is designed to better enable.

[b] Following on well from [a], merchandise and amusement are more likely to be part of the midday time than the sunset time.

So this ayah establishes that the Friday prayer is one that all Muslims must go to regardless of whether they may lose profit or not, and there is special emphasis on not letting trade distract them.

But what about its timing? Is it referring to the Fajr prayer, Midday prayer or 'isha prayer?

The fact that we can return to business would imply that it would be at midday. This is based on the Qur'anic logic that the day is typically for labour and trade and the night typically for rest. Allah says in the Qur'an: -

وَجَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ آيَتَيْنِ فَمَحَوْنَا آيَةَ اللَّيْلِ وَجَعَلْنَا آيَةَ النَّهَارِ مُبْصِرَةً لِّتَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلِتَعْلَمُوا عَدَدَ السِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابَ وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَصَّلْنَاهُ تَفْصِيلًا

"We made the night and day two Signs. We blotted out the Sign of the night and made the Sign of the day a time for seeing so that you can **seek favour/bounty [a]** from your Lord and will know the number of years and the reckoning of time. We have made all things very clear."

(17:12)

[a] The same favour/bounty highlighted above in (62:9-11).

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ لِتَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ

It is He Who appointed the night for you, so that you could **rest** in it, and the day for seeing. There are certainly Signs in that for people who listen.

(10:67)

So these would imply that it was in the plan of Allah that we would use the night for rest and sleep and the day for the seeking of our bounty. And it is indeed still the predominant pattern of work to work the day and not the night, although people are slipping into the night with work more and more, but still I would think day workers outnumber night workers.

The next point to be considered is that the midday point is the point at which the majority of people are likely to be working and making their money. If you go to either end of the day, the number of people steeped in business such that they would struggle to leave it (refer to 62:11), would decrease significantly. Hence the midday prayer would target the majority of people (at all times), and this maximises the test of leaving business and profit, which then maximises the benefit of remembering Allah in our worldly toils.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِيَسْتَأْذِنَكُمْ الَّذِينَ مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَبْلُغُوا الْحُلُمَ مِنْكُمْ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ مِّن قَبْلِ صَلَاةِ الْفَجْرِ وَحِينَ تَضَعُونَ ثِيَابَكُمْ مِّنَ الظُّهْرِ وَمِنَ الْعِشَاءِ ثَلَاثُ عَوَرَاتٍ لَّكُمْ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا عَلَيْهِمْ جُنَاحٌ بَعْدَهُنَّ طَوَافُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

O you who believe! let those whom your right hands possess and those of you who have not attained to puberty ask permission of you three times; **before the morning (fajr) salaah [a]**, and **when you put off your clothes at midday (zzahira) [b]**, and **after the evening ('ishaa') salaah [c]**; these are three times of privacy for you; neither is it a sin for you nor for them besides these, some of you must go round about (waiting) upon others; thus does Allah make clear to you the communications, and Allah is Knowing, Wise.

(24:58)

This verse helps us to understand that Allah is talking to the Arabs and their patterns; this then helps us to understand the Friday prayer verse too and its timing.

We see that the general pattern was that they would only be putting their clothes on before the fajr prayer (hence not out at work to be distracted by minimal trading opportunities). We see that they generally might take off their clothes midday (neither before nor after salaah is mentioned), though on Friday it may or may not be done. They would generally take off their clothes at night after having completed their evening/sunset prayer.

These indicate a lifestyle that revolved around generally daytime hustle and bustle and generally rest by night. And so when Allah commands them not to be distracted by trade from the Friday prayer, they would naturally understand that this would be the middle/daytime prayer. And this also manifests itself in the continuing and somewhat preserved practice of praying the Friday prayer at midday and with an audible voice. Note also (24:36-37).

So the middle prayer is in the pre-noon/noon/afternoon, and Allah says that we should not allow trade to keep us away from this prayer. Hence, we must seek to avoid delaying praying it in its midday time, which is not that long.

And if we again recall: -

حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ

"You shall consistently observe the salaah, especially the middle prayer, and stand before God in submission."

(2:238)

We will note that we should try to avoid delaying the prayer. We should not allow the hustle and bustle of our day to artificially delay the prayer, as we could easily miss it due its timing and duration.

13.5 The Glorification Verses

Arabic word translations: (Using Lane's Lexicon and Lughatul-Qur'an)

Bukran: early morning. (bakr)

Asaal: (plu of aseela) root, base, foundation, evening time (similar to 'asheeyan, it's like when the sun is rooted in the horizon)

Gudoo: early morning

Layl: night

Fajr: Dawn

Zuhr: noon

'ishaa': (late) evening

masaa': (early) evening.

Sabaah: morning.

What I hope to explore here are the timings that have been associated with the act of glorification. I must state that one or two above words can have differing meanings, for example 'ishaa and asaal. I simply chose the meaning that I thought could be nicely linked to the salaah verses. It may be noted that in the classical dictionaries, some of the meanings of these periods have been derived from Sunni practices. I have as a rule not taken these to necessarily be the true and original meanings of these words.

In the following verses I include the transliterated words from the Arabic text relating directly to times. So let's begin: -

"So be steadfast in the face of what they say and glorify your Lord with praise before the rising of the sun (tuloo'l shams) and before its setting (gurrobiha). And glorify Him during parts of the night (layl) and at the (atraaf) parts of the day (nahar), so that hopefully you will be pleased."
(20:130)

This ayah tells us to glorify Allah: -

- Before sunrise
- Before sunset
- During parts of the night
- During parts* of the day.

*At the atraaf (Atraaf = plural greater than 2) of the day. In 11:114 Allah commands us to perform prayer at (tarafay) the sides (plural dual) of the day and in the times approaching the night. The word taraf can mean side as well as part, extremity, edge, ends etc... The most logical meaning would be to take it as 'part'. So atraafu-nahar can mean parts of the day.

So in short, Allah is asking us to glorify him at all times. If we read on, in 20:132 we see that we are told to enjoin prayer in a manner distinct from the glorification verse (20:130). I therefore take them to be representing to differing yet not mutually exclusive phenomena.

“So glory be to Allah when you enter the evening (early evening)(tamsoon) and when you enter the morning. Praise be to Him in the heavens and the earth, in the (‘asheean) late evening and when you reach midday (tuzhiroon).”
(30:17-18)

“So remain steadfast. Allah's promise is true. Ask forgiveness for your wrong action and glorify your Lord with praise in the late evening (‘asheeye) and the early morning (abkar).”
(40:55)

“So wait steadfastly for the judgement of your Lord – you are certainly before Our eyes. And glorify and praise your Lord when you get up. And glorify Him in the night (layl) and when the stars set/fade out (dawn time).”
(52:48-49)

“(It is) so that you might all believe in Allah and His Messenger and honour Him and respect Him and glorify Him in the morning (bukran) and the evening (aseela).”
(48:9)

“We subjected the mountains to glorify with him in the evening (ashee-ye) and at sunrise (isharaaq).”
(38:18)

“You who believe! Remember Allah much, and glorify Him in the morning (bukratan) and the evening (aseela).”
(33:41-42)

“In houses which Allah has permitted to be built and in which His name is remembered, there are men who proclaim His glory morning (bukratan) and evening (aseela),”
(24:36)

“He (Zakariyya) came out to his people from the Upper Room and gestured to them to glorify Allah in the morning (bukratan) and the evening (‘ashee-ya).”
(19:11)

“He (Zakariyya) said, ‘My Lord, appoint a Sign for me.’ He said, ‘Your Sign is that you will not speak to people for three days, except by gesture. Remember your Lord much and glorify Him in the evening (‘ashee-ye) and after dawn (abkaar).”
(3:41)

“Remember your Lord in yourself humbly and fearfully, without loudness of voice, morning (gudoo-y) and evening (asaal). Do not be one of the unaware.”
(7:205)

“Restrain yourself patiently with those who call on their Lord morning (gudoo-y) and evening (‘ashee-ye), desiring His face. Do not turn your eyes from them, desiring the attractions of this world. And do not obey someone whose heart We have made neglectful of Our remembrance and who follows his own whims and desires and whose life has transgressed all bounds.”
(18:28)

“In houses which Allah has permitted to be built and in which His name is remembered, there are men who proclaim His glory morning (gudoo-we) and evening (asaal), not distracted by trade or commerce from the remembrance of Allah and the performance of prayer and the giving of the alms; fearing a day when all hearts and eyes will be in turmoil.”

(24:36-37)

“Remember the Name of your Lord in the morning (bukratan) and the evening (aseela).”

(76:25)

“And they say: "Tales of the ancients, which he has caused to be written: and they are dictated before him morning (bukratan) and evening (aseela).”

(25:5)

It is interesting to note that in these two times of salaah and glorification when Muhammad was likely to be out of sight, the kuffar say that he is being told what to write of the Qur'an.

“Whatever beings there are in the heavens and the earth do prostrate themselves to Allah (Acknowledging subjection),- with good-will or in spite of themselves: so do their shadows in the morning (gudoo-we) and evenings (asaal, this context defines asaal which is sometimes mistranslated as afternoon)”.

(13:15)

“Send not away those who call on their Lord morning (gudoo-we) and evening (‘ashee-ye), seeking His face. In naught art thou accountable for them, and in naught are they accountable for you, that you should turn them away, and thus be (one) of the unjust.”

(6:52)

If we read through these verses (which are not exhaustive, but they are fairly representative), we find that the times of glorification fall into the following regions: -

Night-time: (52:48-49), (20:130).

Morning and Evening time (early and late evening): (20:130), (30:17-18), (40:55), (52:48-49), (48:9), (38:18), (33:41-42), (24:36), (19:11), (3:41), (6:52), (76:25) etc...

Noontime: (30:17-18), (20:130) (indirectly)

At All times: (20:130)

I think therefore that in accordance with the salaah timings, the glorification/supplication timings would generally fit in and around the same time regions. Some are just after a salaah region or before or within it. Nevertheless, Glorification is a different thing from salaah in the Qur'an and their timings need not accord.

Let us be clear that Allah wants us to keep him in remembrance at all times, because let us recall Allah orders us to establish salaah to remember him, and surely the remembrance of Allah is the greatest.

Truly Allah is the greatest. He orders us to read the Qur'an to remember him, to appreciate his mercy and power, to express our devotion physically in body by bowing and prostrating.

And he tells us of glorification at various times because truly those who glorify Allah have properly remembered him.

And in the act of salaah and glorification when we bring Allah into remembrance and with Allah in remembrance we are protected from Satan and averted from evil action.

All praise to Allah, surely there is none other deserving of our total submission.

13.6 Salaat as a physical and timed ordinance

A view taken by some 'Qur'an alone' Muslims is that salaah (among other practices) are understood wrong. In this view, salaah is not a timed and physical act, rather it is understood [for example] as a general religious mind frame or way of being. Closeness/attachment/system of life etc. are all meanings I have come across. In this context, the plural use of salaah [salawaat, see (2:238)] is an issue here. If salaah is a concept (for example, like faith), how can it be implemented in plural? Some even view that establishing salaah at certain times, is only for the messenger.

A major error in approach is as follows. An ayah where the word salaah does not appear to make sense as the physical prayer is found and then used as a basis to say that there is no physical salaah. Some examples of this are (9:84, 9:99, 9:103, 33:43, 33:56, 2:157, 9:103 and 24:41). The error here is that a word may have more than one meaning and context decides that. The same approach is taken with Ruku' and Sujood by necessity as they cannot be interpreted physically if salaah is not to be a physical prayer.

Keep in mind that salaah is a timed and dedicated act, in whatever form you can do it, to remember Allah. Consider:

فَاِخْفِظُوْا عَلٰی الصَّلٰوٰتِ وَالصَّلٰةِ الْوُسْطٰی وَقُوْٓمُوْا لِلّٰهِ قٰنِیْنَ
فَاِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجًاۤ اَوْ رُكْبَانًاۤ فَاِذَا اٰمَنْتُمْ فَاذْكُرُوْا اللّٰهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُوْنُوْا تَعْلَمُوْنَ

Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers and [in particular] the middle prayer and **stand** before Allah, devoutly obedient.

And if you fear [an enemy, then pray] on **foot** or **riding**. But when you are secure, then remember Allah as He has taught you that which you did not know.

(2:238-239)

Here someone walking or sat on a horse can perform salaah. We can then better conceptualise that salaah can be performed by a planet, tree, or bird. However this does not negate that prayer with standing, bowing and prostrating should be performed when possible.

Below I add some extra ayaat that are relevant to this question, these should be seen in addition to comments on a variety of ayaat in the previous sections that unequivocally show that salaah is a times and physical ordinance.

فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِخَيْرٍ مُّصَدَّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَسَيِّدًا
وَخَصُوْرًا وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ

So the angels called him while he was **standing in prayer** in the chamber, "Indeed, Allah gives you good tidings of John, confirming a word from Allah and [who will be] honourable, abstaining [from women], and a prophet from among the righteous."

(3:39)

A location and an action are related to salaah.

اِنَّ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ يُخٰدِعُوْنَ اللّٰهَ وَهُوَ خٰدِعُهُمْ وَاِذَا قَامُوْا اِلَى الصَّلٰةِ قَامُوْا كَسٰلٰى يُّرَءُوْنَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُوْنَ
اللّٰهَ اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا

Indeed, the hypocrites [think to] deceive Allah, but He is deceiving them. And when they **stand to prayer, they stand lazily**, showing [themselves to] the people and not remembering Allah except a little.

(4:142)

A physical action related to salaah is mentioned as something others can witness and which can be performed lazily

قُلْ آمِنُوا بِهِ أَوْ لَا تُؤْمِنُوا إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ إِذَا يُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ يَخِرُّونَ لِلْأَذْقَانِ سُجَّدًا

Say, "Believe in it or do not believe. Indeed, those who were given knowledge before it - when it is recited to them, **they fall [physically] upon their faces [lit. chins] in prostration.**

(17:107)

A physical action, mentioning a specific part of the face, related to an event [hearing Qur'an] is linked to prostration.

أَمَّنْ هُوَ قَانِتٌ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَائِمًا يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُو رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

Is one who is devoutly obedient during periods of the night, **prostrating and standing [in prayer]**, fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Lord, [like one who does not]? Say, "Are those who know equal to those who do not know?" Only they will remember [who are] people of understanding.

(39:9)

Physical acts that are part of prayer as mentioned in a timeframe.