

Importance of Nafl (Volunteer) prayers in addition to Fard (obligatory) Prayers

It is very important to perform Nafl prayers in addition to obligatory prayers and is very relevant for building a strong Islamic practice beyond the **fard** obligations.

Below is a **Qur'an- and Sunnah-based explanation** of *why praying nafl (voluntary) prayers*—such as **Sunnah Rawātib, Tahajjud, Ishrāq, Duḥā, and others**—is so important.

1. Nafl prayers complete and protect the Fard prayers

Even sincere believers are rarely perfect in their fard ṣalāh. Nafl prayers **repair the shortcomings**.

□ Hadith

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“The first thing for which a person will be called to account on the Day of Resurrection is his prayer. If it is sound, he will succeed and prosper. If it is deficient, he will fail and lose. If there is any deficiency in his obligatory prayers, Allah will say:

‘Look, does My servant have any voluntary prayers to make up for it?’”

(Tirmidhī, Abū Dāwūd – Ṣaḥīḥ)

➡ **Nafl prayers act as a safety net** for our farḍ ṣalāh on the Day of Judgment.

2. Nafl prayers bring closeness and love of Allah

Farḍ prayers are an obligation, but **nafl prayers are a sign of love and longing** for Allah.

- **Hadith Qudsī**

Allah says:

“My servant does not draw near to Me with anything more beloved to Me than what I have made obligatory upon him. And My servant continues to draw near to Me with voluntary deeds until I love him...”
(*Bukhārī*)

➡ Nafl prayers are the **pathway to Allah’s special love**, protection, and divine assistance.

3. The Prophet ﷺ consistently prayed Nafl – despite being forgiven

The Prophet ﷺ had **all his past and future sins forgiven**, yet he was the most devoted in nafl prayers.

□ Hadith

‘Ā’ishah (radīyAllāhu ‘anhā) said:

“The Prophet ﷺ would stand in prayer at night until his feet became swollen.”

(Bukhārī, Muslim)

When asked why, he said:

“Should I not be a grateful servant?”

(Bukhārī)

➡ Nafl prayers are an **expression of gratitude**, not just a means of forgiveness.

4. Tahajjud: a special, praised station in the Qur’an

• Qur’an

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسَىٰ أَن يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُودًا

“And during a portion of the night, pray Tahajjud as an extra (nafl) for you; it may be that your Lord will raise you to a praised station (maqām maḥmūd).”

(Surah Al-Isrā’ 17:79)

➡ Tahajjud elevates a believer’s **rank, honor, and acceptance** with Allah.

5. Nafl prayers purify the heart and strengthen īmān

□ Qur'an

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ
الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ

“Successful indeed are the believers—those who are humble in their prayer.”

(Surah Al-Mu'minūn 23:1–2)

Regular nafl prayers:

- Increase **khushū'** (humility)
- Soften the heart
- Protect from sins
- Strengthen awareness of Allah (taqwā)

6. Sunnah Rawātib: protection and a house in Jannah

The Prophet ﷺ emphasized certain sunnah prayers attached to farḍ prayers.

□ Hadith

“Whoever prays twelve rak'ahs in a day and night, a house will be built for him in Jannah.”

(Muslim)

These include:

- 2 before Fajr
- 4 before & 2 after Zuhr
- 2 after Maghrib

- 2 after ‘Ishā’

➡ These sunnah prayers **guard the fard** and earn eternal reward.

7. Ishrāq & Duḥā: reward equal to Hajj and ‘Umrah (in virtue)

- **Hadith**

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Whoever prays Fajr in congregation, then sits remembering Allah until the sun rises, then prays two rak‘ahs, will have a reward like that of Hajj and ‘Umrah—complete, complete, complete.”

(Tirmidhī – ḥasan)

➡ Nafl prayers multiply rewards **without extra hardship**.

8. Nafl prayers distinguish true servants from mere obligation-doers

- **Qur’an**

كَانُوا قَلِيلًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُونَ
وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ

“They used to sleep little of the night, and in the hours before dawn they would seek forgiveness.”

(Surah Adh-Dhāriyāt 51:17–18)

➡ Nafl prayers are a sign of **sincere servitude**, not minimal compliance.

Summary: Why Nafl Prayers Matter

Nafl prayers:

- ✓ Complete deficiencies in farḍ
 - ✓ Earn Allah’s love
 - ✓ Elevate ranks in Jannah
 - ✓ Purify the heart and increase īmān
 - ✓ Show gratitude and sincerity
 - ✓ Were the constant practice of the Prophet ﷺ
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Below are **ONLY authentic (ṣaḥīḥ or ḥasan) du‘ās** that are **established from the Qur’an and Sunnah**, which may be recited **after nafl prayers** (or at any time), without innovations or weak reports.

1. Du‘ā for Acceptance of Deeds

• Qur’an

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

Rabbana taqabbal minnā innaka Anta as-Samī‘ul-‘Alīm

“Our Lord, accept from us. Indeed, You are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.”

□ **Surah Al-Baqarah 2:127**

✓ Very appropriate after nafl prayers, asking Allah to accept worship.

2. Du‘ā for Forgiveness and Mercy

• **Qur’an**

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَارْحَمْنِي وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

Rabbighfir lī warḥamnī wa Anta khayrur-rāḥimīn

“My Lord, forgive me and have mercy on me, and You are the best of those who show mercy.”

• **Surah Al-Mu‘minūn 23:118**

✓ Often recited by the Prophet ﷺ in various supplications.

3. Du‘ā for Steadfastness in Religion

• **Hadith (Ṣaḥīḥ)**

يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِكَ

Yā Muqallibal-qulūb, thabbit qalbī ‘alā dīnik

“O Turner of the hearts, keep my heart firm upon Your religion.”

□ **Tirmidhī (ḥasan–ṣaḥīḥ)**

✓ Highly recommended after nafl, especially Tahajjud.

4. Du‘ā for Guidance, Taqwā, and Contentment

• **Hadith (Ṣaḥīḥ)**

وَالْعَفَافَ وَالْغِنَى اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْهُدَى وَالتَّقَى

Allāhumma innī as’alukal-hudā wat-tuqā wal-‘afāfa wal-ghinā

“O Allah, I ask You for guidance, piety, chastity, and self-sufficiency.”

• **Muslim**

✓ A comprehensive du‘ā after voluntary prayers.

5. Du‘ā for Beneficial Knowledge and Accepted Deeds

• **Hadith (Ṣaḥīḥ)**

Allāhumma anfa‘nī bimā ‘allamtanī wa ‘allimnī mā yanfa‘unī wa zidnī ‘ilmā

“O Allah, benefit me with what You have taught me, teach me what will benefit me, and increase me in knowledge.”

□ **Ibn Mājah – ṣaḥīḥ**

6. Du‘ā for Protection from the Fire

□ **Hadith (Ṣaḥīḥ)**

اللَّهُمَّ أَجِرْنِي مِنَ النَّارِ

Allāhumma ajirnī minan-nār

“O Allah, protect me from the Fire.”

□ **Abū Dāwūd – ṣaḥīḥ**

✓ Especially good after night prayers.

7. Du‘ā for the Best of This Life and the Hereafter

• **Qur’an**

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

**Rabbana ātinā fid-dunyā ḥasanah wa fil-ākhirati ḥasanah
wa qinā ‘adhāban-nār**

• **Surah Al-Baqarah 2:201**

✓ The most comprehensive du‘ā used frequently by the Prophet

ﷺ

Important Sunnah Note (Very Important)

There is **NO** specific du‘ā fixed by the Prophet ﷺ exclusively after nafl prayers.

✓ Any authentic du‘ā may be made

✓ Best times: **after prayer, during sujūd, and at night (Tahajjud)**

✗ Avoid believing any specific wording is “mandatory” after nafl

Summary (Authentic Practice)

After nafl prayer:

- Praise Allah
 - Send ṣalāh upon the Prophet ﷺ
 - Make **any authentic du‘ā**
 - Be humble and sincere
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