

'Forgotten Sunnahs of Salah and Wudoo'

We are brought up with the knowledge that Wudoo is to be performed by Washing Hands, Rinsing mouth & Nose, wash the Face, wash the arms till the elbows, wiping the head and then washing the feet, all done 3 times and the wiping done once. But there are other ways proven from authentic Ahadeeth and that a Muslim should put to practice.

The Forgotten Sunnahs related to Wudoo can be listed as:-

1. Doing Siwaak before Wudoo

The Prophet ﷺ said: *"Were it not for the fact that I did not want to make things too hard for my ummah, I would have commanded them to use the siwaak at every time of prayer."* (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 2/299 and Muslim, 1/151). According to another report narrated by al-Bukhaari, he said: *"...at every time of making wudoo'."*

2. Rinsing Mouth and Nose in one go in Wudoo

There are narrations that indicate that Rasool Allah ﷺ used to rinse the mouth and nose in one go as in with one handful of water.

'Abd Allah b. Zayd, while describing the Prophet's wudû, relates that: *"... the Prophet ﷺ would then rinse his mouth and nose with a single handful of water, and he would do so thrice."* [*Sahîh al-Bukhârî* (191) and *Sahîh Muslim* (235)].

The commonly practiced Sunnah of rinsing mouth and nose is to do so by separating them that is to rinse mouth three times and then rinse nose three times. But this hadeeth indicates that it is also Sunnah not to separate the rinsing of the mouth and nose, and to rinse both the mouth and nose from a single handful of water, then rinse the mouth and nose from a single handful, then rinse the mouth and nose from a single handful. This helps saving water as well as one would be taking water three times instead of six.

3. Run the fingers through the Beard after washing the face

Imam Ahmed recorded that Abu Wa'il said, "I saw 'Uthman when he was performing wudoo'... When he washed his face, he passed his fingers through his beard three times. He said, 'I saw the Prophet ﷺ do what you saw me doing.'" (Tirmidhi & Ibn Majah)

4. Sometimes washing parts ones or twice also

Instead of always washing the Face, Arms and feet three times one can sometimes wash them once and sometimes twice, so that you are doing all the different Sunans. The scholars have unanimously agreed that what is obligatory in wudoo is to wash each part once, although washing each part two or three times is Sunnah.

That is because of the report narrated by al-Bukhaari (157) from Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: *The Prophet ﷺ did wudoo' washing each part once.*

Narrated `Abdullah bin Zaid: *The Prophet ﷺ performed ablution by washing parts twice.* [Sahih Bukhari 158]

5. Wiping the head three times

Again the commonly practiced Sunnah is to wipe the head once but it is also proven from the Sunnah to wipe it three times.

Humran said : I saw 'Uthman b. 'Affan performing ablution. He then narrated the same tradition. In this version there is no mention of rinsing the mouth and snuffing up water. This traditions adds : *"He wiped his head three times.* He then washed his feet three times.

He then said: I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ performing ablution in like manner. He (the Prophet) said: *He who performs ablution less than this, it is sufficient for him....."* [Sunan Abi Dawud 107, Saheeh by albanee in saheeh abu dawood (107)]

6. Upon completing Wudoo recite the supplication.

The Prophet ﷺ said: *"There is no one among you who does wudoo' and does it properly and does it well, then he says, (the below Dua) but the gates of Paradise will be opened to him and he may enter through whichever of them he wishes."* (Narrated by Muslim, *al-Tahaarah*, 345).

وَرَسُولُهُ عَبْدُهُ مُحَمَّدًا أَنَّنَّ وَأَشْهَدُ لَهُ شَرِيكَ لَا وَحْدَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا إِلَهَ لَا أَنَّ أَشْهَدُ

'Ashhadu an laa ilaaha ill-Allah wahdahu laa shareeka lah, wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan 'abduhu wa rasooluhu,'

A report narrated by al-Tirmidhi adds:

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي مِنَ التَّوَّابِينَ وَاجْعَلْنِي مِنَ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

"Allahumma ij'alni min al-tawwaabeena wa'jalni min al-mutatahhireen

(O Allah, make me one of those who repent and make me one of those who purify themselves)."

(Saheeh Sunan Abi Dawood, classed as saheeh by al-Albaani)

7. Rubbing between your toes with your smallest (pinky) finger

Mustawrad Ibn Shidad Al-Fahry radiyallahu ‘anhu said: *“If the Prophet ﷺ would perform wudu’, he would rub [between] his toes with his little (or pinky) finger.”* [Abu Dawood, At-Tirmidhee, Ibn Maajah]

To conclude, we must try and implement all of them by alternating them as in by sometimes washing the parts once sometimes twice sometimes thrice or sometimes wash one part once, the other twice and the others thrice. This keeps our concentration while we are making Wudoo and make it more rewarding!

May Allah make us amongst those who shine bright on the day of Judgement for the Prophet ﷺ to recognize his Ummah.

Forgotten Sunnahs Of Salah

Sutra (Screen/barrier)

A Sutra is an object used by a person performing an obligatory or Sunnah prayer (Salah) as a barrier between himself & anyone that may pass in front of him. The idea behind it is that the worshipper should refrain from looking beyond the sutrah, & focus properly so that his mind will not wander.

The Prophet ﷺ said: *“When one of you prays, let him pray facing towards a sutrah and draw close to it, and not let anyone pass in front of him.”* And he ﷺ said: *“Let one of you use a sutrah when he prays, even if it is an arrow.”* (Abi Dawood, Book 2, Hadeeth 698)

The sutrah is mustahabb according to the majority of fuqaha’, and some of them are of the view that it is obligatory.

The sutrah can be anything a wall, a chair, a person praying or sitting in front, a small box, a bag, a stick or if nothing is there then a line can be drawn by a stick and taken as a sutrah.

Stopping someone to pass by in front when praying

Once a Muslim has set a Sutrah himself, he should try not to let anyone or anything pass in front of him, because the Prophet ﷺ said: *“When any one of you prays facing an object that he is using to screen him from the people, and someone wants to pass in front of him, let him push him away, and if he insists let him fight him, for he is no more than a devil.”* (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, *al-Salaah*, 509; Muslim, *al-Salaah*, 505).

The Prophet ﷺ said, *“If someone passing in front of a person performing the prayer knew of the penalty for it, it would be better for him to wait for forty.”* (Bukhari)

Whether the Prophet ﷺ said, forty days, months or years was not mentioned by the narrator.

Therefore, do not hesitate to stop any one whether young or old, remember by stopping them you are actually doing them a favor by saving them from a sin.

Going early to get the First Row

There are many ahadeeth about the virtue and rewards of praying in the first row, the Prophet ﷺ said,

- *“If the people knew what (reward) there is in the call and the first row, and there was no other way to settle the matter than drawing lots, they would draw lots for it.”* [al-Bukhaari (615) and Muslim (437)]
- *“Allah and the angels send blessings on the front rows.”* [Abu Dawood & Nisaai Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani].

A Sunnah everyone knows of, but sadly the Ummah has become laidback and complacent that they think they are already doing enough by just praying with Jamah (those who are abandoning the Jamaa {congregation} is a bigger problem) but that was not the attitude of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ who would compete against each other to be the best.

It was narrated from Abu Harmalah that Ibn al-Musayyab said: I have not missed the first takbeer for fifty years, and I have not looked at a man’s back whilst praying for fifty years. End quote. *Al-Siyar* (4/30), i.e., he used to pray in the front row.

Coming early to the Masjid allows a person to offer other Sunnah prayers and also make Dua between Adhaan & Iqaamah, a time when Duas are accepted.

Keeping the rows straight and gaps filled

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, said:

- *“Straighten your rows, for straightening the rows is part of perfecting prayer.”* [Reported by Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]
- *‘Straighten your rows,’ three times, ‘for by Allah either you straighten your rows or Allah will create division among your hearts.’* And Nu’maan ibn Basheer said: *I saw men standing shoulder to shoulder, knee to knee, ankle to ankle.* (Narrated by Abu Dawood, 662; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood, 616).

Note that the majority of the Fuqaha say that it is sinful to disrupt the lines by standing head and heels ahead of the line. But this is not about just the toes going a little ahead or back, so as a Sunnah we should try and perfect the lines as much as possible.

Raising hands during Prayer (Raf al Dain)

It is proven by from the Sunnah to raise one’s hands in prayer (after Takbir al Ihram – the first Takbeer) are three places during the prayer:

- i. before bowing in Rukoo’
- ii. after rising from Rukoo’
- ii. and when standing up for the third Rakah (after the first Tashahhud)

As mentioned in Class 5, al-Hasan said: “The Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to raise their hands during prayer when they bowed and when they stood up (from bowing).” Al-Bukhaari said, “Al-Hasan did not exclude any of the Sahaabah from that, and it was not proven that any one among the Sahaabah did not raise his hands.” (Bukhari)

Hence my brothers and sisters in Islam, do not let your habit of not doing it or the idea of not doing it being acceptable, stop you from following the Sunnah. Yes, the Salah is acceptable without this or for that matter any of the optional Sunnahs, but then what reason can we give our Lord and our Beloved Prophet ﷺ on the Day of Judgement to abandon such a simple yet worthy Sunnah?

Reciting some verses in the third and fourth rak’ah of Zuhur prayer

Aboo Sa`eed al Khudri (radiAllahu `anhu) said that the Prophet ﷺ used to recite in the first two rak’ahs of Zuhr prayer approximately thirty verses in each rak’ah, and in the last two rak’ahs approximately fifteen verses, or he said: half of that....” [Muslim, 452]

Hence, the scholars say it is Sunnah to sometimes recite a Surah (after Fatihah) in the last two raka’ahs and sometimes recite Surah Fatihah and nothing after that in the last two raka’ahs.

Offering Long Zuhr Prayers

The Prophet ﷺ would sometimes lengthen it to the extent that "the Zuhr prayer would have started, and someone could go to a plain: al-Baqi,' fulfil his need, [come back to his place,] make his ablution, and then come (to the mosque) while the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was still in the first rak'ah, it was that long.

Invoking and Supplicating to Allah during the recitation of the Qur’aan in the salah

Hudhaifah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: I performed Salat with the Prophet ﷺ one night, and he started reciting Surat Al-Baqarah. He ﷺ then started reciting Surat An-Nisa’ which he followed with Surat Al-Imran. He recited leisurely. When he recited an Ayah which mentioned the tasbeeh, he would say Subhan Allah and when he recited the Ayah which tells how the Rubb is to be asked, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would then ask from Him; and when he ﷺ recited an Ayah asking one to seek Protection Allah, he would seek Protection of Allah...” [Muslim].

Keeping the Back Straight in Rukoo'

The Prophet ﷺ commanded us to do rukoo' and Sujood perfectly and completely. A Hadeeth narrates: *If the the Prophet ﷺ was in rukoo', he would straighten his back that if water was poured on his back it would remain.* (Ibn Majah 872).

Note that this should not make someone judge those who are not able to get to the desired position because some might find physical difficulty. As long as he is trying as much as he can, to bow down in the way of the Sunnah, Allah will reward him.

But note that not doing rukoo' and Sujood properly and completely is something which invalidates one's prayer. This is a serious matter. The Prophet ﷺ said: *"A man's prayer is not good enough until his back is straight in rukoo' and Sujood."* (Reported by Abu Dawud).

Sitting for a brief period of time before standing up after the two prostrations of the first and third Rakahs

It is a sunnah to sit and have a brief rest after the two prostrations of the first and third Rakahs before standing up for the second and fourth Rakahs respectively. A hadeeth for this was reported in Saheeh al-Bukhaari, also reported by Saheeh Isnads in Sunan Abi Dawood and Sunan al-Tirmidhi.

Sitting mutawarrikan in prayer

Sitting mutawarrikan in prayer is a proven Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ, He used to do it in every prayer that had two Tashahud (3 and 4 Rakah prayers).

Tawarruk or sitting mutawarrikan is:- The left foot is laid down and the right foot is held upright, and both are held out to the right, with the buttocks on the ground.

Al-Bukhaari narrated from Abu Humayd al-Saa'idi (may Allah be pleased with him), a description of the prayer of the Prophet ﷺ, in which he said: *"And when he sat in the final rak'ah, he put his left foot forward and held the other foot upright, and sat on his behind."*

Different types of Tasleem (Final Salam)

The Sunnah that the Majority of the Ummah now follows is that one needs to turn his/her head first to the right and then to the left shoulder saying, "Al-Salaamu 'alaykum wa rahmat-Allahu" on each side but what is forgotten is that there are other ways of Tasleem from the Authentic Sunnahs that a Muslim can alternate in his Salah.

The Forms of Salaam (Tasleem) mentioned in the Sunnah are:

- a) "Al-Salaamu 'alaykum wa rahmat-Allahu wa barakaatuhu" to the right, and "Al-salaamu 'alaaykum wa rahmat-Allah" to the left.

- b) The same, but without saying “*wa barakaatuhu*”.
- c) “*Al-Salaamu ‘alaykum wa rahmat-Allahu*” to the right, and “*Al-salaamu ‘alaaykum*” to the left.
- d) Saying one salaam, tilting the head slightly to the right.

Wearing Shoes while Praying

The Prophet ﷺ prayed wearing shoes is to be found in the hadeeth, “*Be different from the Jews, who do not pray in their shoes or in their leather slippers (khufuof).*” (Abu Dawud; classed as sahih by Albaani).

But the condition is that the shoes must be taahir (pure, clean). If there is any najaasah (impurity) or dirt on the shoes, then one should not pray wearing them. Also if the mosque is furnished with carpeting, then wearing shoes on it will make it dirty and so no one should enter wearing shoes.

The Sunnah can/should be applied when praying outdoors like the parks, roads etc. If we see someone looking at it with confusion, we make them aware of the Sunnah with the hope of them reviving this Sunnah.

Praying the Sunnah prayers at home

Another one of the beautiful Sunnahs that has become rare- to perform An-Nawaafil (supererogatory prayers) at home. This blesses the homes and also creates an atmosphere in the house. There are many ahadeeth encouraging us to do that.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

- “*O people, pray in your houses, for the best of prayer is a man’s prayer in his house, apart from the prescribed prayers.*” [Reported by Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]
- “*When any one of you finishes his prayer in his mosque, let him give his house a share of his prayer, for Allah will create something good (i.e bless him) in his house from his prayer.*” [Reported by Muslim]
- “*Man’s voluntary prayer, where people do not see him, is twenty five times as equal as that which he performs publicly.*” [Reported in Musnad Aboo Ya’ala, Hadeeth 3821, Authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in al-Jaami’ as-Sagheer, #3821]

Making up Sunnah Prayers

It is not just the Fard Salah but Sunnah prayer if missed can, or rather should, be made up. It was narrated in a Hadeeth by Bukhari and Muslim that “*The Prophet ﷺ made up the Sunnah of Zuhr after praying ‘Asr*”. [Al-Bukhaari, 4370; Muslim, 834].

Other points that were covered in the previous classes but can be listed under Forgotten Sunnahs are:

WUDOO

- Be economic in using water for Wudoo
- Perform 2 Rakats after Wudoo
- Using Siwak (Miswak) before every prayer

SALAH

- Reciting different opening supplications for Du'aa Al Istiftaah
- Giving some time intervals after each Ayah while reciting Surah al-Faatihah
- Remember Death while praying
- The bowing, the prostrations, the period of standing after bowing and the interval between the two prostrations: all should be equal in length
- Remember Death while praying
- Being Consistent in offering the Sunnan Al Rawaatib (12 Sunnah Rakaats)

May Allah make us all implement the Sunnahs which will help us in keeping our hearts alive in prayer and give us the Hidayah to stand in front of Him in prayer as He would like us to. Verily, we are in need of Him and He does not need our prayers!

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TIPS FOR THE TEST

1. Do not have to memorize the Ayahs or Hadeeths word for word, get a good understanding of the message in it.
2. Remember the Sunnah and implement it.
3. Remember the virtues.