MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS IN EARLY ISLAM

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Reprinted from JSAI 10
Jerusalem 1987
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To my teacher, Prof. M.J. Kister, on his seventieth birthday.

Preface

Western scholars have already noticed that according to Muslim sources, before the five daily prayers became part of the “pillars” of Islam, the Muslims used to pray only twice a day. Goldziher states that “before the duty of prayer was extended to five times a day, the Muslims are said to have observed only two canonical times of prayer: morning and afternoon...”1 Other scholars, like Mittwoch, for instance, who studied the evidence of Muslim sources, maintained that the first two prayers which the Muslims reportedly used to pray daily were salat al-fajr (before sunrise), and salat al-‘isha’ (after sunset).2

In the present study various reports and traditions are examined which may give us a better insight into the evidence of Muslim sources concerning the first times of prayer in Islam, their special significance, and their position in relation to other times of prayer.

I. Šalāt al-ḍuḥa

A. The first report to be examined was recorded on the authority of al-Waqidi (d. 207H/823), by al-Baladhuri (d. 279H/892).3 This report was quoted from al-Baladhuri by Ibn Hajar,4 and it was also reproduced by al-Maqrizi,5 who in turn was quoted by al-Halabi.6 The most coherent version of this report of al-Waqidi is that of al-Maqrizi. It reads:

3 Baladhuri, Ansāb, I, 113, 117.
5 Maqrizi, Imād, I, 16–17.
6 Halabi, I, 267.
wa-kana salla llahu ‘alayhi wa-sallama yakhruju ila l-ka’bati awwala l-nahari fa-yuṣallit šalát al-duḥa. wa-kanat šalatan la tunkiruha Quraysh. wa-kana idha salla ft sa’iri l-yawmi ba’da ḏalika qa’ada ‘Ali aw Zayd rādiya llāhu ‘anhum Yaṣṣūdānīhi. wa-kāna salla llahu ‘alayhi wa-asḥābuhu idha ḟā’u waqtu l-‘asrī tafarraqu ft l-shi’abi furada wa-mathna. wa-kanu yuṣallīna l-duḥa wa-l-‘asra. thumma nazalatt l-ṣalawātu l-khamsu. wa-kanati l-ṣalatī rak‘atayni qabla 1-ḥijrati ...

The Prophet used to go out to the Ka’ba at the beginning of the day and perform the duḥa prayer. It was a prayer with which Quraysh did not find any fault. When he afterwards prayed during the rest of the day, ‘Ali and Zayd used to sit and keep guard on him. When it was the time of the ‘asr, the Prophet and his companions would scatter in the ravines, one by one and in pairs; they used to pray (the prayers of) the duḥa and the ‘asr. Afterwards the five prayers were enjoined on them. Before the Hijra, each prayer consisted of two rak‘as...

This passage implies that the first times of prayer observed by the Muslims before the introduction of the five daily prayers were the duḥa and the ‘asr. These times deserve a special examination. The term duḥa occurs several times in the Quran, but its basic meaning is indicated in one verse only, 91/1: wa-l-shamsi wa-duḥāhā. In this Quranic oath, duḥa means the brightness of the sun, or simply, daylight. In other cases the term duḥa appears indeed in contrast to the term layl (113/1; 79/29). But duḥa meaning the brightness of the sun could be, and indeed was, restricted to that part of the day when the brightness of the sun first appears. In Quran 79/46, duḥa occurs in juxtaposition with ‘aṣhiyya (evening), which means that the former signifies the first part of the day, or as put in the Tafsir of Muqatil: “the first hour of daylight following sunrise”.7 In view of this, it is clear that salāt al-duḥa which the first Muslims reportedly practiced, was performed in the morning, shortly after sunrise.8 The term ‘asr, which also occurs in a Quranic oath (103/1), is explained as “the last hour of day... when the sun sinks towards setting”.8 In fact, the term ‘asr is almost identical with the term ‘aṣhiyy (evening) which occurs quite often in the Quran. The latter is explained by Muslim commentators as ‘asr.9 It

7 Muqatil, II, 242: wa-hiyya awwalu sā‘atin mina l-nahāri, min ḥiyni taṣlawu l-shamsu.
8 For a further description of Muhammad’s prayer near the Ka’ba following sunrise, see Tabari, Tārīkh, II, 56 (the story of ‘Afīf al-Kindī). Cf. Bayhaqi, Dala’il, I, 416; Ḥalabi, I, 270–271.
9 Ibid., 249: wa-huwa aḥkārū sā‘atin mina l-nahāri... ḥiyni taṣlawu l-shamsu li-l-ghurāb.
10 E.g. Suyūṭī, Durr, V, 154 (on 30/17–18), 309 (on 38/31), 352 (on 40/55); III, 14 (on 6/52); IV, 219–220 (on 18/28), 260 (on 19/11).
follows that *salat al-\textasciitilde{\textasciitilde}{}\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}* was an evening prayer performed shortly before sunset.\(^9\)

The above passage of al-Waqidi points to a decisive difference between *salat al-duha* and *salat al-\textasciitilde{\textasciitilde}{}\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}* The former did not arouse any objection on the part of the Quraysh, and therefore Muhammad could practice it openly near the Ka'ba. The latter prayer, however, seems to have been very provoking to the Quraysh, so that the Muslims were forced to practice it secretly in the ravines of Mecca. The reason why the Muslims were not hindered from praying the *\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}* prayer near the Ka'ba seems, at first sight, to be connected with the fact that the Quraysh themselves were used to practicing various religious rites in the *\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}* some of which were closely associated with the cult of the Ka'ba. The most notable of these rites was the circumambulation (*\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}*) of the Ka'ba, which included also the touching of the Black Stone. In an early verse attributed to Abū Ṭalib, it is stated that the worshippers used to touch the Black Stone and gather around it in the *\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}* as well as in the evenings.\(^10\) Other rituals of the Hajj in general also took place in the *\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}*. The ceremonies of Yawm al-Nahr which were observed at Minā on the tenth of Dhū l-Hijja were focused on the slaughter of sacrificial animals during the *\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}* of that day. This act was signified by the verb *\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}*, which originally meant: to perform sacrificial slaughter in the *\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}* of Yawm al-Nahr.\(^11\) On the same day, the worshippers used to throw pebbles at the three *\textasciitilde{}* in Minā. This ritual as well was performed during the *\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}*.\(^12\) The ifāda from Muzdalifah to Minā was also performed in the *\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}*. It is reported that in the morning of Yawm al-Nahr, the pilgrims used to ascend the mountain of Quzah in Muzdalifah, and when they saw the first rays of the rising sun they commenced the ifāda.\(^13\)

The time of the *\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}*, i.e., that part of the day immediately following sunrise, functioned as a time of ritual practices not only among the Meccans and the pilgrims, but also among those pious monotheistic

\(^9\) It is now clear that *salat al-\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}* was introduced into Islamic cult much earlier than the Madinan period, contrary to Mittwoch, *op. cit.*, 11 ff.

\(^10\) Ibn Hishām, I, 292:
\begin{verbatim}
wa-bi-l-hajari l-muswadi idh yamsahunahu
idha kianafahu bi-l-duha wa-l-\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}
\end{verbatim}

\(^11\) \textit{Tāj}, s.v., "d.h.w.": wa-dahhaytu bi-l-shāri \textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{} fiha, ay fi duha l-nahari; hadhā huwa l-\textasciitilde{}\textasciitilde{} fihi...

\(^12\) E.g. \textit{Qira}, 523; \textit{Fath al-bārī}, III, 462.

\(^13\) E.g. Azraqī, 130.
persons who were active in Arabia already in pre-Islamic times. One of them was Abū Qays Şîrma b. Abī Anas who, reportedly, abandoned idolatry and led an ascetic life. One of the verses attributed to him runs as follows:14

\[
sabbihū llāhā sharqa kulli šabāhin!
\]
\[
īlārīat shamsuho wa-kulla hilali.
\]
Praise Allāh at the breaking of each morning/
whose sun has risen, and at the rising of each moon.

These reports which illustrate the ritual significance of the time of the \textit{duḥā} in pre-Islamic times could explain why the Quraysh let Muḥammad pray freely near the Ka'ba in the \textit{duḥā}. But, as a matter of fact, the Quraysh were also used to performing various rituals in the \textit{`aṣr}, for instance the \textit{iftā}, to Muzdalifa which took place when the setting sun was very close to the horizon.15 In spite of this, they did not let the Muslims pray freely in the \textit{`aṣr}. It seems, therefore, that the reason why the Quraysh put up with \textit{ṣalāt al-duḥā} must be connected with something in the very nature of the prayer itself, which made it so distinct from \textit{ṣalāt al-`aṣr}.

In fact, \textit{ṣalāt al-duḥā} was a typical Arab way of worship. This is indicated in a series of reports implying that in the first decades of Islam, \textit{ṣalāt al-duḥā} was in vogue especially among the Arabs, or rather among the Bedouins. One of these reports relates that the first Muslim who prayed the \textit{duḥā} prayer was a \textit{sahābī} called Dhu l-Zawa'id, or Abū l-Zawa'id, from the tribe of Juhayna.16 Another report was recorded by ‘Abd al-Razzaq (d. 211H/827) on the authority of Ibn Jurayj (d. 150H/767). It reads:17

\begin{quote}
‘Abd al-Razzaq 'an Ibn Jurayj, qala: akhbarant Sulaymān ayān annahu samī'a Tawāsṣ yaqūl: inna awwala man šallāhā l-a'rābū. idhā bā'a abaduhum bidā'ītum ya'ūt l-masjīda fa-yukabbiru wa-yasjudu, illa anna Tawāsṣ yaqūl: allahu akbar, allahu akbar, allahu akbar, thumma yasjudu l-a'rābū.

‘Abd al-Razzaq from Ibn Jurayj, He said: Sulaymān also informed me that he had heard Tawās saying: The first who prayed it (i.e. the \textit{duḥā} prayer) were the Bedouins. When one of them sold a commodity he would come to the mosque and say: \textit{allāh akbar}, and perform the \textit{sujūd} (prostration). But Tawās said:
\end{quote}

\begin{itemize}
\item[15] E.g. Azraqt, 131.
\item[16] Isāba, II, 413; Majmā al-zawā'id, II, 234; Suyūtī, Ḥawā', I, 73.
\end{itemize}
(the Bedouin used to say:)  

\[ \text{allah akbar, allah akbar, allah akbar, and then he would perform the sujud.} \]

‘Abd al-Razzâq has also recorded a shorter version of the same account:\(^{18}\)

\[ ...qala Ibn Jurayj: wa-qala nasun: awwalu mansallah ahlul-hawadi, yadkhuluna l-masjidah faraghmin aswaghim. \]

Ibn Jurayj said: Some people said: The first who prayed it (i.e. the \( \text{duha} \) prayer) were the dwellers of the desert. They used to enter the mosque when they had finished their fairs.

These reports indicate that \( \text{salat al-duha} \) was a thanksgiving ceremony which the Bedouins used to observe whenever they succeeded in selling their wares in the markets. In fact, religious rites had been closely associated with Arab commercial life since pre-Islamic times, especially during the Hajj and the ‘Umra. It may even be supposed that \( \text{salat al-duha} \) itself had been practiced by the Bedouins since pre-Islamic times which explains why they, of all Muslims, adhered to it at the beginning of Islam. The fact that \( \text{salat al-duha} \) was essentially connected with the Arab trade leads to the conclusion that this kind of devotional practice was well known to the Quraysh, the leading tradesmen of Arabia. Thus, the reason why the Quraysh let Muḥammad practice it openly becomes self-evident. The Prophet appears to have merely adopted a pre-Islamic Arab practice which for him was a natural way of expressing his own gratitude and devotion to Allāh.

\( \text{Salat al-duha} \) as performed by the Bedouins consisted mainly in the \( \text{takbir} \) and the \( \text{sujud} \). This fact is most significant; the \( \text{sujud} \) is a characteristic gesture of obedience and gratitude, and in view of the above reports it seems that it was far more common among the Bedouins than is usually admitted in the Muslim sources.\(^{19}\) \( \text{Salat al-duha} \) preserved its basic significance as a thanksgiving ritual during the first decades of Islam. There is evidence that Muḥammad used to perform it following great victories over his enemies. For instance, when Abū Jahl was killed (in Badr), Muḥammad reportedly prayed the \( \text{duha} \) prayer.\(^{20}\) Most current are

\(^{18}\) Ibid., 79.

\(^{19}\) For a survey of these sources see M.J. Kister, “Some reports concerning al-Ṭa’īf”, JSAI, I, 1979, p.4.

\(^{20}\) Bayhaqī, Dalā’īl, II, 363. See also Fāṭḥ al-bari, III, 45; Zad, 348; Majmū’ al-zawa’id, II, 238; Suyūṭī, Ḥawār, I, 60–61.
the traditions of Umm Hānī‘ about ṣalāt al-duḥā which Muḥammad prayed on the conquest of Mecca.\textsuperscript{21}

The same prayer was performed as a token of gratitude for water and food. Once, when Muḥammad managed to provide a whole army of Muslims with water in a miraculous way, he prayed the duḥā.\textsuperscript{22} Another report relates that the Prophet had a special bowl (qaṣ‘ā), which was carried by four persons. The companions of the Prophet used to eat from it after having performed the sujud of the duḥā.\textsuperscript{23}

B. Many Muslim traditions reflect the idea that prayers performed during sunrise or sunset are reprehensible because these were the hours when the idolaters used to prostrate themselves to the sun. The traditions condemning prayers during these parts of the day stress that when the sun rises or sets it is clasped between the two horns of the devil.\textsuperscript{24} The aversion to ritual acts at sunrise or sunset\textsuperscript{25} seems to date back to the days of the Prophet himself. Shortly before his death, Muḥammad made some changes in the ifāda, which were designed to remove all traces of sun-worship from this ritual. It is reported that during his last pilgrimage (ḥajjat al-wada‘), Muḥammad ordered that the ifāda from ‘Arafa to Muzdalifā be performed after sunset and not during sunset, and that the ifāda from Muzdalifā to Minā be performed before sunrise and not during sunrise.\textsuperscript{26}

This attitude towards the hours of sunrise and sunset had direct bearings on ṣalāt al-duḥā; in fact, in the first decades after Muḥammad’s death there were several pious Muslims who wished to suppress the duḥā prayer altogether, declaring it to be unlawful. This is demonstrated in the story about Mujāhid and ‘Urwa b. al-Zubayr who once entered the mosque of Medina and saw the people praying the duḥā. They asked Ibn

\textsuperscript{21} E.g. Ibn Hishām, IV, 53–54; Waqidi, II, 830; Ibn Sa‘d, II, 144–145; Bukhārī, II, 73: Muslim, II, 157–158; Malik, I, 166; Abū Dawūd, I, 297; Tirmidhī, II, 258; Fath al-bārī, III, 43–44; Zafīr, II, 332; Suyūṭī, Ḥāwī, I, 59.

\textsuperscript{22} Majma‘ al-zawā‘id, II, 235; Suyūṭī, Ḥāwī, I, 61.

\textsuperscript{23} Abū Dawūd, II, 313. Cf. also Suyūṭī, Ḥāwī, I, 61.

\textsuperscript{24} Ibn Sa‘d, IV, 216–217, 218; Abū Dawūd, I, 294; Muslim, II, 209; Ibn Qutayba, Tāwil, 125. On the meaning of “the two horns of the devil” in connection with the sun, see I. Goldziher, Abhandlungen zur arabischen Philologie, I, Leiden 1896, p., 113 f. And see further traditions forbidding prayers at sunrise or sunset, Wensinck, Handbook, 192f.

\textsuperscript{25} E.g. El‘ s.v. “mīkāt”.

\textsuperscript{26} E.g. Azraqū, 131.
'Umar, who was sitting there, about it, and he said: “It is an innovation” (bid'ah). The same 'Abdallah b. 'Umar is also reported to have stated: “I have never prayed the ḍuḥā since I embraced Islam”. He also declared that he had never seen the Prophet praying the ḍuḥā, and he as well had he seen 'Umar and Abu Bakr doing it. The same attitude towards the ḍuḥā prayer was shared by other sahāba as well. When Anas b. Malik was asked about ṣalāt al-ḍuḥā, he stated: “The prayers are (only) five”. Abu Bakr once saw people praying the ḍuḥā, and he as well told them that they were praying something which the Prophet and his companions had never prayed. Likewise, it is related that 'Abdallāh b. Mas‘ūd never prayed the ḍuḥā. Instead, he used to pray between the zuhr and the ‘asr prayers, apart from night vigils.

Those theologians who objected to ṣalāt al-ḍuḥā had to produce proper explanations for the above-mentioned reports implying that the Prophet had prayed the ḍuḥā. The main line of argumentation which was eventually taken by these theologians was that Muḥammad had never prayed the ḍuḥā regularly and intentionally; there were only some cases in which a prayer performed by Muḥammad happened to coincide with the time of the ḍuḥā. This line is reflected in a tradition relating that the Prophet prayed in the ḍuḥā only once, when he was visiting a certain Muslim who asked the Prophet to pray at his house, and this happened to take place in the ḍuḥā. According to a tradition of ‘Ā'isha, the Prophet used to pray the ḍuḥā prayer only upon returning to Medina from a journey; his return always took place in the ḍuḥā. Al-Zuhri, too, declared that the Prophet had never prayed the ḍuḥā except on the conquest of Mecca, and upon returning from a journey. As for the conquest of Mecca, Muḥammad’s prayer on that occasion was explained by Muslim theologians as ṣalāt al-fāṭḥ, which was performed also in later periods following the conquest (fāṭḥ) of various places.

27 Bukhārī, III, 3; Muslim, IV, 61. And see further Suyūṭī, Hāwī, I, 73.
28 'Abd al-Razzāq, III, 81: ma ṣallaytu l-ḍuḥā mundhu aslamtu.
29 'Abd al-Razzāq, III, 81.
30 Bukhārī, II, 73; Zād, 331, 343.
31 Zād, 344.
32 Ibid., 343; Fath al-bārī, III, 45-46.
33 'Abd al-Razzāq, III, 80; Zād, 344.
34 Bukhārī, II, 73-74; Zād 347; Fath al-bārī, III, 45.
35 Muslim, II., 156; Zād, 332, 345.
36 'Abd al-Razzāq, III, 77.
37 See Zād, 346 ff.; Fath al-bārī, III, 44; Suhaylī, IV, 103.
But the objection of Muslim theologians to *salāt al-ḍuḥā* did not bring about its disappearance. This prayer, like some other practices condemned by pious theologians as *bidʿa*, survived within the framework of a whole system of rites which had their origin in pre-Islamic Arab practices—namely, the pilgrimage to Mecca. The cult of the Kaʿba had consisted, since pre-Islamic times, of the *tawāf*, and the *ḍuḥā* prayer was practiced as a part of this ritual.

The survival of *salāt al-ḍuḥā* as a part of the *tawāf* is plainly attested in a tradition about ‘Āʾisha who reportedly saw people performing the *tawāf* around the Kaʿba, then awaiting sunrise in order to pray. She went on stressing that they had prayed in the “hour when prayer is reprehensible” (*al-saʿātu llatī tukrahu fihā l-ṣalatu*). The custom of praying during sunrise following the *tawāf* seems to have been deeply rooted in the cult of the Kaʿba, so that Muslim theologians were eventually obliged to provide it with an appropriate legal basis, in the form of a prophetic *hadith*. The *hadith* reads:

Children of ‘Abd Manāf, do not hinder anyone who has circumambulated this house (i.e. the Kaʿba) from praying at any hour one chooses, be it at night or during the day.

Many pious Muslims indeed thought that *salāt al-ḍuḥā* was legitimate as long as it was performed in Mecca as part of the *tawāf*. Ibn ‘Abbās is said never to have prayed the *ḍuḥā* except when he circumambulated the Kaʿba. ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Umar as well declared: “I have never prayed the *ḍuḥā* since I became a Muslim, except when I was circumambulating the House”.

Further traditions indicate that pious Muslims did not always confine the *ḍuḥā* prayer to the *tawāf*. There is evidence that some of them practiced it also without the *tawāf*, while being careful not to perform it too frequently. Ibn ‘Abbās, for instance, reportedly used to pray it once every ten days, and others as well used to perform it occasionally.

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38 Bukhārī, II, 190; ‘Abd al-Razzāq, II, 427.
39 Tirmidhī, IV, 98–99. See also *ibid.*, I, 299; *Fath al-bārī*, III, 390 ff.; *Majmāʿ al-zawaʿīd*, II, 228–229; Azraqī, 265; Fākīhī, fol. 300; *Qīrā*, 320 ff.
40 ‘Abd al-Razzāq, III, 79.
41 *Fath al-bārī*, III, 43 (from Ibn Abī Shayba): “*ma ṣallaytu l-ḍuḥā mundhu aṣlamtu illa an ẓafā bi-l-baytī*.”
42 *Zad*, 345, 349; Suyūṭī, *Ḥawī*, I, 65.
43 *Zad*, 345, 349.
Similarly, an irregular observance of the *duhā* prayer was attributed to the Prophet himself.\(^44\) Some maintained that the *salāt al-ṣuḥā* was lawful, provided that it was practiced privately at home.\(^45\)

In fact, however, *salāt al-ṣuḥā* was far too favoured to be practiced in a limited fashion only. Traditions soon appeared in which the same persons who had reportedly objected to it were now quoted as though highly recommending it. The introduction of such traditions was the result of the special attachment with which this prayer was treated in large circles. ‘Āʾishah, for instance, was reported to have stated that she used to perform the *ṣuḥā* prayer in spite of the fact that Muhammad had refrained from it. She explained that Muhammad had not performed the *ṣuḥā* prayer only because of his wish to spare the believers the burden of this prayer, in case they followed his example.\(^46\) ‘Āʾishah also stated that she would never give up this prayer, not even in return for the resurrection of her parents.\(^47\)

Ibn ‘Umar, to whom the definition of *salāt al-ṣuḥā* as *bidda* was attributed (see above), was now quoted as having stated that the people had never invented anything he liked more than *salāt al-ṣuḥā*,\(^48\) or, that it was a good *bidda*.\(^49\) ‘Ali b. Abī Talib was asked about this prayer which the people had invented. He said: “Pray as much as you can because Allah does not punish for praying”.\(^50\) Further traditions actually present the Prophet himself as prescribing the *ṣuḥā* prayer to some of his companions. Abu Hurayra is reported to have stated that the Prophet had told him to perform the *witr* before bedtime, to fast three days each month, and to pray the *ṣuḥā* prayer.\(^51\) The same prescription is said to have been given to Abu l-Darda’.\(^52\)

In a further group of traditions *salāt al-ṣuḥā* is presented as practiced regularly by the Prophet himself. According to one tradition, the Prophet

\(^{44}\) Tirmidhi, II, 258; Zad, 340, 345; Suyuti, Ḥawī, I, 60.
\(^{45}\) Zad, 346.
\(^{46}\) ‘Abd al-Razzāq, III, 78; Bukhārī, II, 73; Muslim, II, 156–157; Abū Dāwūd, I, 297; Zad, 331, 344; Malik, I, 166–168.
\(^{47}\) ‘Abd al-Razzāq, III, 78; Malik, I, 168.
\(^{48}\) ‘Abd al-Razzāq, III, 78–79; *wa-mā ahdatha l-nasu shay‘an aḥabba ilayya minḥā*. See also Suyūṭī, Ḥawī, I, 73.
\(^{49}\) Fath al-bārī, III, 43; *...wa-ni‘mat al-bidda*. See also Zad, 344.
\(^{50}\) ‘Abd al-Razzāq, III, 78.
\(^{51}\) ‘Abd al-Razzāq, III, 74; Bukhārī, II, 73; Muslim, II, 158; Tirmidhi, III, 291–292; Zad, 336; Mundhiri, Targhib, II, 55.
\(^{52}\) Muslim, II, 159; Zad, 336; Mundhiri, Targhib, II, 56.
used to pray the *duḥā* prayer defining it as “a prayer of desire and fright” (*ṣalāt raggbi wa-raḥba*).\(^53\) ‘Ā’isha is said to have stated that the Prophet used to perform the *duḥā* prayer, sometimes with four *rak’as* and sometimes with more.\(^54\) According to another statement attributed to both ‘Ā’isha and Umm Salma, the Prophet used to pray the *duḥā* prayer with twelve *rak’as*.\(^55\) Mujahid reports that the Prophet used to perform the *duḥā* prayer sometimes with two *rak’as*, sometimes with four, six or eight *rak’as*.\(^56\) According to Jābir b. ‘Abdallāh, the Prophet used to perform six *rak’as* during *ṣalāt al-duḥā*.\(^57\)

Such traditions about the Prophet were designed to rule out the above-mentioned traditions claiming that Muḥammad had never performed the *duḥā* prayer. The only way left for those who still objected to this prayer was to try and present it as one of Muḥammad’s exclusive *khaṣa’is*. In the following tradition Muḥammad is reported to have stated: “I was ordered to observe the two *rak’as* of the *duḥā*, but you (i.e. the Muslims) were not ordered to observe it...”.\(^58\) But the partisans of *ṣalāt al-duḥā* were not short of traditions of their own. In the following version the Prophet says: “Three things are incumbent upon me as *fara’id* (obligatory duties), and upon you as *taḥawwūf* (voluntary act): the witr, the two *rak’as* before the *fajr* prayer, and the two *rak’as* of the *duḥā* prayer”.\(^59\) In this manner, *ṣalāt al-duḥā* was given a firm legal basis as a most recommended *taḥawwūf*. The Shāfi‘is, in fact, considered it the best *taḥawwūf*.\(^60\) Moreover, in a further tradition of the Prophet the *duḥā* prayer is elevated to the rank of a *sunna* with respect to the believers, being a *fariḍa* with respect to Muḥammad.\(^61\)

The exact number of *rak’as* which had to be performed during *ṣalāt al-duḥā* was something about which Muslim scholars could never reach agreement, and the variety of opinions is clearly reflected in traditions of the Prophet recommending different numbers of *rak’as*. Some traditions


\(^{54}\) ‘Abd al-Razzāq, III, 74–75. See also *Muslim*, II, 157; *Zad*, 334; Suyūṭī, Ḥawrī, I, 60.

\(^{55}\) *Zad*, 334–335.

\(^{56}\) ‘Abd al-Razzāq, III, 74; *Zad*, 333–334.

\(^{57}\) *Zad*, 334. See also Suyūṭī, Ḥawrī, I, 60 (on the authority of Anas b. Mālik).

\(^{58}\) Suyūṭī, *Khaṣa’īs*, III, 254: umirtu bi-rakatayi l-duḥā wa-lam tu marū biha... See also idem, Ḥawrī, I, 62.


\(^{60}\) Ālūsī, XXIII, 175.

\(^{61}\) A.J. Wensinck, s.v. “ṣalāt” *EL* (quoting Aḥmad).
recommend two rak’as, which seems to be the original number. According to one of these traditions, two rak’as of šalāt al-ḍuḥā substitute for the duty of sadaqa which is incumbent upon each knuckle of the human body. Another tradition states that he who prays two rak’as when the sun is opposite his face (idhā staqbalathu l-shams), his sins will be forgiven. Other traditions recommend four rak’as. The Prophet reportedly stated that Allāh had asserted that four rak’as performed at the beginning of the day substitute for four rak’as at the end of the day. "He who performs the ḍuḥā prayer with four rak’as" — says the Prophet in another tradition — "Allah will build a house for him in paradise". "He who prays the ḍuḥā with eight rak’as will be written among the repentants" — says another tradition. A further tradition promises a golden palace in paradise to those who perform twelve rak’as during salat al-ḍuḥā. A harmonizing tradition was also produced promising due reward to those performing 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, or 12 rak’as during the ḍuḥā prayer. The mere existence of this variety of traditions shows that salat al-ḍuḥā was regarded as highly distinguished. The attitude of the believers towards this prayer is reflected also in the following tradition to the effect that salat al-ḍuḥā brings forth livelihood (rizq) and drives away poverty.

A special group of traditions was designed to stress the value of a constant practice of salat al-ḍuḥā, in contrast to the traditions recommending only an occasional performance of this prayer. "He who keeps performing the ḍuḥā prayer, his sins will be forgiven even if they were as plentiful as the foam of the sea". Or, "He who prays the ḍuḥā constantly, interrupting it only in case of illness, I (i.e. the Prophet) and he will be in

42 Muslim, II, 158; Abū Dāwūd, I, 295–296; Mundhīrī, Targhib, II, 55; Ṣād, 336–337.
43 Mundhīrī, Targhib, II, 58; Majmū‘ al-zawa‘id, II, 236; Suyūṭī, Hawr, I, 66.
44 Tirmidhī, II, 259; Abū Dāwūd, I, 296; Mundhīrī, Targhib, II, 57–58; Ṣād, 337; Majmū‘ al-zawa‘id, II, 235–236.
45 Fath al-bārī, III, 45.
46 ‘Abd al-Razzāq, III, 81.
47 Tirmidhī, II, 257; ‘Abd al-Razzāq, III, 75; Ṣād, 337; Fath al-bārī, III, 44; Suyūṭī, Durr, V, 299; idem, Hawr, I, 62; Mundhīrī, Targhib, II, 56.
48 Mundhīrī, Targhib, II, 58; Nuzhat al-majālīs, I, 123; Fath al-bārī, III, 44; Suyūṭī, Durr, V, 299; idem, Hawr, I, 69. For the discussion of this problem see further Ṣād, 341 ff.; Fath al-bārī, III, 43–45; Nuzhat al-majālīs, I, 123; Suyūṭī, Hawr, I, 71 ff.
49 Nuzhat al-majālīs, I, 122. See also Fath al-bārī, III, 47: Neglecting this prayer causes blindness.
50 Tirmidhī, II, 260; Mundhīrī, Targhib, II, 56; Ṣād, 337, 352; Suyūṭī, Durr, V, 299; idem, Hawr, I, 70.
paradise, in a boat of light, in a sea of the light of Allāh".71 Those who persist in praying the ǧuḥā are promised, in another tradition, to enter paradise through a special door, named “Duḥā”72. Another tradition says that he who sticks to the ǧuḥā prayer for a whole year, and then abandons it, this prayer shall miss him like a she-camel which misses its young.73 A special reward is promised to those who pray ṣalāt al-ṣubh and then remain in their places till the sun rises in order to pray the ǧuḥā.74

The importance attributed in early Islam to ṣalāt al-ǧuḥā reached such a degree that it was sometimes considered as matching other Islamic duties. It is related, for instance, that once the Muslims accomplished a successful raid, and returned to Medina with a lot of booty. The Prophet, however, declared that he who prayed the ǧuḥā had accomplished a more successful raid and gained more booty.75 In other words, ṣalāt al-ǧuḥā was regarded as superior to the duty of jihād. In another tradition, the Prophet is quoted as having stated that he who sets out for ṣalāt al-ǧuḥā shall have the reward of him who performs the ‘Umra.76 In fact, the ǧuḥā prayer was eventually regarded as the essence of the true faith; refraining from observing it was declared to be one of the signs of the munafīq.77

Ṣalāt al-ǧuḥā was provided in due course with a Quranic basis as well. This basis was reportedly discovered by Ibn ʿAbbas in sûra 38/18. This verse appears in a passage about David who is said to have been “penitent” (awwāb). The verse runs as follows (tr. Arberry):

With him we subjected the mountains to give glory at evening and sunrise (...bi-l-asihiyyi wa-l-ishraqi).

The prayer of the penitent David and the mountains in the ishrāq, i.e. sunrise,78 was identified by Ibn ʿAbbās with ṣalāt al-ǧuḥā. He is reported

72 Ibn al-Jawzī, ʿIlāl, I, 471–472; Zād, 339; Suyūṭī, Ḥawwī, I, 63, 70; Nuzhat al-majalis, I, 122; Mundhirī, Targhib, II, 59; Majmaʿ al-zawaʿid, II, 239.
73 Zād, 351.
75 Mundhirī, Targhib, II, 56; Majmaʿ al-zawaʿid, II, 235; Suyūṭī, Ḥawwī, I, 65, 70.
76 Mundhirī, Targhib, II, 58; Zād, 340. See further, Suyūṭī, Ḥawwī, I, 63, 67.
77 Suyūṭī, Durr, VI, 405: al-munafīq la yuṣallī l-ǧuḥā wa-l-yaqraʿu ʾqal: yā ayyuhā l-kafirīn". See also idem., Ḥawwī, I, 65.
78 See Muqāṭīl, Taṣfīr al-khams miʿa āya mina l-Qurān, MS Br. Lib., Or. 6333², fol. 9r; ...bi-l-asihiyyi wa-l-ishraq: yaʿnī wa-hīna tushriqu l-ishamsu ft awwal l-nahār.
to have said: "The virtue of ṣalāt al-ḍuḥā never occurred to me till I came across this verse (i.e. 38/18)". In further versions it is related that upon hearing from Umm Hānī' that Muḥammad had prayed the ḍuḥā at her house (see above), Ibn 'Abbās stated that it was ṣalāt al-ishraq. Muḥammad himself is sometimes said to have identified the ḍuḥā with ṣalāt al-ishrāq. The identification of ṣalāt al-ḍuḥā with David's prayer who is labelled in the Quran as awwāb gave rise to a tradition of the Prophet in which the ḍuḥā prayer is called ṣalāt al-awwābin.

The ḍuḥā was connected by Ibn 'Abbās with a further Quranic verse, namely 24/36, which speaks about prayers held in the mosques "in the mornings and in the evenings". The relation between ṣalāt al-ḍuḥā and the Quran was reaffirmed through the tradition to the effect that the Prophet had ordered the believers to recite in this prayer sura 91 (wa-l-shamsi wa-duḥāhā), and sura 93 (wa-l-ḍuḥā). David was not the only Quranic prophet with whom ṣalāt al-ḍuḥā was connected. Abraham who, according to Quran 53/37 "paid his debt in full" (waffāa), is said to have paid it daily by means of the four rakʿas of ṣalāt al-ḍuḥā. Moses was told by Allāh that if he wanted the high mountains to pray for him, he should not stop praying the ḍuḥā.

Such was the way in which ṣalāt al-ḍuḥā survived as a legitimate Muslim way of worship. The only thing left for Muslim theologians was to see to it that this prayer was performed not too close to sunrise. This tendency is clearly reflected in the following story: The saḥābi Abū Bashīr al-Anṣārī once saw another man (Saʿīd b. Nāfī') praying the ḍuḥā as soon as the sun had risen. Abū Bashīr reproached the latter for this, and said that the Prophet had stated: "Do not pray till the sun is high, because it rises between the two horns of the devil". The same injunction appears

79 Loc. cit.: qala Ibn 'Abbās: ma faṣantu bi-faḍli ṣalāti l-ḍuḥā ḥattā atayu'ala ḥadthī l-ayta...
And see also 'Abd al-Razzāq, III, 79; Suyūṭī, Durr, V, 298; idem, Ḥaww, I, 59; Qurtubi, XV, 160.
80 Suyūṭī, Durr, V, 298-299; Ḥalabi, III, 93; Majma' al-zawa'id, II, 238.
81 Qurtubi, XV, 159-160; Rāzi, XXVI, 186.
82 Mustadrak, I, 314; Suyūṭī, Durr, V, 299; idem, Ḥaww, I, 59, 71; Qurtubi, XV, 160; Mundhirī, Targhib, II, 59.
83 Suyūṭī, Durr, V, 52; idem, Ḥaww, I, 59; Rāzi, XXIV, 4.
84 Faṭih al-bart, III, 46 (from al-Hakīm); Nuẓhat al-majālis, I, 122; Suyūṭī, Ḥaww, I, 66.
85 Faṭih al-bart, III, 45; Suyūṭī, Ḥaww, I, 68.
86 Nuẓhat al-majālis, I, 122.
87 Majma' al-zawa'id, II, 226: la ṭusalli ḥattā tartafra l-shamsu fa innaha taṭhe'i fi qarnayi l-shayṭān.
in a further version of the tradition stating that Ibn ‘Umar used to pray the *duhā* following the *tawaf* (see above). This version ends with the following statement: “I do only what my companions used to do, and I hinder no one from praying at any hour one chooses, at night or in the day, but do not seek the (hour of) sunrise or sunset”. In a further version of the same tradition it is related that Ibn ‘Umar used to refrain from praying at the beginning of the day till the sun was high. Likewise, it is reported that Ibn ‘Abbās stated that *ṣalāt al-duḥā* must be performed when the shadows disappear (i.e. at noon). Al-Zuhrī as well reportedly related that the companions of the Prophet used to pray the *duhā* at the hot hours of the day (bi-l-hawājjir). The Prophet himself is reported to have once seen the people of Qubā’ praying the *duhā* shortly after sunrise, upon which he stated: “The prayers of the repentants must be performed when the knuckles are excessively hot”. Muslim scholars stressed accordingly that *ṣalāt al-duḥā* should not be performed as long as the rising sun is still yellow, just as the ‘*aṣr* prayer should not be delayed till the setting sun becomes yellow.

On the other hand, however, there were also certain Muslims who still preferred an earlier hour for the performance of *ṣalāt al-duḥā*, i.e. closer to the original one. ‘Umar is reported to have stated: “Servants of Allāh, perform the *duhā* prayer in the *duhā*, i.e. pray it in its proper time, and do not delay it till the time of the *duhā* has become advanced”. In view of this, one may conclude that, theoretically at least, this pre-Islamic way of worship survived almost intact till later Islamic periods.

### II. Ṣalāt al-‘aṣr and Ṣalāt al-fajr

**A.** The report quoted at the beginning of this study (above, p. 41) concerning the two times of prayer which the first Muslims used to observe, relates that the second time of prayer, apart from the *duhā*, was

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81 Bukhārī, II, 76-77.
82 ‘Abd al-Razzāq, II, 430.
84 ‘Abd al-Razzāq, III, 77.
86 Qurtubī, XV, 160. See also *EI* s.v. “ṣalāt” (A.J. Wensinck).
the 'asr, i.e. that part of the day immediately preceding sunset. According to that report, Muḥammad was unable to pray the 'asr openly, due to the objection of the Quraysh. This means that in contrast to salat al-duḥā, salat al-'asr did not have any roots in Arab pre-Islamic customs. Various pre-Islamic rituals did take place at the end of the day, for instance the iḥawāf which was performed at the duḥā as well as in the evening (above, p. 42), and especially the iṣāda from 'Arafa to Muzdalifa which was performed close to the setting of the sun (above, p. 43). But the mere fact that the Quraysh objected to the performance of salat al-'asr by Muḥammad indicates that there were some elements in it which did not accord with the customs of the Quraysh.

It seems that the Quraysh objected to salat al-'asr because this prayer reflected Jewish practices. The relation of salat al-'asr to the Jewish minḥah is quite obvious, and already Goldziher pointed out the Jewish origin of the sacredness of the 'asr time in Islam.95 The above report implies, therefore, that apart from authentic Arab ways of worship (salat al-duḥā), Muḥammad adopted, at a very early stage, some Jewish ritual practices as well. The latter were those to which the Quraysh were firmly opposed.

Jewish influence is especially conspicuous in those Muslim traditions stressing the sacredness of the hour of the 'asr on Friday. The 'asr on Friday is regarded in Islam as a most blessed hour, in which all prayers are responded to, and all oaths have special solemnity. Some traditions state that this hour coincides with the time of salat al-'asr.96 Other traditions say that this hour commences after salat al-'asr,97 or, that it lasts from salat al-'asr till the sun disappears,98 or, that it occurs in the last hour of daylight (akhir sārat al-nahār);99 some traditions say that this hour starts when the sun becomes yellow and lasts till the sun disappears.100 The Jewish origin of this belief is self-evident in view of the fact that in Judaism the same hour marks the beginning of the holy Sabbath.101

96 'Abd-al-Razzaq, III, 262.
97 Ibid., III, 265; Ṣafṭ al-bārī, II, 349; Suyūṭī, Durr, VI, 217.
98 'Abd al-Razzaq, III, 262.
99 Ibid., III, 262. See also 265–266; Ṣafṭ al-bārī, II, 349.
100 'Abd al-Razzaq, III, 264; Ṣafṭ al-bārī, II, 349.
Salāt al-‘asr seems to have retained always a special position in Islam. This is reflected in traditions dealing with the introduction of salāt al-khawf. Mujahid reports that once the Muslims prayed the zuhr prayer during a military expedition, while being watched by the polytheists. The latter were about to attack the praying Muslims, but no sooner had they charged than one of them said: “They (i.e. the Muslims) are about to perform another prayer before the setting of the sun (namely, the ‘asr), which is dearer to them than their own selves”. Salāt al-‘asr was thus preferred by the polytheists as the most appropriate time for attacking the Muslims, on the assumption that the latter would not interrupt it even if their lives were endangered. In order to protect the Muslims and to secure the undisturbed performance of salāt al-‘asr, Gabriel reportedly revealed to Muhammad the verses about salāt al-khawf (Quran, 4/101 ff.).

The special veneration with which salāt al-‘asr was treated by the Muslims brought about the introduction of traditions of the Prophet stressing the vital importance of its performance by the believers. The Prophet reportedly stated that salāt al-‘asr had been enjoined upon the previous peoples but they had refused to practice it because it was too burdensome for them. But in fact, it was superior to the rest of the prayers by twenty-six degrees. In another version of the same tradition, the Prophet promises a double reward to those who pray the ‘asr. “He who neglects the ‘asr prayer”, says another tradition, “his (entire) work has failed”. Another tradition states that missing the appropriate time of salāt al-‘asr is like losing one’s family and fortune.

The importance of this prayer is clearly reflected in some legendary traditions relating that ‘Ali b. Abi Ṭālib was once entrusted by Muhammad with a certain task, due to which he was unable to pray the ‘asr before the setting of the sun. The Prophet, it is related, invoked Allah to

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draw back the sun, till it shone again above the western horizon; there-upon ‘Ali prayed the ‘sahr, and the sun set again.\textsuperscript{107}

B. The fact that \textit{salat al-‘asr} was one of the two daily prayers which preceded the five constitutional ones, is mentioned in a whole series of exegetic traditions referring to some Quranic verses which are interpreted as though dealing with that early stage when the Muslims prayed only twice a day. The interesting point is that the morning prayer, which is mentioned in these traditions alongside \textit{salat al-‘asr}, is not \textit{salat al-duhā}, but rather another prayer — \textit{salat al-fajr} which is performed before sunrise. This fact means that already before the introduction of the five daily prayers, \textit{salat al-fajr} replaced \textit{salat al-duhā} as an official morning prayer, performed together with \textit{salat al-‘asr}.

Among the Quranic verses which Muslim commentators connected with the prayers of the \textit{fajr} and the \textit{‘asr}, the most noteworthy is 20/130 (cf. also 50/39–40):

\begin{quote}
\textit{wa-sabbih bi-hamdi rabbika qabla tuhri l-shamsi wa-qablaghurabiha...}

And praise your Lord before the rising of the sun and before its setting...
\end{quote}

According to al-Suddi, this verse refers to the first two daily prayers, which preceded the five constitutional ones,\textsuperscript{108} and these prayers are said to be \textit{salat al-fajr} and \textit{salat al-‘asr}\textsuperscript{109} Another Quranic verse which is also connected by Muslim exegetes with \textit{salat al-fajr} and \textit{salat al-‘asr}\textsuperscript{110} is 11/114:

\begin{quote}
\textit{wa-aqimi l-ṣalāta tārafayi l-nahāri wa-zulafan mina l-layli.}

And perform the prayer at the two ends of the day and during some stages of the night.
\end{quote}

The same prayers are said to be mentioned in Quran 40/55,\textsuperscript{111} 6/52,\textsuperscript{112} and 17/78–79.\textsuperscript{113}

The fact that \textit{salat al-fajr} substituted for \textit{salat al-duhā} as an official


\textsuperscript{108} Suyūṭi, \textit{Durr}, IV, 312 (from Ibn Abī Ḥātim): \ldots kāna hadha qabla an tufrāda l-ṣalātu.

\textsuperscript{109} Suyūṭī, \textit{Durr}, IV, 312, VI, 110.

\textsuperscript{110} Ṭabārī, \textit{Tafṣīr}, XII, 77; Suyūṭī, \textit{Durr}, III, 351.


\textsuperscript{113} Ṭabārī, \textit{Tafṣīr}, XV, 93: \ldots ‘an Abī Jāfār: \textit{“išā ghasaqa l-laylī” qala: salat al-‘asr-.}
morning prayer already before the number of prayers was extended to five is most significant. The obvious similarity between salât al-fajr and the Jewish shaharitn indicates, once again, how early Muḥammad began to look for Jewish models of prayer which substituted for Arab pre-Islamic manners of worship (salât al-duḥā). The same process is discernible in the fact that at a certain stage before the hijra, Muḥammad stopped praying towards the Ka’ba which served as his first qibla, and started praying towards Jerusalem instead.114 After the hijra, however, the Ka’ba was taken up again as a qibla.

The sacredness of the hours of the fajr and the ʿasr was mainly the result of the fact that they marked the middle stage between day and night. The Prophet is reported to have related that at the fajr and the ʿasr the angels of the day and of the night meet with each other, on their way up to heaven and down to earth. Those going up inform Allāh about the prayers of the worshippers.115 This tradition indicates that the fajr and the ʿasr were regarded as most appropriate hours for prayer.

The fact that the prayers of the fajr and the ʿasr were performed during the middle stage between night and day brought about the identification of these prayers with the Quranic phrase al-salāt al-wusta (2/238). This phrase in itself means a prayer performed between night and day,116 and it seems to have been connected at first with salāt al-ṣubh (al-fajr) which was performed between the darkness of the night and the brightness of the day.117 The application of the same Quranic phrase to salāt al-ʿasr is ascribed to the Prophet himself. ‘Alī related that the Muslims used to think that al-salāt al-wusta was salāt al-ṣubh, till they had heard the Prophet cursing the polytheists during the Battle of the Ditch for having detained the Muslims from praying the ʿasr. The words of the Prophet were: “shaghaluna ‘ani l-salati l-wusta salati l-ʿasri...”118 It was even maintained that the words “salāt al-ʿasr” were originally written in the Quran itself, serving as a badal for the phrase al-salāt al-wusta. This qirāʿa is related on the authority of ʿĀ‘isha, Ḥafṣa and Umm Salama.119

114 Some connect it with the miraculous idrāʾ to Jerusalem and the introduction of the five daily prayers which is said to have taken place during that event. See Ḥalabi, I, 264.
116 ‘Abd al-Razzāq, I, 579: ...wasalāt fa-kāmat bayna l-layli wa-l-nahar. See also Suyūṭī, Durr, I, 301 (from ‘Abd al-Razzāq).
117 Suyūṭī, Durr, I, 301 (from Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr). See also Razi, VI, 148 ff.; Ṭabarist, II, 262.
118 Ṭabarī, Tafsīr, II, 345. See also Suyūṭī, Durr, I, 303; Ṭahāwī, Sharḥ, I, 173.
119 Ṭabarī, Tafsīr, II, 343–344. In other versions, a “wawat” is inserted between “al-salāt al-
Sa/at al-fajr and salat al-‘asr have always retained their superiority over the rest of the official Islamic prayers. Thus it is related that a person told the Prophet that his preoccupations hindered him from sticking to the five daily prayers. So the Prophet instructed him to keep to the ‘asrani only. The man asked: “What are the ‘asrani?” The Prophet said: “A prayer before sunrise and a prayer before sunset”. The virtue of these prayers is stressed also in the following statement of the Prophet: “He who prays before the rising of the sun and before its setting will not enter hell”. The prayers of the fajr and the ‘asr were also called al-bardani, i.e. the cool ones. The Prophet reportedly stated: “He who prays the bardani will enter paradise”.

C. The data surveyed thus far concerning salat al-fajr and salat al-‘asr indicate that these prayers were actually performed close to sunrise and sunset. But these prayers were never condemned as bid‘a, not even after the aversion to prayers during sunrise and sunset became dominant in Islam. The reason for this seems to have been connected with the fact that, in contrast to salat al-duha, the prayers of the fajr and ‘asr had a clear parallel in other monotheistic circles, i.e. the Jews, and this apparently provided these prayers with a kind of legitimacy. Nevertheless, there is evidence in Muslim sources that some scholars preferred that the prayers of the fajr and ‘asr be performed not too close to sunrise and sunset. As for salat al-‘asr, those who waited till the sun became yellow in order to perform this prayer were sometimes labelled as munafiqun. As for salat al-fajr, several traditions were circulated stressing that this prayer must not be extended beyond sunrise. The general tendency was to detach it as far as possible from sunrise, so that prayers performed even during the first brightness preceding sunrise were deplored.

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120 Suyûtî, Durr I, 294; Taḥwîl, Mushkîl, I, 440.
121 Ibn Khuzayma, I, 164; Suyûtî, Durr, IV, 312; Muslim, II, 114; Taḥbîrî, Taḥfîr, II, 351; Majma‘ al-zawa‘id, I, 318.
122 Bukhârî, I, 150. See also Fath al-bârî, II, 43–44; Muslim, II, 114.
123 Ibn Khuzayma, I, 172; ʿAbd al-Razzâq, I, 549–550; Taḥwîl, Sharh, I, 192; Tirmîdî, I, 271; Mâlik, I, 221; Abû Dawûd, I, 98; Muslim, II, 110.
124 E.g. ʿAbd al-Razzâq, I, 581, 582.
125 Ibid., I, 572.
scribed for șalāt al-fajr was the ghālas, i.e., the last moments of darkness. Sometimes it was even stressed that when this prayer was concluded, one was still unable to recognize one’s own son or friend. Delaying the fajr prayer till after the disappearance of the stars was sometimes condemned as a Christian practice.

On the other hand, however, there were quite a few Muslims who, in spite of the aversion to prayers during sunrise and sunset, used to delay the fajr and the ʿasr prayers till very close to sunrise and sunset, thus maintaining their original time. Those who used to delay the ʿasr prayer during Muhammad’s lifetime were mainly the inhabitants of Qubā, near Medina, namely the Banū ʿAmr b. ʿAwf. It is reported that they used to pray the ʿasr much later than did the people of Medina. The scholar Tāwūs reportedly used to delay the ʿasr prayer till the sun became very yellow. Ibn Masʿūd also used to delay the ʿasr prayer, and so did Ibn Sirin and Abū Qilāba. Abū Hurayra reportedly postponed the ʿasr until the rays of the sun were seen only upon the summit of the highest mountain in Medina. The name of șalāt al-ʿasr was explained as though derived from the term ʾiṣār in the sense of taʿkhr, i.e., delay. Abū Qilāba reportedly stated that șalāt al-ʿasr was thus named in order to be delayed.

Traditions soon appeared in which those who prayed the ʿasr as early as possible were actually condemned for deviating from the sunna of the Prophet. Umm Salama is reported to have stated: “The apostle of Allāh used to pray the zuhr earlier than you do, and you pray the ʿasr earlier than he did”. In a similar tradition, the too early performance of the ʿasr prayer is presented as a deviation from the sunna of the preceding peoples:

126 Ibid., I, 540, 569; Bukhārī, I, 147, 148; Muslim, II, 119; Tirmidhī, I, 260–261.
128 Majmāʿ al-zawa'id, I, 316.
129 Bukhārī, I 144; “Abd al-Razzāq, I, 549; Muslim, II, 109–110; Taḥāwī, Sharḥ, I, 190; Majmāʿ al-zawa'id, I, 307–308.
130 “Abd al-Razzāq, I, 550: ...kāna yuʾakhkhiru l-tasra hattā taʃjarra l-shamsu jiddan.
131 Ibid., I, 551; Majmāʿ al-zawa'id, I, 307.
132 “Abd al-Razzāq, I, 551.
133 Taḥāwī, Sharḥ, I, 193.
134 Taḥāwī, Mushkil, I, 439.
135 Loc. cit.: ‘an Abī Qilāba: innāma summīyati l-ʿasra li-iṯʿara. See also idem, Sharḥ, I, 194.
"Those who were before you used to pray the zuhr earlier than you do, and to pray the 'asr later than you do". In fact, the Prophet himself was quoted as explicitly favoring the delayed performance (ta'khîr) of salât al-'asr.

The great scholar Abû Ḥanifa objected to the early performance of salât al-'asr. He maintained that the appropriate time for this prayer commences only when the shadows are twice as long as the objects that cast them. The followers of Abû Ḥanifa maintained that the 'asr prayer should be delayed till the ascension of the angels at the end of the day.

Likewise, salât al-fajr was not always detached from sunrise. Pious Muslims like 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, although recommending that salât al-fajr be started when the stars are still visible, gave instructions to prolong it through the recitation of two long suras. In fact, many Muslims used to carry on the fajr prayer till the day became very bright, or even to start it only when the day was already bright. Such, for instance, was the practice of Tawûs (kāna yusfiru bi-salât al-ghadât).

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D. The question of the lawfulness of prayers close to sunrise and sunset was especially acute with respect to the voluntary rak'as following the
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prayers of the *fajr* and the *'asr*. Those who objected to prayers close to sunrise and sunset utterly forbade such voluntary supplications following *ṣalāt al-fajr* and *ṣalāt al-'asr*. Their attitude is reflected in the following traditions about the Prophet. 'Ali reportedly stated that the Prophet used to pray two *rak'as* following each compulsory prayer, except for the *fajr* and the *'asr*.¹⁴⁶ Salama b. al-Akwa', too, stated that he had never seen the Prophet pray following the *ṣubh* and *'asr* prayers.¹⁴⁷ The Prophet himself was reported to have interdicted in several traditions prayers following the *ṣubh* till sunrise, and following the *'asr* till sunset.¹⁴⁸ Prayers following *ṣalāt al-'asr* were especially prohibited, and several traditions of the Prophet to that effect were circulated.¹⁴⁹

As is to be expected, however, there is evidence that voluntary prayers following *ṣalāt al-fajr* and *ṣalāt al-'asr* were not altogether abandoned. The adherence to such voluntary *rak'as* was customary mainly in Mecca; here they were performed at the end of the *tawāf* which took place following the prayers of the *fajr* and the *'asr*.

A tradition of the Prophet says that there are two kinds of *tawāf* which provide the believers with total forgiveness: a *tawāf* following *ṣalāt al-fajr* which is finished at sunrise, and a *tawāf* following the *'asr* prayer which is finished at sunset. These are sacred hours attended by the angels.¹⁵⁰ Each of these two daily *tawāfs* was concluded by two *rak'as*, and there are several traditions of the Prophet stressing the lawfulness of such *rak'as*. In one of them the following statement is attributed to the Prophet: “There is no prayer following the *'asr* till sunset, neither following the *fajr* till sunrise, except at Mecca”.¹⁵¹ In fact, there is a whole chapter in al-Fākihi containing traditions about prominent *ṣahāba*, such as Ibn ‘Umar, Ibn ‘Abbās, al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn and others, who prayed the voluntary *rak'as* at Mecca following the *tawāf* of the *ṣubh* and the *'asr*.¹⁵²

Muslim scholars sometimes made a point of stressing that the concession relating to prayers following the *fajr* and the *'asr* was exclusive to

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¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, II, 225. And see further, Bukhārī, I, 152; Fākihi, 301¹.
¹⁵⁰ Fākihi, 299¹. See also Azraqi, 266; *Qira*, 330.
¹⁵¹ *Majma‘ al-zawa‘id*, II, 228. See further, Fākihi, 300°; *Qira* 321.
¹⁵² Fākihi, 300°–301°.
Mecca, but, on the other hand, the ṭawāf did not always remain the only legitimate setting for practicing these extra prayers. It is reported that the Zāhirīs considered all traditions prohibiting additional rakʿas following the fajr and the ʿasr prayers as abrogated (mansūkha). There are, in fact, several examples proving that the adherence to this kind of rakʿas overcame the resistance of pious Muslims. It is related, for instance, that ʿUmar used to flog people who dared pray after the ʿasr prayer, but Tamim al-Dārī ignored it and stated that he had seen the Prophet himself praying following ṣalāt al-ʿasr. The same statement was made by Zayd b. Khālid al-Juḥāni.156 Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī as well related that he had seen the Prophet perform two rakʿas following salāt al- ʿasr. ʿAʾisha, too, stated that the Prophet had never given up the two rakʿas following the ʿasr prayer.158

These traditions indicate that despite the efforts exerted by Muslim scholars to suppress prayers during sunrise and sunset, due to their alleged pagan nature — prayers at these hours were never abandoned in early Islam. The sacredness attached to these hours was greater than the fear of paganism.

Abbreviations

Abū Dāwūd — Abū Dāwūd, Sunan, Cairo 1952.
Bukḥārī — al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ, Cairo 1958.

153 E.g., Fākihi, 301'.. fa-innahu rukhkhisa fi dhalika hā-ḥunā ma lam yurakhkhas fi shay'in mina l-amsar. And see also the statement of Abū l-Darda' concerning the same matter: innā hādā l-balad layṣa ka-sāʿirī l-buldān (Fākihi, 300').
154 See the detailed discussion, Fath al-bārī, II, 48.
155 Majmāʿ al-zawā'id, II, 222–223.
156 Ibid., II, 223.
157 Loc. cit.
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Fakihi — al-Fakihi, Tarikh Makka, MS Leiden, Or. 463.


Maqrîzî, Imtâz — al-Maqrîzî, al-Imtâz wa-l-asmaʿ, Cairo 1941.


Muqâtîl I–II — Muqâtîl b. Sulaymân, Tafṣîr al-Qurān, MS Saray, Ahmet III, 74/I–II.

Muslim — Muslim, Ṣâḥîh, Cairo, 1334H/1915.


Ṭâhâwî, Mushkil — al-Ṭâhâwî, Mushkil al-āthar, Hyderabad 1333H/1914.


