

Lesson 49: Salat al-ayaat (Prayer of signs)

1. Its causes

The prayer of "signs" (*ayaat*) is obligatory when any of the following signs occur:–

1. Solar eclipse.
2. Lunar eclipse.
3. Earthquake.
4. Any natural occurrence which normally creates fear in the common people, like black, red or yellow storm, cyclone and things like that.

2. Its time

In solar and lunar eclipses, the time of the "prayer of signs" is from beginning of the eclipse till it is completely cleared.

In other causes like earthquake it must be prayed soon after the cause subsides. But it is always *ada* even if prayed many days after its occurrence.

3. Its method

Prayer of signs is 2 *rak'ats*; every *rak'at* has 5 *ruku'* (total 10 *ruku'*).

After *niyyah* and *Takbiratul-ihram*, you should recite Surah al-Hamd, then any other Surah; then go to *ruku'*. Your one *ruku'* is complete. After rising from *ruku'*, recite again Surah al-Hamd and one Surah and go to *ruku'*. Your second *ruku'* is complete. Likewise, you should do 5 *ruku'*. After rising from 5th *ruku'*, say '*Sami' Allahu liman hamidah'* and go to *sajdah*. Complete 2 *sajdahs* as usual and rise for the 2nd *rak'at*.

Likewise, do 5 *ruku'* in the 2nd *rak'at*, and perform 2 *sajdahs*, recite *tashahhud* and *salaam* as usual. Your prayer is complete.

Note: It is mustahab to recite *qunut* before every second *ruku'*. For this purpose count all ten *ruku'* together, Thus you will recite *qunut* before the 2nd and 4th (in the first *rak'at*), and before the 6th, the 8th and the 10th *ruku'* (in the 2nd *rak'at*).

4. Short Method

Also you are allowed to pray this prayer by a short method:

After *Takbiratul-Ihram*, you recite Surah al-Hamd, and only a part of a Surah; then go to the first *ruku'*, after rising recite another subsequent part of that Surah and go to the second *ruku'*, rise again and recite the third subsequent part of that Surah and go to the 3rd *ruku'*. Likewise do before the 4th and the 5th *ruku'*, finishing the Surah before 5th *ruku'*.

For example: Surah al-Ikhlās is 5 verses. You may recite '*Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Rahim*' before first *ruku'*'; '*Qul-Huwa'llahu Ahad*' before the 2nd *ruku'*'; '*Allahus-Samad*' before the 3rd *ruku'*'; '*Lam yalid wa lam yulad*' before the 4th *ruku'*'; and '*Wa lam yakun lahu kufuwan ahad*' before the the 5th *ruku'*', Thus you would have read only one al-Hamd and only one complete Surah in one *rak'at*. You may recite one *rak'at* in one way and the other *rak'at* in the other way.

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