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In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

# Worship during long days

The article was collected by Ummu Mariam.

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Verily, all praises and thanks are due to Allah, we praise Him, seek His help and His forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our souls and evils of our deeds. One whom Allah guides none can lead him astray, and one whom He misguides, none can guide him. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad (SAAS) is His servant and His messenger.

***"O you who believe! Fear Allah*** (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) ***as He should be feared.*** (Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always), ***and die not except in a state of Islam*** [as Muslims (with complete submission to Allah)]." (Al-Qur'aan 3:102 - interpretation of the meaning)

***"O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person*** (Adam), ***and from him*** (Adam) ***He created his wife*** (Eve), ***and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual*** (rights), ***and*** (do not cut the relations of) ***the wombs*** (kinship). ***Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you.***" (Al-Qur'aan 4:1 - interpretation of the meaning)

***"O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and speak*** (always) ***the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger*** (SAAS) ***he has indeed achieved a great achievement*** (i.e. he will be saved from the Hell-fire and made to enter Paradise)." (Al-Qur'aan 33:70-71 - interpretation of the meaning)

*Ammaa ba'd* (as for what follows), the best of speech is the speech of Allah that is the Book of Allah. The best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad (SAAS). Of all matters, the worst are innovations; and everything new is an innovation, and every innovation is a deviation, and every deviation leads to Hell-fire.

The following *fataawaa* concerning praying and fasting in areas where the day is very long or the night is continuous were taken from: [www.islam-qa.com](http://www.islam-qa.com).

**Question #5842:**

Due to the inclination of the earth's axis of rotation, regions nearest to one pole experience continuous day for some months, for example, the trading city of Tromso (about 50000 inhabitants) in northern Norway (in which 0.4% of its population comes from Islamic countries) where the sun is visible continuously from late May to late July, while regions nearest to the other pole experience continuous night during that same period. How do Muslims living in Tromso do for *al-maghrib* and *al-'ishaa'* prayers as night never falls during these few months and also given that the month of *Ramadan* falls during this period, how can they fast?

**Answer:**

All praises and thanks are due to Allah.

*Fatwaa* no. 2769 was issued by the Council of Senior Scholars and the Standing Committee concerning an issue similar to the one you are asking about. This is the text of the question and answer:

All praises and thanks are due to Allah and blessings and peace be upon the one after whom there will be no Prophet.

The Standing Committee for Academic Research and Issuing *fataawaa* has read the question that has been sent to the General Secretary by the Secretary of the Union of Muslim Students in Holland, and which has been passed to them by the Secretary of the Council of Senior Scholars. The text of the question is as follows:

We hope that you can provide us with a *fatwaa* concerning the way of determining the times of *al-maghrib*, *al-'ishaa'* and *al-fajr* prayer, and also the first day of Ramadan and the day of *'eid al-Fitr*. That is because the way the sun rises and sets in the countries of Northern Europe that are close to the North Pole is different from the way it rises and sets in the eastern Muslim countries. The reason for that has to do with the timing of the end of the red and white twilight. It may be noted that in summer the white twilight lasts almost the whole night, so it is difficult to determine the time of *al-'ishaa'* and the onset of the dawn.

They replied: The Council of Senior Scholars in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia issued a statement on the determining of the times of prayer, determining the start of dawn each day, and the end of the dawn in Ramadan, in countries such as yours. This is what it said:

After studying, researching and discussing the matter, the Council decided the following:

**Firstly:** Whoever resides in an area where the night can be distinguished from the day by the onset of dawn and the setting of the sun, but the day is extremely long in the summer and extremely short in the winter, is obliged to perform the five daily prayers at the times known in *sharee'ah*. That is because of the general meaning of the words of Allah, the Exalted (interpretation of the meaning): "**Perform as-salaat** (prayers) **from mid-day till the darkness of the night** (i.e. *adh-dhor*, *al-'asr*, *al-maghrib*, and *al-'ishaa'* prayers), **and recite the Koran in the early dawn** (i.e. the morning – *al-fajr* prayer). **Verily, the**

*recitation of the Koran in the early dawn* (i.e. the morning – *al-fajr* prayer) *is ever witnessed* (attended by the angels in charge of mankind of the day and the night)." (*Al-Qur'aan* 17:78)

Allah, the Exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): "...*Verily, as-salaat* (the prayer) *is enjoined on the believers at fixed hours.*" (*Al-Qur'aan* 4:103)

And because it was proven from Buraydah (*RAA*) that a man asked the Prophet (*SAAS*) about the times of the prayers, and he (*SAAS*) said to him: "*Pray with us for these two*" meaning two days. When the sun passed its zenith, he (*SAAS*) told Bilal to pronounce *al-adhaan*, then he told him to pronounce *al-iqaamah* for *adh-dhohr*. Then he told him to pronounce *al-iqaamah* for *al-'asr* when the sun was still high and clear white. Then he told him to pronounce *al-iqaamah* for *al-maghrib* when the sun had set. Then he told him to pronounce *al-iqaamah* for *al-'ishaa'* when the red afterglow (twilight) had disappeared. Then he told him to pronounce *al-iqaamah* for *al-fajr* when the dawn had appeared. Then on the second day, he told him to delay *adh-dhohr* until the extreme heat had passed and he did so. He prayed *al-'asr* when the sun was high, delaying it beyond the time he had previously performed it. He prayed *al-maghrib* before the red afterglow had vanished; he prayed *al-'ishaa'* when a third of the night had passed; and he prayed *al-fajr* when there was clear daylight. Then he (*SAAS*) said: "*Where is the man who was asking about the time of prayer?*" The man said, "Here I am, O Allah's Messenger." The Prophet (*SAAS*) said: "*The time for your prayer is within the limits of what you have seen.*" (Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim)

It was narrated from 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aas (*RAA*) that Allah's Messenger (*SAAS*) said: "*The time for adh-dhohr is from when the sun has passed its zenith and a man's shadow is equal in length to his height, so long as al-'asr has not come. The time for al-'asr lasts so long as the sun has not turned yellow. The time for al-maghrib lasts so long as the red afterglow has not yet disappeared. The time for al-'ishaa' lasts until midnight. The time for as-sobh (al-fajr) prayer lasts from the beginning of the pre-dawn so long as the sun has not yet risen. When the sun rises, then refrain from praying, for it rises between the two horns of the Satan.*" (Narrated by Muslim)

And there are other *ahaadiith* which have been narrated concerning the definition of the times of the five daily prayers through the words and actions of the Prophet (*SAAS*). It makes no difference whether the night and day are long or short, so long as the times of the prayers can be distinguished by the signs which were explained by Allah's Messenger (*SAAS*).

This is with regard to the timings of the prayers. With regard to the timings of their fast in Ramadan, those who are accountable should refrain from food, drink and everything else that invalidates the fast each day of Ramadan, from the time of dawn until sunset in their areas, so long as the night can be distinguished from the day, and when day and night together add up to twenty-four hours. It is permissible for them to eat, drink, have intercourse, etc during the night only, even if it is short. **The sharee'ah of Islam is universal and applies to all people in all countries.** Allah, the Exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): "...*And eat and drink until the white thread* (light) *of dawn appears to you distinct from the black thread* (darkness of night), *then complete your saum* (fast) *till the nightfall...*" (*Al-Qur'aan* 2:187)

Whoever is unable to complete a whole day's fast because the day is so long, or who knows from experience or from the advice of a competent, trustworthy doctor, or thinks it most likely that fasting will lead to his death or make him severely ill, or will make his sickness worse or impede his recovery, may break his fast and make up the days that he misses in a month when he can make them up. Allah, the Exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): "...*So whoever of you sights* (the crescent on the first night

of) *the month* (of Ramadan, i.e. is present at his home), *he must observe as-saum* (fasts) *that month, and whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number* [of days which one did not observe *as-saum* (fasts) must be made up] *from other days...*" (*Al-Qur'aan* 2:185)

Allah, the Exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): "*Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope...*" (*Al-Qur'aan* 2:286)

Allah, the Exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): "*...Allah does not want to place you in difficulty...*" (*Al-Qur'aan* 5:6)

Allah, the Exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): "*...And (Allah) has not laid upon you in religion any hardship...*" (*Al-Qur'aan* 22:78)

**Secondly:** Whoever lives in a land in which the sun does not set during the summer and does not rise during the winter, or who lives in a land in which the day lasts for six months and the night lasts for six months, for example, has to perform the five daily prayers in each twenty-four hour period. They should estimate their times based on the nearest area in which the times of the five daily prayers can be distinguished from one another, because it was proven in *hadiith al-israa' wal-mi'raaj* (Prophet's Night Journey and Ascent into Heaven) that Allah enjoined on this *ummah* (nation) fifty prayers each day and night, then the Prophet (SAAS) kept asking his Lord to reduce it until He said, "O Muhammad, they are five prayers each day and night, and for each prayer will be the reward of ten, that is fifty prayers..." (Narrated by Muslim)

And it was proven in the *hadiith* of Talhah ibn 'Ubaydillah (RAA) that he said: A man from Najd with unkempt hair came to Allah's Messenger (SAAS) and we heard his loud voice but could not understand what he was saying, till he came near and then we came to know that he was asking about Islam. Allah's Messenger (SAAS) said, "*(You have to offer) five prayers each day and night.*" The man asked, "Do I have to do any (prayers) other than that?" Allah's Messenger (SAAS) said, "*No, unless you want to offer voluntary (nawaafil) prayers...*" (*Al-Bukhari and Muslim*)

And it was proven in the *hadiith* of Anas ibn Malik (RAA) that he said: We were forbidden to ask Allah's Messenger (SAAS) about anything, so we used to like it when an intelligent man from among the desert people came and asked him a question in our hearing. A man from among the desert people came and said, "O Muhammad, your messenger came to us and said that you claim that Allah sent you." He (SAAS) said, "*He spoke the truth.*" ... The man said, "And your messenger claimed that we have to offer five prayers each day and night." The Prophet (SAAS) said, "*He spoke the truth.*" The man said, "By the One Who sent you, has Allah enjoined that upon you?" He (SAAS) said, "*Yes.*" (Narrated by Muslim)

It was proven that the Prophet (SAAS) told his companions about *ad-Dajjal* (Antichrist). He was asked how long he would stay on earth, and he (SAAS) said, "*Forty days, one day like a year, one day like a month, one day like a week and the rest like your days.*" It was said, "O Allah's Messenger, the day which is like a year, will the prayers of one day be sufficient for us then?" He (SAAS) said, "*No, estimate them.*" (Narrated by Muslim)

So the day which will be like a year is not regarded as one day in which only five prayers will be sufficient, rather we are obliged to offer five prayers in each twenty-four hour period. He (SAAS) commanded them (the companions) to offer the prayers at intervals as on a regular day.

So the Muslims in the country mentioned in the question have to define the times of prayer in that land, basing those times on the closest area in which the night and day can be distinguished from one another and the times of the five daily prayers are known according to the signs described in *sharee'ah*, within each twenty-four hour period.

Similarly they also have to fast Ramadan. They can set the time for their fast and determine the beginning and end of Ramadan and the times of starting and breaking the fast each day by the dawn and sunset each day in the closest area in which night can be distinguished from day. The total period must add up to twenty-four hours, because of the *hadiith* of the Prophet (SAAS) about *ad-Dajjaal* mentioned above, in which he told his companions how to determine the times of the five daily prayers. There is no difference in this regard between fasting and prayer.

And Allah is the Source of strength. May Allah send blessings and peace upon our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions.

*Al-Lajnah ad-Daa'imah lil-Buhooth al-'Ilmiyyah wal-Iftaa'* (*Fataawaa al-Lajnah ad-Daa'imah*, 6/130-136)

### **Question #2196:**

I wish to ask you about the problem of praying *al-'ishaa'* and *al-fajr* in the region of Newcastle in Britain. The Muslims here in Newcastle have a big problem with defining the right time for *al-fajr* and *al-'ishaa'* prayers, and the time for starting the fast, because the light reaches the surface of the earth before the sun rises, and stays there after it has set, for a long time, and sometimes this light remains there for the entire night. The astronomers here have divided this period when the light appears until the sun rises, and when remains after sunset until it disappears, into three:

1. When the intensity of the light is such that a person is able to do some work
2. When the light is such that a person cannot do any work that needs light
3. Total darkness

The question here is: how do we define the beginning of the time for *al-fajr* and *al-'ishaa'* and for starting to fast in the light of the times given by these astronomers' calculations?

### **Answer:**

All praises and thanks are due to Allah.

In defining the times of prayer, the astronomers' calculations do not matter. For determining the time of *al-fajr*, what counts is the appearance of a horizontal line of light on the eastern horizon. The time for *al-fajr* starts when this line becomes clear and distinct, and it ends when the sun rises. The time for *al-maghrib* starts when the disk of the sun has set, and it doesn't matter if there is still light after the disk of the sun has disappeared. The time for *al-'ishaa'* begins when the red afterglow of sunset disappears.

The time for fasting begins when the time for *al-fajr* begins, as we have explained above, and the fast ends when the disk of the sun itself has set, even if some of its light remains afterwards.

From *Fataawaa al-Lajnah ad-Daa'imah*, 6/143

O Allah, there is no ease except in that which You have made easy, and You make the difficulty, if You wish, easy.

May Allah, the Exalted, send blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions.



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Allah, the Exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): **"...Help you one another in al-birr and at-taqwaa (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression. And fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Severe in punishment."** (Al-Qur'aan 5:2)

Allah, the Exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): **"By al-'asr (the time). Verily, man is in loss, except those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth, and recommend one another to patience."** (Al-Qur'aan 103)

On the authority of Abu Huraira (RAA) who reported that Allah's Messenger (SAAS) said: *"If anyone calls others to follow right guidance, his reward will be equivalent to those who follow him (in righteousness) without their reward being diminished in any respect, and if anyone invites others to follow error, the sin, will be equivalent to that of the people who follow him (in sinfulness) without their sins being diminished in any respect."* (Muslim)

'Abdullah ibn 'Amr (RAA) narrated that the Prophet (SAAS) said: *"Convey (my teachings) to the people even if it were a single sentence, and tell others the stories of the children of Israel (which have been taught to you), for it is not sinful to do so. And whoever tells a lie on me intentionally, will surely take his place in the (Hell) Fire."* (Al-Bukhari)

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