

The Best Time for Performing the Fajr Salaah

Q: Salaah-310: Very few people attend the Fajr salaah in Jamaa'ah and especially in Masjids where the time for the Fajr salaah is shortly after Subh Saadiq, people prefer to perform their salaah at home. They are therefore deprived of the rewards of salaah in Jamaa'ah. Now will it better to consider these people and fix the time for the Fajr salaah at the last possible time?

Answer: The Ahadeeth state that the Fajr salaah may be performed either in Ghalas (darkness i.e. immediately after Subh Saadiq) or in Isfaar (brightness i.e. some time after Subh Saadiq and close to sunrise). In the early days of islaam when the Sahabah RADI. used to spend nights in the Masjid learning and engaged in Ibaadah, it was easy for them to perform the Fajr salaah in Ghalas (just as it is easier for us during Ramadhaan) and there was no fear of anyone missing the Fajr salaah in Jamaa'ah.

However, as the numbers of the Muslims started to grow, it became more convenient for them to perform salaah during Isfaar and there was no fear of people missing the salaah, Rasulullaah SAW. started to perform the salaah at this time and even mentioned the virtue of doing so. Rasulullaah SAW. said, "Perform salaah when the light is bright because it holds greater rewards. Other Ahadeeth mentioning the same virtue are found in Tirmidhi (Vol.1 Pg.22), Muslim (Vol.1 Pg. 223), Nasa'ee (Vol.1 Pg.50), Ibn Maajah (Pg.49), Majma'uz Zawaa'id (Vol.1 Pg.132), Ibn Abi Shaybah (Vol.1 Pg.321), Tahtaawi (Vol.1 Pg.106) and many others.

It is because of these narrations that Fuqahaa recommend that the Fajr salaah be performed when the sky is bright. This should be at such a time before sunrise in which it is possible to comfortably perform the Fajr salaah according to the Sunnah (reciting at least forty verses) and then to perform another such salaah should the first be rendered invalid on some account. This would be approximately 25 to 30 minutes before sunrise and performing salaah at this time is Mustahab. Performing the Fajr salaah at this time is best because performing it earlier will result in most people not attending since it would be too early for them. It must however not be so late that there is no time to repeat the salaah should the need arise. And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

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