

In the name of

Allah,

the Beneficent,

the Merciful

Al-Furqān

the bi-weekly electronic newsletter from the office of
Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi

O Allah,

Bless

Muhammad

& his progeny

Salat al-Jum‘a / Friday Prayer a few reminders

O you who believe!

*When the call is sounded for the prayer on Friday,
then hasten to the remembrance of Allah and leave aside the trade,
that is better for you if you know.
(The Qur’an 62:9)*

1. Salātu 'l-Jum‘a: wājib ‘ayni or takhiyri?

The Friday Prayer is an important weekly event in the Islamic calendar. It has an important socio-religious aspect of the Muslim community. Ideally, it is a means of communication/interaction between the Islamic government and the ummah. As such the imam of jum‘a plays a very important role in the community; and, therefore, in an ideal situation, he is to be appointed by the legitimate religious authority. The “call” should be “sounded” by the true representative of God — the Prophet or the Infallible Imam or someone who is appointed by the Imam.

And so the obligation of attending the Friday Prayer depends on the imam of the jum‘a. If an evil person like Ziyad bin Abih (who was appointed as the governor of Kufa by Mu‘awiyah) leads the Friday Prayer and openly abuses Imam ‘Ali (a.s.) in its *khutba* (sermon), then surely attending such a Friday Prayer cannot be obligatory!

Therefore, in Shi‘a laws of Islam, if the Friday Prayer is led by the Infallible Shi‘a Imam or someone specially appointed by him —as would be the case after the re-appearance of the Imam al-Mahdi— then salātu 'l-jum‘a would be **wājib ‘ayni**, absolutely/individually obligatory.

However, during the ghaybat (Occultation) of the Present Imam al-Mahdi (a.s.), the Friday Prayer is **wājib takhiyri**.

What does “wājib takhiyri” mean? It means that you have a choice between two obligatory

deeds: you must do one of them, you cannot miss both. In the present case, it means that you have the duty of doing either the Noon (Zuhr) Prayer or the Friday (Jum‘a) Prayer.

Nonetheless, it is preferable to do the Friday Prayer even during the ghaybat. And whenever you do the Friday Prayer, then you will do it with the niyyat of wājib; and after that you do not have to recite the Zuhr Prayer.

2. On Whom is Salātu 'l-Jum‘a Wājib?

The Friday Prayer, whether in form of ‘ayni or takhiyri, is **wājib** upon the men who are resident of that city, in good health, and not elderly.

So the Friday Prayer is **not wājib** upon the women, the traveler, the sick, and the elderly. HOWEVER, this does not mean that they are not allowed to participate in the Friday Prayer; it only means that they are exempted from the obligation of participating in the Friday Prayer.

Considering the Friday Prayer as the most important weekly religious event in a non-Muslim country, it is preferable for the women, the traveler, and the elderly to participate in the Friday Prayer provided it does not cause any inconvenience to them.

In words of Ayatullah Sistani, “For women, it is better to pray at such places where they are best concealed from strangers (*non-mahram*), regardless of whether that place is her home, a mosque or anywhere else.” (*Tawziḥ*, mas‘ala # 903)

The **niyyat** for these exempted people will still be the niyyat of wājib whenever they participate in the Friday Prayer; and they do not have to say the Zuhr Prayer after it.

Question: “I am not able to come every week for the Friday Prayer; I come only occasionally. Do I still have to do the niyyat of wajib whenever I come for Friday Prayer?”

Answer: Yes, you have to do the niyyat of wajib whenever you come for Friday Prayer.

3. Friday Prayer led by a Sunni Imam.

If there is no Shī‘a centre or mosque near your home or work-place, then you can participate in the Friday Prayer led by a Sunni imam. HOWEVER, in this case, you will also have to recite the Zuhr Prayer after it. One of the conditions for the imam of jamā‘at, in Shī‘a fiqh, is that the imam must be Shī‘a Ithnā-‘Ashari.

4. What If I Missed the Khutbas before Jum‘a Prayer?

The two *khutbas* (sermons) delivered by the imam of jum‘a are essential parts of the Friday Prayer ceremony. The audience is required to listen to the *khutba*, and not to engage in any other activity, not even doing the nāfila/sunnat prayer.

However, if a person missed the *khutbas*, he or she can still join the Friday Prayer and it will be considered sufficient.

5. Discipline & Orderliness in Jum‘a

In the Friday Prayer, attentively listen to the *khutba* of the imam. After the *khutba*, straighten up the rows of jamā‘at and stand closer to one another. Hasten in filling the gaps when the iqamah is being recited. Remain silent when the imam is reciting the surahs; and in stages of zikr, those who are in the first rows, should not recite the zikr so loud that the imam hears them. Do not go into the ruku or sujud before the imam.

Imam as-Sadiq (a.s.) said, “The best moment when du‘a is accepted (by God) on Friday is the time when the imam ends his *khutba* and before he asks the people to straighten their rows...”

6. Recommendations for Thursday Night & Friday

In Islam, the day starts from sunset to sunset — so the recommendations of Friday starts from the sunset of Thursday to sunset of Friday:

(A) Thursday Night:

1. Reciting certain surahs of the Qur‘ān: YaSin (#36), Wāqi‘a (#56), Jum‘a (#62), Shu‘ara (#26), Qisas (#28), Ahqaf (#46) and Dukhān (#44).
2. Reciting salawat as much as possible.
3. Praying for the forgiveness of the departed souls of the believers; and also for the fulfillment of the wishes of the believers who are alive.
4. Reciting the famous Du‘a-e Kumayl. I strongly recommend that you read its translation in your own language once a month or at least once every three months until you become familiar with its various themes. After that, even when you recite it Arabic —while not knowing the Arabic language— you will still be able to grasp the spirit of that du‘a.
5. Reciting other recommended du‘as as mentioned in *Mafātih al-Jinān*.

Remember, if you cannot do all these —and not all of us can do that— then make sure that you don’t miss out in all of it. Thursday Night comes with its special blessings, seize the moment as much as you can. When the sons of Prophet Ya‘qub requested their father to pray for them, he said, “I shall *soon* ask for forgiveness for you from my Lord” — he delayed that till Thursday night and then prayed for them.

(B) Friday

1. Doing *ghusl* of Friday before Friday Prayer.
2. Clipping the nail.
3. Shortening the moustache.
4. Putting on perfume.
5. Wearing the best of clothes.
6. Combing the hair and the beard.
7. Giving charity.
8. Saying salawāt 1000 times.
9. Doing the ziyarat of Imam al-Mahdi (a.s.).
10. Reciting Du‘a Nudba in which one longs for the appearance of the Present Imam.

**Imam ‘Ali (a.s.) said,
“Take some fruits for your family every Friday so that they may rejoice on Friday.”**