

Muslim men and Muslim women have to pray. But each prayer takes only a few minutes to do.

There are five times every day when the prayers must be done. Allah has told us this.



But Muslims can pray at other times if they want to.

Do you know what times of day Muslims have to pray?



The first prayer is just before the sun rises, just before the sky becomes bright.

Most non-Muslims are asleep at that time.

Muslims get up though at that time even if they feel sleepy.



That prayer is called *fajr*.

The second prayer is in the middle of the daytime.

Maybe you have just had your lunch then?



That prayer is called *dhuhr*.

The third prayer is in the afternoon.

It is called '*asr*.



The fourth prayer is just after the sun sets.

It gets dark at that time of day.



That is when Muslims pray the *maghrib* prayer.

When *maghrib* time has finished, and it is night time, Muslims pray the '*ishaa* prayer.

Maybe you are getting sleepy then!

After the *ishaa* prayer you can go to bed for the night.



These five prayers are the ones that Muslims have to pray.

They are called the *fard* prayers.

Allah has promised to reward us if we pray these prayers.

And He may punish us if we do not do these prayers.



The Prophet ﷺ told us about other prayers that we can pray if we want to.¹



We don't have to pray those other prayers.

If we do pray them correctly and we do them to please only Allah, then He will reward us.

¹ These have different names depending on which non *fard* prayers they are – for example, *rawaatib*, *witr*, etc.

And if we don't pray them He won't punish us for not praying them.



But we should try to pray as many of these prayers as we can.

O Allah, make it easy for us to pray our prayers at their correct times.

O Allah, help us to pray our prayers in the right way.

O Allah, accept our prayers.



Test yourself:

1) What is a *fard* prayer?

The five prayers are:

maghrib, 'ishaa, fajr, dhuhr, 'asr

Now you choose from that list to answer the following questions:

2) Which prayer is prayed at the following times?

Answer

i) the first prayer in the morning, it is starting to become light

.....

ii) middle of the day when people are having lunch

.....

iii) later on in the afternoon

.....

iv) the sun has set and it is getting dark now

.....

v) at night time when it is very dark

.....

3) Here is a list of prayers and the times they are prayed. But everything has become muddled up!

Can you join up each prayer with the correct description?

maghrib first prayer in the morning, starting to become light

`ishaa the sun has set and it is getting dark now

fajr middle of the day people are having lunch

dhuhr later on in the afternoon

`asr night time, it is very dark, time for bed

Revision:

- Does each prayer take a long time?
- What sort of things do we ask Allah for when we pray?
- Do we feel calm and happy after the prayer?

Homework for next time!

- What do we have to do *before* we pray? How do we get ready for the prayer?

Key points for teachers:

Prayer is an act of worship. Therefore the manner in which it is done – and this includes the time at which it is done, as highlighted in this posting – is something that is taken from Revelation, and not from our own intellects.

The most important of the different types of prayer is the *fard* prayers.

There are five distinct time periods for the *fard* prayers in each 24 hours.

Allah has informed us when each of these time periods begins and ends, telling us either in the Qur-aan or in the authentic Sunnah.

The *fard* prayers have to be prayed in their correct times.

The idea that some or all *fard* prayers can be delayed and then prayed together (e.g. at the end of the day) has no basis in Islam.

A person will be rewarded for the *fard* prayers he/she prays as long as it fulfils the necessary conditions of the prayer.

And likewise the person may be punished if they do not pray the *fard* prayers.

The non *fard* prayers should be prayed as well since they will make up for any deficiencies in the person's *fard* prayers.

However a person will not be punished for leaving off non *fard* prayers.

Even children of a young age may be able to understand the idea that the Islamic day begins at Maghrib, rather than Fajr; so a parent may wish to bring up this concept when talking to the child since it will be of relevance as the child grows up *inshaa Allaah* (for example in Ramadaan time with regards to the first *taraaweeh* prayer).