



IN THE EDGES
OF THE DAY

&

IN THE EDGES
OF THE NIGHT

A Guide to **Making Up Missed Prayers**

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Setting Your Intention

In the name of Allah ﷻ, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

A Gift From Those Who Walked This Path Before You

Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahīm. All praise belongs to Allah ﷻ, Lord of the worlds, and peace and blessings be upon our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his family, and his companions.

We, the authors, present this guide to you as a gift from travelers who have completed the journey to those who are still on the path. By Allah's ﷻ mercy and guidance, we have fulfilled our *qadā'* prayers, and now we hope to light the way for you as you embark on or continue this sacred journey.

This book was born from the overwhelming gratitude we felt upon completing our makeup prayers. We remember the uncertainty, the challenges, and sometimes the loneliness of this path. We remember searching for guidance, practical advice, and reassurance that this monumental task was indeed possible.

As authors who have walked before you, our intention in creating this guide is pure:

We offer this knowledge as *ṣadaqa jāriya* (continuous charity and beneficial knowledge), seeking only Allah's ﷻ pleasure, and the benefit of our sisters and brothers in faith. Having experienced the transformative power of fulfilling this obligation, we intend to inspire hope in those who feel overwhelmed by their missed prayers.

We intend to make the path clearer, smoother, and less lonely for you than it was for us. Every strategy, story, and suggestion comes from lived experience, tested and refined through our own trials and successes.

We intend that this guide serves as a companion in your moments of doubt, a source of practical wisdom when challenges arise, and a reminder of the spiritual growth that awaits you on this journey.

As you begin this journey, we invite you to set your own intention, making it personal and powerful:

"Ya Allah ﷻ, I intend to fulfill my obligation of makeup prayers not merely as a debt to be paid, but as an opportunity to rebuild my relationship with You. With each prayer, I seek Your pleasure, Your forgiveness, and a chance to rewrite moments of heedlessness with moments of devotion. Guide me, strengthen me, and accept this journey from me."

Remember the beautiful hadith qudsi where Allah ﷻ says: "I am as My servant thinks of Me." Approach this journey with hope in Allah's ﷻ mercy rather than fear of His punishment. See each makeup prayer not as a burden but as a gift: another chance to stand before your Creator in submission and love.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "The believer is a mirror to the believer." In sharing our experiences, we hope to reflect back to you your own potential for completion and transformation. What was possible for us is possible for you, with Allah's ﷻ help.

We completed our journey. You can complete yours. And perhaps one day, you too will guide someone else along this path, continuing this circle of knowledge, support, and spiritual growth.

May Allah ﷻ accept this work from us, make it beneficial for you, and reward both authors and readers with His pleasure and Paradise. Amīn.

Your Sisters in Deen,

Nausheena & Afshan

(All other names have been changed to respect the privacy of the worshipper).



**PART I:
UNDERSTANDING
THE OBLIGATION**

Chapter 1: The Awakening

Nausheena's Story

It was winter of my senior year, a pivotal moment at age seventeen, when everything changed. My parents were away for 'umra, and I was staying at my aunt and uncle's house with my cousins and siblings. One evening, we were reading about the importance of prayer. This wasn't just casual reading. We were studying about what happens to those who miss their prayers in the grave. The words pierced through years of sporadic worship, years of choosing sleep over Fajr, of letting Dhuhr slip away during school hours, of finding excuses to delay 'Aṣr. It scared me!

That night, surrounded by my cousins and brother, the weight of prayer in Islam truly hit me for the first time. The Prophet ﷺ had said, "The first matter that the slave will be brought to account for on the Day of Judgment is the prayer. If it is sound, then the rest of his deeds will be sound. And if it is bad, then the rest of his deeds will be bad." (Recorded by Al-Tabarani)

In Islam, the emphasis on prayer is absolute. The five daily prayers are the foundation of our faith and one of the greatest acts of devotion through which we draw near to Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ says in the Quran:

"Indeed, prayer has been decreed upon the believers, a decree of specified times" (4:103).

When you truly absorb this verse, each prayer time begins to feel like a divine appointment. At seventeen, I finally understood what my mom and Sunday school teachers had been trying to teach me for years. Maintaining the five daily prayers became a way of structuring life around these sacred moments and around the deeper purpose for which we were created.

Establishing regular prayer can be one of the greatest challenges many Muslims face. Between school, work, social life, and the pace of modern life, maintaining the five daily prayers calls for thoughtful organization of our schedules and priorities. Yet this commitment also carries immense potential for transformation, shaping the rhythm of our days and drawing our lives steadily back to Allah ﷻ.

That winter night, reading about the punishment of the grave, I made a decision that would alter the course of my life, and perhaps my *ākhirah*. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Prayer is a light" (Muslim), and I was about to discover just how illuminating this journey would be.

The decision to begin praying five times a day brought a complete shift in the rhythm of my life. Each prayer invited its own adjustment in routine and mindset. My days started with an alarm for Fajr, pulling myself from the warmth of sleep to answer the call to prayer. On school

days, getting home by 2 PM gave me time to pray Dhuhr before ‘Aṣr arrived. Slowly, the midday prayers that once slipped past during the busyness of school began to find their place in the structure of my day

Maghrib is the focal point of one of my most vivid memories from this time. I worked at Baskin Robbins in the mall, and I would slip away to the back storage room for Maghrib, finding a tight corner among the boxes and freezers to lay down my prayer mat. It wasn't glamorous or ideal, but it marked a turning point in my commitment: learning to make space for prayer wherever I found myself. Finally, ‘Ishā became my daily spiritual closure with Allah ﷻ, a peaceful way to end each day before sleep.

More than just the mechanical aspects of prayer times, it meant learning to structure my entire day around these divine appointments. Each prayer would become a compass point, guiding me through the day, anchoring me in remembrance of Allah ﷻ.

But what about the years before: of my sporadic and missed prayers?

Chapter 2: Islamic Rulings & Spiritual Ramifications of Missed Prayers

Understanding the weight of missed prayers begins with recognizing what Allah ﷻ has decreed for us. The Quran clearly states:

"...Indeed, prayer has been decreed upon the believers at specified times" (4:103)

emphasizing the serious nature of prayer times and our obligations to fulfill them. The Prophet ﷺ further emphasized this gravity when he said:

"The covenant between us and them is prayer, so whoever abandons it has disbelieved" (Tirmidhi).

These texts remind us that prayer is a fundamental pillar of our faith and a sacred covenant with our Creator.

Missing prayers carries a heavy spiritual weight, so much so that Ibn Mas'ūd (ra) said, "There is no sin more grievous after shirk than abandoning prayer." And Allah ﷻ reminds us in the Quran,

"Indeed, Allah does not forgive associating others with Him in worship but forgives anything else of whoever He wills..." (4:48).

When we neglect our prayers, scholars have outlined three levels of consequences that we may face.

1. The first and most immediate is spiritual distance from Allah ﷻ. Just as neglecting any relationship causes it to weaken, abandoning prayer creates a barrier between us and our Lord, dimming the light of faith in our hearts and making us feel disconnected from divine guidance and peace.
2. The second consequence manifests in our worldly affairs, where we may experience increased hardship, decreased baraka in our time and sustenance, and a general sense that life feels more difficult and less blessed.
3. Finally, and most seriously, we will face questioning on the Day of Judgment about our neglected prayers, standing before Allah ﷻ to account for these missed opportunities to connect with Him and fulfill our most basic obligation as believers.

Anse Dr. Tamara Gray often says, "A missed prayer is to the soul as a collapsed lung is to the body."

She reflects in her digital book *40 Lessons for Life*:

In 1989, I stopped in Paris on my way to Damascus to visit my sister-in-law. May Allah have mercy on her soul (she passed during the war). I was getting dressed to go see the sites and dropped a pin. I bent over to pick it up and my lung collapsed. It's called pneumothorax and it can happen in young healthy people.

The thing is, when my lung collapsed I couldn't talk, I was in an enormous amount of pain, and I could barely move. Eventually I got to the hospital and after a series of medical mishaps I was on the mend and Alhamdulillah here I am, not the worst for wear.

Every time I think about that experience I think about the effect of the loss of one lung on my body: devastating. And that is the effect of the loss of a prayer on your spirit. fard prayers keep our spirit healthy, strong, and able to speak! The loss of prayer cuts off communication with God, limits spiritual mobility, and causes pain.

Pray even if you don't feel like it. Breathing is natural. Make prayer natural.

Anse Dr. Tamara Gray also says, "If you have time to binge on Netflix, you have time to binge on prayer to fulfill debt towards Allah ﷻ." *Mic drop!*

Saba's Story: "My journey began during a random YouTube scroll. Sheikh Omar Suleiman was discussing the weight of salah on the Day of Judgment. I remember freezing, phone in hand, as years of missed prayers suddenly felt real. That night, I couldn't sleep. By Fajr, I had my journal out, ready to start counting. But more importantly, ready to change."

The Rewards of Making Up Prayers

While the consequences of missing prayers are serious, Allah's ﷻ mercy shines through in the immediate benefits that come from making up these missed obligations. When you begin this journey, you'll experience the profound relief of clearing your spiritual debt and that weight you've been carrying will finally begin to lift from your shoulders. You'll likely notice increased baraka in your time and affairs, finding that somehow your days feel more blessed and productive despite dedicating extra time to prayer. Your connection with Allah ﷻ will naturally strengthen as you spend more time in His presence, and this renewed relationship brings a deep peace of mind that replaces the anxiety you may have felt about your missed prayers.

The long-term rewards that scholars describe are even more remarkable. Through the consistent act of making up prayers, you work toward elevation in your spiritual rank,

drawing closer to Allah ﷻ in ways that transform your entire relationship with Him. These prayers serve as expiation for your sins, helping to purify your record and cleanse your heart from past negligence. Allah ﷻ may grant you protection from punishment, both in this world and the next, as you demonstrate your sincere commitment to fulfilling your obligations. Perhaps most beautifully, you may find increased blessings in your sustenance, not just material provision, but a richness in all aspects of your life that comes from being in the right relationship with your Creator. In both this life and the next, this journey brings forgiveness, tranquility, and reward that extends far beyond what we can imagine.

Warda's Reflection: "The mistake I made at first was approaching qadā' prayers with dread. Each prayer felt like a burden, a reminder of failure. Everything changed when my teacher said, 'Each makeup prayer is a gift from Allah ﷻ; He's giving you a chance to rewrite your past.' That shifted everything. Suddenly, each prayer became an opportunity, not an obligation."

The major schools of thought consider it obligatory (farḍ) to make up missed prayers as they are a debt to Allah ﷻ.

“Guard strictly [the five obligatory] prayers, especially the middle prayer, and stand before Allah ﷻ with devotion” (2:238).

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Whoever forgets a prayer must perform it when they remember it.” [Bukhari; Muslim]

Narrated by Anas ibn Mālik, the Prophet ﷺ said: “When one of you sleeps and misses a prayer or forgets it, let him pray it when he remembers, for Allah ﷻ says: ‘Establish the prayer for My remembrance.’” [Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim]

Hope in Allah ﷻ

There's a beautiful story that emphasizes the significance of turning back to Allah ﷻ. In a hadith, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

"Among the people who came before you, there was a man who had killed 99 people. He went out in search of the most knowledgeable person on earth to ask if he could ever be forgiven. He was directed to a monk and asked him, "I have killed 99 people; is there any chance for me to repent?"

The monk replied, "No." So the man killed him too, completing 100.

Still determined to repent, he found a scholar and asked the same question. The scholar replied:

"Who can stand between you and repentance? Go to such-and-such a land; there are righteous people there. Join them in worship and do not return to your evil land."

The man set off on his journey. But halfway there, he died.

Now the angels of mercy and punishment argued over his soul.

- The angels of punishment said, "He never did a single good deed."
- The angels of mercy said, "But he was on his way to repent!"

So Allah ﷻ sent another angel in the form of a man to settle the dispute. He instructed:

"Measure the distance between the two lands. If he is closer to the land of righteousness, he will be forgiven."

They measured, and he was found to be closer to the land of mercy, by only a small distance—and so Allah ﷻ forgave him.

Lessons from this story:

- No sin is too great for Allah's ﷻ mercy as long as one turns to Him sincerely.
- Intention and effort matter. The man didn't make it to his destination, but he intended to, and he started the journey with that intention.
- Allah's ﷻ mercy outweighed his lifetime of sin—because of a single, sincere turn back to Him.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim and Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn

The Conversation That Changed Everything

It was during Ramadan 1444 AH (2024) when my understanding of prayer underwent another seismic shift. Just as that winter night in my teenage years had awakened me to the importance of establishing daily prayers, a conversation with my friend Afshan Malik opened my eyes to a debt I hadn't even known I carried.

Afshan shared her journey of making up her *qaḍā'* prayers. I sat there, my heart growing heavier with each word. Here I was, proud of maintaining my five daily prayers for years, yet completely oblivious to the prayers that remained unprayed.

The Story of Ka' b: A Mirror to Our Own Delays

Afshan's Reflection:

As a recovering procrastinator, one of the things that kept circling in my mind was the reality that I had years of prayers I needed to make up. Then came a Ramadan where I heard the story of Ka' b ibn Mālik, not for the first time, and it landed differently.

Here was someone beloved to the Prophet ﷺ, a companion personally called to join the believers on the expedition to Tabuk. And yet, day after day, he told himself, "I'll go tomorrow... I'll go tomorrow." He had the means: financial security, physical ability, emotional steadiness; but spiritually, he hit a blind spot: procrastination.

That story forced me to confront my own blind spot: my *qaḍā'* prayers from my early tween years, prayers I had carried for years like an unfinished weight.

What struck me most about Ka' b's story wasn't just the mistake. It was the consequence. The greatest blessing was withheld from him: closeness to the Prophet ﷺ and the believing community. He lived in a spiritual "timeout" with no end in sight until Allah ﷻ lifted it after fifty long days.

I couldn't stop asking myself:

Was I living in my own version of that spiritual distance?

Would my impact in the work I love be affected?

Was I asking Allah ﷻ for blessings and answered *dua* while still carrying the heavy debt of neglected prayers?

I had made them up here and there before, but something shifted that Ramadan. The weight felt urgent, personal, and nonnegotiable. It became a project of the soul.

Night after grueling night in Ramadan, I pushed myself to face them, one *qaḍā'* prayer after another.

The parallels were undeniable. Just as Ka' b delayed his preparation for battle, many of us delay making up our prayers:

- "I'll start after Ramadan"
- "I'll begin when life is less busy"
- "I'll do it when I'm older"
- "I'm praying five times now, isn't that enough?"

This realization felt different from my (Nausheena) first awakening. At seventeen, I had come to understand the importance of moving forward with prayer. Now, I came to understand the importance of restoring what had come before. Alongside maintaining my daily prayers, I felt a responsibility to acknowledge and repair those missed moments of connection with Allah ﷻ.

Learning about qaḍā' prayers through Afshan's journey was transformative. Her story opened my eyes to the possibility of making up years of missed prayers and to the blessing of being given the chance to restore those moments of worship.

Just as Ka' b's story had inspired Afshan, her story inspired me. If she could take on this journey, so could I. The debt seemed enormous, but as the saying goes, "The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step", or in this case, a single prayer.

What initially felt like a heavy burden slowly transformed into an opportunity. Each makeup prayer would be:

- A chance to reconnect with Allah ﷻ
- An opportunity to right a past wrong
- A means of seeking forgiveness
- A way to invite more blessings into my life

As I began calculating my missed prayers, I remembered Allah's ﷻ words:

"Indeed, Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly" (2:222).

This journey of making up prayers became a path of returning to Allah ﷻ, again and again, through each qaḍā' prayer.

Anse Dr. Tamara Gray shared this beautiful verse in her Ramadan *tarāwīh dua* that we remember Allah ﷻ in the edges of the day and in the edges of the night.

"Establish prayer 'O Prophet' at both ends of the day and in the early part of the night. Surely good deeds wipe out evil deeds. That is a reminder for the mindful" (11:114).

When I first heard that and I started my qaḍā' journey, I knew that I would be praying and remembering Allah ﷻ in different times of the day and night, not just during the times of the daily prayers.



**PART II:
PRACTICAL
IMPLEMENTATION**

Chapter 3: Taking Account: The Math Behind Calculating the Missed Prayers

I, Nausheena, remember sitting with my journal, phone calculator in hand. The numbers were daunting: 1,275 days. Then subtracting periods: 294 days. Final count: 981 days of prayers to make up. But numbers tell only part of the story. Behind each missed prayer was a moment of choice, a busy day, or sometimes just the carelessness of youth.

Calculating Your *Qaḍā'*

1. Determine the timeframe of missed prayers. For me, I was sporadic from summer, 1990, when I got my first period, until December 1993.
2. Account for days exempt from prayer (see appendices for valid reasons to miss prayer). I averaged a 7-day period.
3. My calculation example:
 - 3.5 years = 1,275 days
 - Minus 294 days (7 days × 42 months)
 - Total: 981 days of prayers to make up

It felt overwhelming at first, but I began during the last ten nights of Ramadan 1445H. In those nights, I was able to pray five full days' worth of *qaḍā'* prayers each day. I truly believe it was the baraka of Ramadan carrying me through. Once Ramadan ended, the pace naturally slowed to four days. Then I adjusted again and set a steady goal of making up three days' worth of prayers daily.

Allah ﷻ had given me ease in ways I couldn't ignore. I didn't have small children needing my constant attention. My consulting work allowed flexibility in my schedule. I had my health. These were real blessings, and I knew they were meant to help me finally face what I had delayed for years.

Anse Dr. Tamara Gray says your calculation may be less straightforward. If you are struggling to remember when you started praying, when you stopped, how many days, etc... Just make your best guesstimate and go forward. Don't get stuck in counting, get started praying.

Reflection

Reference **qadā' Prayer Calculation Worksheet** in Appendix.

I got my period at _____ years old.

I started praying seriously at _____ years old.

Subtract the age you got your period from the age you started praying. ____ years ____ months

During those years I would get my period approximately _____ days a week.

There are 7 days in a week, so I did not have prayer debt for approximately ____ weeks.

There are 52 weeks in a year, the weeks listed above add up to ____ years.

Subtract the number of years you do not have to make up from the number of years you do have to make up.

This is your number of years! You can now break it down into months, weeks, and days to help you get it done!

Chapter 4: Creating a Sustainable Plan

Set your intentions clearly. Your intention should first be to clear your debt to Allah ﷻ. You can deepen this intention by including the intention to transform your relationship with the prayer itself. Yearn for something deeper than simply checking off missed prayers from a list. With each prayer, seek to develop a more profound appreciation for these sacred times that Allah ﷻ has prescribed. These moments, these appointments with your Creator, hold wisdom and beauty you may have missed in your younger years.

Build stronger prayer habits that will carry you forward, ensuring you never accumulate such a debt again. Let this journey of making up prayers become a training ground for discipline, teaching you to guard your prayers more carefully and value each opportunity for connection with Allah ﷻ.

Work to increase your *khushu'* – that sweet, focused concentration in prayer that makes time stand still. Making up so many prayers offers countless opportunities to practice presence, to improve your connection, to find that still point where it's just you and your Lord. With each prostration, each *takbīr*, each *tashahhud*, work to be more present, more conscious of Who you are standing before. Anse Dr. Tamara Gray reminds us to not judge our prayers based on the level of *khushu'*. The point is to get them done!

Allow yourself to feel the weight lift. Each completed prayer is like placing down a small stone you have been carrying for years. The lightness that comes with each completion is both physical and spiritual – a tangible reminder that Allah ﷻ has given you this chance to set things right, to clear your account while still in this world rather than facing it in the next.

Open a fresh prayer journal and write down your intentions, making them tangible and real on paper. Not just for documentation, but to solidify the commitment.

Set realistic daily goals. For example, after each farḍ prayer, commit to praying one extra qada' prayer. This rhythm feels sustainable and challenging enough to make progress but not so overwhelming that you'll burn out. The math makes sense with five daily prayers, you can complete one day of qada' prayers each day and then build from that.

Lubna's Method: "I started with just one qada' prayer per day. It sounds tiny compared to my debt of hundreds of prayers. But here's what I learned: consistency beats quantity. That one prayer became a solid habit. After a month, I naturally increased to two. Six months later, I was comfortably praying five qada' prayers daily. Start small, but start today."

Make tracking essential to your journey. Create a simple system to mark each completed prayer, watching your progress unfold day by day.

Perhaps most importantly, share your intentions with a trusted friend or family member. Their support will prove invaluable. They can become your accountability partner, checking in on your progress and encouraging you when the numbers feel overwhelming. Having someone who understands and supports this journey makes an enormous difference. Consider finding someone with their own spiritual goal, as mutual accountability helps both parties stay committed. And when you hit a milestone, celebrate!

Identifying Missed Prayers

For makeup prayers, we focus solely on the farḍ (obligatory) prayers. Making up the sunna prayers is not required. Here's what this means for each prayer:

Prayer	qaḍā' (Makeup) rak' a
Fajr	2 farḍ rak' a
Dhuhr	4 farḍ rak' a
'Aṣr	4 farḍ rak' a
Maghrib	3 farḍ rak' a
'Ishā'	4 farḍ rak' a

Required Components of the Prayer

Every prayer has both required and recommended (sunna) parts. When you are on a journey to complete many farḍ prayers it makes sense to focus on just the required components of the prayer to make the process quicker, easier, and more efficient.

When making up missed prayers, understanding the minimum requirements helps make the task more manageable. The required components of the prayer while maintaining its validity are:

Required Component	Timing	Essential Arabic Phrases
Intention	Before beginning the prayer	When making up a missed prayer, your intention is crucial. No specific wording is required, but before beginning, you must specify in your heart: 1. Which prayer you're making up (Fajr, Dhuhr, etc.) 2. That it's a makeup prayer (qaḍā')

		For example, your intention might be: "I intend to pray the farḍ of Fajr as qaḍā' for Allah ﷻ."
Opening Takbīr	At the start of the prayer	"Allāhu akbar"
Recitation of the Fatiha	In every rak' a	"Bismi llāhi r-raḥmāni r-raḥīm Al-ḥamdu li-llāhi rabbi l- ' ālamīn Ar-raḥmāni r-raḥīm Māliki yawmi d-dīn Iyyāka na' budu wa iyyāka nasta' īn lhdinā ṣ-ṣirāṭa l-mustaqīm Ṣirāṭa lladhīna an' amta ' alayhim Ghayri l-maghḍūbi ' alayhim wa lā ḍ-ḍāllīn"
Bowing (<i>rukū'</i>)	In every rak'a	None required
Standing (<i>qiyam</i>)	In every rak'a	None required
First prostration (<i>sajda</i>)	In every rak'a	None required
Sitting	In every rak'a	None required
Second prostration (<i>sajda</i>)	In every rak'a	None required
Recitation of the testification of faith (<i>tashahhud</i>)	In the final sitting	"At-taḥiyyātu lillāhi waṣ-ṣalawātu waṭ-ṭayyibātu. as-salāmu ' alayka ayyuhan-nabiyyu wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuhu. as-salāmu ' alaynā wa ' alā ' ibādillāhiṣ-ṣāliḥīna. ashhadu an lā ilāha illā Allāha wa ashhadu anna Muḥammadan ' abduhu wa rasūluhu"
Blessings upon the Messenger of Allah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم	In the final sitting	"Allāhumma ṣalli ' alā muḥammadin wa ' alā āli muḥammad, kamā ṣallayta ' alā ibrahīma wa ' alā āli ibrahīm, innaka ḥamīdun majīd. allāhumma bārik ' alā muḥammadin wa ' alā āli muḥammad, kamā bārakta ' alā ibrahīma wa ' alā āli ibrahīm, innaka ḥamīdun majīd."
Ending salutations	At the end of the prayer	"As-salamu alaykum"
Order	The order of these components must be followed as listed here.	

A Note on Omitting Sunna Elements

Many of us learned prayer as one complete unit without distinguishing between what is absolutely required (farḍ) and what is recommended (sunna). If it feels uncomfortable to omit familiar elements like the opening *dua* (thana) or extra dhikr, know that this discomfort is natural and shows your reverence for prayer.

Remember: Allah ﷻ judges our hearts and intentions. When you omit sunna elements during qaḍā' prayers, you're not being disrespectful. Instead, you're being strategic about completing a debt to Allah ﷻ.

You have options. If your heart feels more at peace including certain sunna elements, do so. The key is finding a balance that allows you to maintain consistency without burning out. Some people prefer the full prayer structure they're accustomed to, while others find freedom in focusing solely on the farḍ components.

The above is in adherence to the Shāfi'ī school of thought. If you follow another school of thought, you can either learn its rulings regarding farḍ and sunna of the prayer, or you can take a *rukhsa* from the Shāfi'ī school and follow the clear instructions listed above. In Islamic law, a *rukhsa* (رخصة), or concession, is a dispensation from an obligatory act. The purpose of a *rukhsa* is to make it easier for a person to fulfill their religious obligations and maintain their connection with God.

What matters most is that you begin and continue. Whether you choose the minimal approach or include sunna elements, Allah ﷻ sees your sincere effort to fulfill your obligation. Trust that He appreciates both your reverence for the complete prayer and your wisdom in choosing sustainability over perfection.

Important Notes

- You don't need to specify the exact date of the missed prayer. As a general guideline, it is preferred to make up the most recent prayers first.
- Be sure to stay consistent in maintaining proper prayer conditions (*wuḍū*, *ṭāhir* clothes, *ṭāhir* space)
- You can do multiple makeup prayers in one session
- It's permissible to make up prayers at times in which prayers are forbidden, unless one purposely intends to do so, in which case it is not permissible

Chapter 5: Daily Integration Strategies

Nausheena's Strategies

- I kept track in a journal.
- I dropped all sunna prayers except witr.
- I prayed one day's worth of qada' prayers during the tahajjud time.
- I prayed 2 extra qada' prayers after each daily farḍ salah.
- I recited shorter surahs.

Each one of you will find different windows of time according to your different lifestyles. When I traveled for work, it was such a blessing that my daily prayers were shortened and combined. Because then it allowed me to add a few qada' prayers during my down time. Back home, as a working professional, student, wife, mom and all the many roles I play, I needed to establish discipline and consistency. So, the journal tracking, the tahajjud routine, and other things helped me build habits that helped me meet my goal.

Ameenah's System: "I tried many tracking methods: apps, calendars, journals. What worked was a simple wall calendar. Each day I completed my qada' prayers, I drew a small mosque. The visual growth of these tiny mosques across my wall became incredibly motivating. On hard days, I'd look at that wall and think, 'Look how far you've come.'"

Some ideas you can use to build in qada' prayers in your schedule:

- Add a qada' prayer after you have read your daily farḍ prayer
- Wake up for tahajjud and pray qada' prayers
- During Ramadan, use tarāwīh and qiyam times for qada'

Daisy's Routine: "My breakthrough came when I started treating qada' prayers like a daily appointment with Allah ﷻ. I literally put it in my calendar: 4:30 AM - 'Meeting with Allah ﷻ.' Something about framing it this way made it feel special rather than burdensome. I even started looking forward to these quiet moments while everyone else slept."

Afshan's Routine: Embracing the Chaos

After years of sporadic effort, my apprehension and sense of obligation intensified in Ramadan 2024. I came across a statement attributed to Imam al Shafi'i that if someone has missed prayers, they should limit themselves to the essentials of life and dedicate the rest of their time to making up those prayers. That stayed with me.

So while working full time, mothering five, and keeping up with home responsibilities, I made a decision that Ramadan: every evening until suhoor would belong to my qada'.

After 'Ishā', I would sit with my notebook and begin praying them one after another. Day by day, prayer by prayer, with tally marks tracking each one. It became my nightly rhythm throughout Ramadan.

By Allah's ﷻ mercy, I completed all of my remaining qada' prayers within that month. The feeling afterward was overwhelming. It truly felt like finishing a marathon. I was spiritually relieved but physically and emotionally drained.

With only a few days left in Ramadan, I shifted to praying tarāwīh. Even then, out of habit, I kept catching myself starting my intention with "I intended to pray qada' of..." and having to laugh softly and correct it to "I intend to pray tarāwīh."

It was one of the most exhausting and rewarding Ramadans of my life.



PART III:
THE JOURNEY

Chapter 6: Navigating the Path: Obstacles, Momentum, and Transformation

The journey of making up missed prayers is a path marked by highs and lows, breakthroughs and setbacks, moments of intense spiritual connection and periods of struggle. Understanding this rhythm and knowing how to navigate it can mean the difference between completion and abandonment.

Every journey worth taking encounters obstacles, and the *qaḍā'* prayer journey is no exception. The challenges you'll face aren't signs of failure. They're natural parts of the process that, when handled with wisdom and patience, can actually deepen your spiritual growth.

The First Major Challenge: The Comparison Trap

Jannah's Experience: "I nearly quit when I heard another sister say she finished her *qaḍā'* in six months. Here I was, two years in and not even halfway done. My teacher helped me understand: this isn't a race. Allah ﷻ knows your circumstances, your struggles, and your pace. Make your journey about your relationship with Allah ﷻ, not about keeping up with others."

One of the most insidious obstacles you'll encounter is comparing your journey to others'. In our age of social media and instant updates, it's easy to see someone's progress and feel inadequate about your own. Perhaps they're making up prayers faster, or they seem to have more time, or they appear to handle the workload with ease while you're struggling.

Remember, you're not seeing their full story. You don't know if they have fewer prayers to make up, more flexible schedules, better health, or different family obligations. More importantly, Allah ﷻ doesn't judge you against others. He judges you according to your own capacity and circumstances.

One antidote to comparison is gratitude. Each day, identify three specific things you're grateful for in your journey:

- The ability to stand in prayer when others cannot
- The opportunity to make up prayers while still in this world
- The small progress you made today, even if it feels insignificant

When Life Interrupts: Handling the Inevitable

Life doesn't pause for our spiritual goals. You will face interruptions—illness, travel, family emergencies, work crises, or simply days when everything falls apart. How you handle these interruptions determines whether they become roadblocks or just bumps along the way.

Nausheena's Personal Account: During my *qaḍā'* journey, I faced an unexpected surgery that left me unable to perform prayers in the normal way for three weeks. Initially, I panicked—all my momentum would be lost! But my teacher reminded me of the concept of modified prayers for those who are ill. I could pray sitting, or even lying down if necessary. What mattered was maintaining the connection, not the perfect form. So, I continued my daily prayers and paused my *qaḍā'* prayers. After my healing, I picked up right from where I left off.

Creating Your Interruption Protocol

Before interruptions happen, establish a clear plan:

1. For Short-Term Illness (1-3 days)

- Maintain your current prayers in whatever form you're capable
- Pause *qaḍā'* prayers without guilt
- Use the recovery time for dhikr and Quran listening
- Resume *qaḍā'* within 24 hours of feeling better

2. For Extended Illness (week+)

- Focus solely on maintaining current prayers
- Journal your intentions to resume *qaḍā'*
- Use illness as a spiritual retreat—increased *dua*, Quran, reflection
- Return to *qaḍā'* gradually, starting with one per day

3. For Travel

- Research prayer times and spaces at your destination beforehand
- Pack your prayer essentials
- Decide in advance: will you maintain *qaḍā'* prayers (even reduced) or pause?
- If pausing, add those days to your count and restart immediately upon return

4. For Family Emergencies

- Release yourself from *qaḍā'* obligations temporarily
- Maintain current prayers as your anchor
- Trust that Allah ﷻ sees your situation and accepts what you're able to do
- Use the first calm moment to reconnect with your routine

Interruption Protocol: Quick Reference

The key principle: **Never let a pause become a stop.** A temporary interruption in your *qaḍā'* routine is a natural part of life. What matters is that you always pick right up from where you left off.

Don't forget, Shaytan will be whispering all kinds of things to mess you up. As you progress in your *qaḍā'* journey, expect resistance from Shaytan. He doesn't want you to succeed in clearing your debt to Allah ﷻ. His tactics are subtle and persistent:

"You've missed too many days—you might as well give up." "This prayer wasn't good enough; it doesn't count." "You're being too extreme; just do a few prayers here and there." "Other obligations are more important right now."

Recognize these whispers as attempts to derail your progress. Counter them with firm responses:

- **Against despair:** "Allah's ﷻ mercy encompasses all things. He accepts sincere efforts."
- **Against perfectionism:** "Allah ﷻ doesn't burden a soul beyond its capacity. My best is enough."
- **Against minimization:** "This debt is real, and clearing it is among my highest priorities."
- **Against distraction:** "My prayer with Allah ﷻ takes precedence. Everything else can wait."

Weathering the Inevitable Storms

Khadija's Strategy: "Life throws curveballs—illness, travel, family emergencies. I learned to have a backup plan. During travel, I focused on current prayers and resumed *qaḍā'* after returning. During illness, I kept the intention strong through dhikr. The key is to never let a pause become a stop."

The Return Protocol

When you've been away from your *qaḍā'* practice for any length of time:

1. **Don't spiral into guilt.** Self-flagellation doesn't serve you or Allah ﷻ. Instead, make *istighfar* and move forward.
2. **Start smaller than you think you need to.** If you were doing five *qaḍā'* prayers daily before the break, restart with two. Rebuild your momentum gradually.
3. **Reconnect with your 'why.'** Read your original intention. Remember what motivated you to begin this journey. Reconnect with that source of inspiration.

Adjust your systems if needed. If life has changed (new job, new baby, new circumstances), your *qaḍā'* practice may need to adapt.

Community Dynamics: When Others Don't Understand

Ruqayya's Experience: "Some family members thought I was being 'extreme' about my *qaḍā'* prayers. They'd invite me to events during times I'd set aside for prayer, and when I declined, they'd say, 'Can't you just do it later?' I had to lovingly but firmly establish boundaries: 'This is a debt I owe to Allah ﷻ, and paying it off is my priority right now.'"

Not everyone will understand your commitment. Some may:

- Discourage you, thinking you're being too hard on yourself
- Minimize the importance of makeup prayers
- Create obstacles, intentionally or unintentionally
- Express skepticism about whether it's "necessary"

Your response should be gentle but unwavering. You don't need to justify your religious obligations to anyone. A simple, "This is something I need to do for my relationship with Allah ﷻ" is sufficient.

Better yet, find your tribe—people who understand and support your journey. This brings us to one of the most powerful tools for maintaining momentum.

Building and Maintaining Momentum

After the initial excitement of starting your *qaḍā'* journey wears off (usually around the 2-3 week mark), you enter the most crucial phase: building sustainable momentum. This is where most people either solidify their commitment or gradually drift away.

Safia's Discovery: *"Something magical happens around the 40-day mark. The prayers start feeling less like makeup work and more like a blessed part of your day. I found myself experiencing moments of pure peace during *qaḍā'* prayers that I rarely felt in my regular prayers. It's like Allah ﷻ sends these spiritual gifts to encourage you."*

Psychologists and spiritual teachers across traditions recognize that approximately 40 days of consistent practice creates a new baseline in your brain. The behavior shifts from something you have to push yourself to do to something that feels natural, even necessary.

Your mission is consistency. Even on difficult days, complete at least one *qaḍā'* prayer and keep your daily practice alive. These early days help establish the rhythm, the neural pathways, and the spiritual habits that will carry you through the rest of the journey.

Strategies for Long-Term Consistency

1. **The Anchor Prayer Method** Link your *qaḍā'* prayers to existing stable routines. For most people, this means immediately after each *farḍ* prayer. The sequence becomes automatic: *farḍ* prayer → brief pause → *qaḍā'* prayer. No decision-making, no "I'll do it later," just consistent flow.
2. **The Minimum Viable Practice** On your hardest days, what's the absolute minimum you can do? Perhaps it's one *qaḍā'* prayer. Perhaps it's maintaining your current prayers and journaling your intention for *qaḍā'*. Define this clearly and give yourself permission to do the minimum without guilt when needed. The key is never doing nothing.
3. **The Weekly Review** Set aside 15 minutes each week (perhaps Friday afternoon) to review your progress:

Weekly Review Template

Complete this every week (suggested: Friday afternoon)

Week of: _____	Response
qada' prayers completed this week:	_____ prayers
What worked well:	
Obstacles I faced:	
How I handled challenges:	
What I'll keep doing:	
What I'll change:	
Spiritual insights/moments:	
Gratitude (3 things):	1. 2. 3.
Goal for next week:	_____ qada' prayers

This regular reflection transforms your journey from a blur of days into a conscious, intentional practice.

The Power of Celebration

Lina's Circle: "We started as three friends, sharing our qada' journey in weekly coffee meetings. Soon, others joined. We celebrated milestones: 100 prayers, 500 prayers. We shared tricks: Noor's tip about using different suras for different prayers, Amina's method of praying qada' during lunch breaks. The journey became less lonely."

Never underestimate the motivational power of celebration. In a journey that can take months or years, milestone celebrations provide crucial psychological reinforcement.

How you celebrate matters less than that you do celebrate. It might be:

- Treating yourself to something special
- Sharing your progress with your accountability partner
- Adding an entry in your gratitude journal
- Making a special *dua* of thanks
- Giving *sadaqa* in gratitude
- Planning a small gathering with others on the same journey
- Splurging on a coffee drink or boba tea
- Dinner with friends

The celebration serves multiple purposes: it acknowledges your progress (fighting the sense of overwhelming distance to the goal), it creates positive associations with the practice, and it gives you something to look forward to during difficult stretches.

Milestone Celebration Tracker

✓	Milestone	Date Achieved	How I Celebrated	Reflection
<input type="checkbox"/>	First 7 consecutive days			
<input type="checkbox"/>	First 30 days without missing <i>qaḍā'</i> practice			
<input type="checkbox"/>	First 100 prayers completed			
<input type="checkbox"/>	25% completion			
<input type="checkbox"/>	First full month's worth of prayers			
<input type="checkbox"/>	50% completion (HALFWAY!)			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Last year of prayers remaining			
<input type="checkbox"/>	75% completion			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Final 100 prayers			
<input type="checkbox"/>	COMPLETION 🎉			

The Transformation: Changes Beyond Prayer

As you progress through your *qaḍā'* journey, you'll notice changes that extend far beyond prayer itself. This is the beautiful outcome in paying back a debt, you receive gifts you never expected.

The Time Expansion Phenomenon

One of the most commonly reported experiences from those on the *qaḍā'* journey is what can only be described as baraka in time. Before starting, the question is always: "Where will I find the time?" Yet somehow, as you commit to the practice, time expands to accommodate it.

Nausheena's Account: "The most surprising change came in my relationship with time. Somehow, I found 50 extra minutes each day for prayers. In what felt like a miracle, time expanded to accommodate my worship. What I couldn't do in 2 minutes before, I was now doing in an additional 10 minutes after every farḍ prayer."

When you prioritize prayer, Allah ﷻ places baraka in your remaining time. Tasks that used to take hours suddenly take minutes. You find yourself more focused, more productive, more present. The time you "spend" on prayer returns to you multiplied in efficiency and blessing in your other activities.

The Spiritual Ripple Effects

Maria's Growth: "Eight months into my *qaḍā'* journey, I noticed changes beyond prayer. I became more conscious of time, more organized in daily life. My relationships improved—maybe because I was carrying less guilt, or maybe because regular prayer gives you perspective on what matters. Even my work benefited from the discipline I learned through consistent *qaḍā'* prayers."

The discipline required for a *qaḍā'* journey doesn't stay confined to prayer—it spills over into every area of your life:

- **Increased conscientiousness:** You become more aware of your commitments and more diligent in fulfilling them
- **Better time management:** The structure required for consistent prayer improves your overall relationship with time
- **Enhanced spiritual sensitivity:** You become more attuned to the subtle spiritual dimensions of daily life
- **Reduced anxiety:** Clearing this debt lifts a weight you may not have realized you were carrying
- **Improved relationships:** The inner peace from fulfilling this obligation makes you more patient and present with others

- **Greater gratitude:** You develop a profound appreciation for prayer itself and for the opportunity to make up what was missed

The Deepening of Current Prayers

Hana's Wisdom: "As I near completion of my *qaḍā'* prayers, I'm grateful for the habits formed. The early morning rises, the regular *dhikr*, the mindfulness of prayer times—these have become part of who I am. Making up missed prayers taught me how to be present for current ones."

Perhaps the most beautiful transformation is what happens to your relationship with your current prayers. After months of making up past prayers, you develop:

- **A visceral understanding of prayer's value:** You know intimately what it costs to make up a prayer, so you guard your current prayers more carefully
- **Improved *khushu'* (concentration):** The sheer volume of prayers you perform develops your capacity for focus and presence
- **Automatic prayer consciousness:** Your internal clock becomes naturally attuned to prayer times
- **Deeper spiritual connection:** The consistent practice deepens your relationship with Allah ﷻ in ways that sporadic prayer never could

You move from someone who prays to someone who is, in essence, a person of prayer. It becomes part of your identity, not just your actions.

The Character Transformation

The *qaḍā'* journey is a transformative path that refines character. It teaches:

- **Humility:** Confronting years of missed prayers strips away spiritual pride
- **Perseverance:** Maintaining consistency through difficulty builds unshakeable resolve
- **Patience:** Progress measured in months and years cultivates deep *ṣabr*
- **Hope:** Witnessing Allah's ﷻ help throughout the journey strengthens your reliance on Him
- **Discipline:** The daily practice develops self-mastery
- **Gratitude:** Completing each prayer cultivates thankfulness for the opportunity

Signs of Spiritual Progress

How do you know you're growing spiritually, beyond just reducing your prayer count? Look for these markers:

1. **The prayers feel lighter:** What once felt like a burden begins to feel like a gift
2. **You wake naturally for Fajr:** Your body clock adjusts to support your spiritual practice

3. **You experience moments of sweetness:** Brief experiences of deep connection during prayer
4. **Your heart softens:** Tears come more easily when hearing Quran or making *dua*
5. **You crave more worship:** After completing *qada'* prayers, you naturally want to add sunna prayers
6. **Your priorities shift:** Things that once seemed urgent feel less important; prayer naturally becomes central
7. **You inspire others:** People notice the change in you and ask about your practice
8. **Time in prayer feels short:** What used to feel interminable now passes in what seems like moments

Signs of Spiritual Progress Checklist

Check off the signs you've noticed in your journey:

✓	Spiritual Marker	When I First Noticed	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prayers feel lighter (less like a burden)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wake naturally for Fajr		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Experience moments of sweetness in prayer		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Heart softens easily (tears during Quran/dua)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Crave more worship after <i>qaḍā'</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prayer naturally becomes central priority		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Others notice positive changes and ask		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Time in prayer feels short		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Increased consciousness of prayer times		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Deeper connection with Allah ﷻ overall		

The Spiritual Lightness

As you progress through your *qadā'* prayers, you'll experience spiritual transformations that are connected to clearing a debt. Many of us felt this spiritual lightness, as if invisible weights were being lifted from our shoulders with each completed prayer. This didn't just feel like psychological relief but a feeling of our spiritual record being cleansed.

Yaqeen Institute's *The Other Side: Barzakh and Beyond* series with Dr. Omar Suleiman teaches us something beautiful about this process: in the realm between death and the Day of Judgment, our prayers will take the form of companions who greet us. Imagine the difference between meeting prayers that testify to your neglect versus prayers that bear witness to your sincere repentance and commitment to making things right.

As one sister described it: "I had imagined my barzakh prayer companion being holey like swiss cheese. But as I completed every *qadā'* prayer, the holes were filling up. Today, my salah companion is a friend waiting to greet me with joy, inshallah."

Perhaps the most amazing transformation is the shift in how you see yourself. You move from:

- "Someone who missed a lot of prayers" → "Someone who fulfilled their obligations to Allah ﷻ"
- "A person struggling with consistency" → "A person of discipline and commitment"
- "Someone carrying spiritual debt" → "Someone who honored their covenant with Allah ﷻ"

Start preparing emotionally and spiritually for that moment. How will you mark it? What special *dua* will you make? Who will you thank? What commitment will you make to Allah ﷻ about guarding your prayers going forward?

The journey of making up prayers is truly transformative. As Juhi beautifully put it: *"The beauty of qadā' prayers is that they're a ladder back to Allah ﷻ. Each prayer is a step up. Some days you climb quickly, others slowly, but as long as you're climbing, you're succeeding."*

You've proven to yourself that you can commit to something difficult and prioritize your relationship with Allah ﷻ above convenience. These lessons will serve you well in every aspect of your faith journey ahead.



**PART IV:
RESOURCES
FOR SUCCESS**

Chapter 7: A Heart Transformed by Prayer

Completing your journey of making up missed prayers marks not an ending, but a beautiful beginning. The discipline and appreciation for prayer that you've developed transforms your entire approach to worship. You may find that incorporating sunna prayers and *nawafil* prayers becomes natural—your heart now craves these additional moments with Allah ﷻ that once felt impossible to fit into your day.

This journey profoundly strengthens your current prayers. The *khushū`* you've practiced through countless makeup prayers carries over into your daily obligations, making each farḍ prayer feel more meaningful and connected. Your relationship with prayer times shifts from one of obligation to one of anticipation and gratitude.

The long-term impact on your relationship with Allah ﷻ extends far beyond the prayers themselves. You've experienced His mercy in allowing you to make up for what was missed, His patience with your pace, and His acceptance of your sincere efforts. This deepened understanding of Allah's ﷻ compassion permeates every aspect of your faith.

As you complete this particular debt, reflect on what other obligations you may owe to Allah ﷻ. Are there missed Ramadan fasts from periods, post-childbirth, or illness that need to be made up? Do you owe zakat from previous years? This journey has taught you to take your debt to Allah ﷻ seriously, understanding that clearing these obligations is about purifying your relationship with your Creator.

Protecting Your Prayer Future: Never Accumulate Missed Prayers Again

Having completed this monumental journey, the last thing you want is to find yourself back where you started. The habits and mindset you've developed during your *qaḍā`* journey are your best protection against future accumulation of missed prayers.

The Post-*qaḍā`* Mindset Shift

Zara's Reflection: "After completing 847 days of makeup prayers, I made a promise to myself and to Allah ﷻ: never again. But it wasn't fear that motivated me—it was love. I had experienced the sweetness of a clear conscience, the peace of standing before Allah ﷻ without that weight of debt. I couldn't bear to lose that feeling."

The completion of your *qaḍā`* prayers should mark a fundamental shift in how you view each daily prayer. Every Fajr, Dhuhr, `Aṣr, Maghrib, and `Ishā` is no longer just an obligation—it's a precious opportunity that, once missed, requires the same effort you've just completed to make up.

Creating Unbreakable Prayer Habits

1. The Sacred Schedule Principle: Treat your prayer times as unmovable appointments with the most important being in existence. Just as you wouldn't reschedule a meeting with a world leader for convenience, don't reschedule your meetings with Allah ﷻ.

Amira's System: "I calendar-block my prayer times like crucial business meetings. My phone shows 'Meeting with Allah ﷻ – Do Not Disturb' five times daily. Colleagues have learned to respect these times because I respect them first."

2. The Backup Plan Strategy Life will always present challenges—travel, illness, work emergencies, family crises. The key is having a backup plan for every common scenario:

- **Travel:** Research prayer times for your destination before departing. Download reliable prayer apps. Pack a portable prayer rug.
- **Work pressures:** Identify quiet spaces in your workplace. Communicate boundaries respectfully but firmly.
- **Illness:** Understand the Islamic rulings for praying while sick (sitting, lying down, etc.).
- **Family emergencies:** Remember that maintaining prayer during difficult times often provides the spiritual strength needed to handle the crisis.

Environmental Protection Strategies

1. Surround Yourself with Prayer-Conscious People The companions you choose dramatically impact your spiritual consistency. Seek friends who remind you of prayer times, who pause conversations for prayer, who normalize prioritizing worship over social activities.

Khadija's Circle: "My closest friends and I have an unspoken rule: if one person says it's prayer time, everyone stops whatever we're doing. No questions, no 'just five more minutes.' This peer accountability has been stronger than any app or alarm."

2. Create Prayer-Friendly Spaces

- **At home:** Designate a permanent prayer space that's always ready
- **At work:** Identify and establish your prayer area
- **In your car:** Keep a prayer rug and compass
- **Social settings:** Don't hesitate to ask hosts about prayer arrangements

3. Digital Boundaries Technology can be prayer's greatest enemy or strongest ally:

- Use "Do Not Disturb" modes during prayer times
- Choose apps that enhance rather than distract from worship

The Emergency Protocol: When You Do Miss a Prayer

Despite your best efforts, you may occasionally miss a prayer. Having a clear protocol prevents one missed prayer from becoming a pattern:

Immediate Response (ASAP):

1. Pray the missed prayer immediately upon remembering
2. Make sincere *istighfar* (seeking forgiveness)
3. Analyze what caused the miss
4. Adjust your systems to prevent recurrence

Reflection Questions:

- What was I doing when I missed the prayer?
- What warning signs did I ignore?
- How can I strengthen my backup systems?
- Do I need to adjust my daily schedule?

Building Spiritual Momentum

1. The Sunna Integration As your farḍ prayers become unshakeable, gradually add Sunna prayers:

- Start with Witr (already essential)
- Add the two Sunna before Fajr
- Include the two after Maghrib
- Build toward the full Sunna routine

2. The Tahajjud Aspiration Many who complete qaḍā' journeys find themselves naturally drawn to night prayers out of the spiritual hunger that's been awakened.

3. The Dhikr Connection Use the time between prayers for remembrance of Allah ﷻ. This keeps you spiritually connected throughout the day, making each prayer feel like a natural continuation rather than an interruption.

Teaching the Next Generation

Safiya's Wisdom: "My teenage daughter watched my qaḍā' journey for two years. The greatest gift wasn't just clearing my own debt—it was showing her the importance of never accumulating one. She's been consistent with her prayers since age 13 because she saw what it cost me to catch up."

If you have children or influence young Muslims:

- Share your qaḍā' story as a teaching tool (without overwhelming them)
- Help them establish prayer habits early
- Model prayer prioritization in your daily life
- Create family prayer accountability systems

The Gratitude Practice

Daily Gratitude Check: Each night, specifically thank Allah ﷻ for:

- The prayers you completed that day
- The strength to prioritize worship
- The clear conscience of no accumulating debt
- The spiritual growth from your qaḍā' journey

Warning Signs: Preventing Backsliding

Be alert to these patterns that preceded your original prayer neglect:

- Making excuses for "just one" missed prayer
- Prioritizing social activities over prayer times
- Feeling "too busy" for worship
- Losing the spiritual sweetness you gained from your qaḍā' journey

The Reset Protocol

If you notice warning signs:

1. Return to your qaḍā' journal and read your original intentions
2. Spend extra time in dhikr and Quran
3. Seek accountability from trusted friends
4. Consider a spiritual retreat or increased worship for several days

Looking Forward: A Life Transformed

Maryam's Testimony: "Three years after completing my qaḍā', I can honestly say it was the most transformative spiritual experience of my life. Not just because I cleared a debt, but because I learned what it means to truly prioritize Allah ﷻ. Every aspect of my life—my relationships, my work, my goals—now revolves around maintaining this connection I fought so hard to rebuild."

The journey of making up prayers is truly transformative. As one sister beautifully put it: "The beauty of qadā' prayers is that they're a ladder back to Allah ﷻ. Each prayer is a step up. Some days you climb quickly, others slowly, but as long as you're climbing, you're succeeding."

You've proven to yourself that you can commit to something difficult and prioritize your relationship with Allah ﷻ above convenience. These lessons will serve you well in every aspect of your faith journey ahead. You've not only cleared your account—you've discovered the true beauty of prayer itself.

The discipline you've built, the spiritual sensitivity you've developed, and the deep appreciation for prayer you've cultivated are treasures that will benefit you for the rest of your life. Guard them carefully. Share them generously. Let them transform not just your own worship, but inspire others to take their own spiritual debts seriously.

Your New Identity

You are no longer someone who accumulates missed prayers. You are someone who:

- Values each prayer as a precious gift
- Protects prayer times as sacred appointments
- Inspires others through consistent worship
- Lives with a clear spiritual conscience
- Has experienced the mercy of Allah ﷻ in the most profound way

May Allah ﷻ accept your efforts, increase you in righteousness, grant you the strength to guard your prayers vigilantly for the rest of your days, and make you among those who never again accumulate spiritual debt. May your journey inspire countless others to clear their own accounts and may Allah ﷻ write for you a share in every prayer they complete because of your example.

Ameen.

"Guard strictly the prayers, especially the middle prayer, and stand before Allah ﷻ with devotion" (2:238).



APPENDICES

MYTH BUSTERS: Common Misconceptions About Making Up Prayers

Despite clear scholarly consensus, many misconceptions persist about making up missed prayers. Let's address the most common myths that prevent people from fulfilling this important obligation.

Myth 1: "I performed Hajj, so all my previous sins are forgiven. Why would I have to make up prayers?"

While it's true that a properly performed Hajj can lead to the forgiveness of sins, this doesn't automatically erase the obligation to make up missed prayers. Scholars distinguish between two types of obligations: rights of Allah ﷻ (*huquq Allah*) and rights of people (*huquq al-'ibad*). Prayer is a right of Allah ﷻ and a debt you owe to Him. Just as Hajj doesn't excuse you from paying back money you borrowed from someone, it doesn't automatically clear your prayer debt. The forgiveness from Hajj is Allah's ﷻ mercy, but the makeup prayers are your active responsibility to fulfill what you owe. Think of it this way: if someone forgives your character flaws, you still need to return the book you borrowed from them.

Myth 2: "Sunna prayers will make up for my missed *farḍ* prayers."

This is a dangerous misconception that conflates different types of prayers. Sunna prayers are voluntary acts of worship that earn extra reward and can help compensate for deficiencies in your *farḍ* prayers, but they cannot substitute for completely missed obligatory prayers. It's like thinking that giving extra charity can excuse you from paying your required zakat—both are good deeds, but they serve different purposes. The *farḍ* prayers you missed created a specific debt that must be repaid with the same type of prayer. Sunna prayers are beautiful additions to your worship, but they cannot erase the obligation of missed *farḍ* prayers any more than extra credit can make up for exams you never took.

Myth 3: "I prayed during blessed times or in blessed places, so those prayers count as multiple prayers toward my debt."

While praying during Laylatul Qadr (worth more than 1,000 months of worship) or in the Haram in Makkah and Medina (where prayers are multiplied in reward) brings immense spiritual benefit, these multiplied rewards don't translate into multiple makeup prayers. The reward multiplication applies to the spiritual benefit and *qjr* (reward) you receive, not to the number of prayer obligations fulfilled. If you pray one Maghrib prayer in the Haram, you've fulfilled one Maghrib prayer, even though the reward may be equivalent to 100,000 prayers prayed elsewhere. The mathematics of reward and the mathematics of obligation operate on

different principles. Each missed prayer requires one specific makeup prayer, regardless of where or when you perform it.

Myth 4: "I was too young to understand the importance of prayer, so I don't need to make up prayers from when I was a teenager."

Many people think that prayers missed during their youth don't count because they were "immature" or didn't fully grasp the significance. However, Islamic obligation begins at puberty, regardless of spiritual maturity. The age of accountability (*taklif*) is based on physical development with spiritual understanding. If you were past puberty, those prayers count as missed obligations, even if you were going through a rebellious phase or didn't feel connected to your faith.

Myth 5: "I'll just pray extra prayers for the rest of my life instead of calculating my exact debt."

While the intention to pray extra is commendable, this approach doesn't fulfill the specific obligation of *qaḍā'* prayers. You can't pay off a specific debt with vague extra payments. It is better to calculate your missed prayers as accurately as possible, even if it's an approximation. The act of counting and being intentional about making up specific prayers is part of the spiritual discipline and accountability that Allah ﷻ wants from us.

Myth 6: "I was sick/depressed/going through a hard time, so Allah ﷻ will excuse those missed prayers."

While Allah ﷻ is indeed merciful and considers our circumstances, temporary illness or depression that doesn't prevent you from performing basic daily functions doesn't excuse missed prayers. The threshold for being excused from prayer is very high—you must be unconscious, severely mentally incapacitated, or in extreme physical distress. Mild illness, depression, or life difficulties require you to make up prayers once you're able, just as you would make up missed fasts from illness during Ramadan.

Myth 7: "Making *du'ā'* and *dhikr* can substitute for missed prayers."

Some people think that increasing their remembrance of Allah ﷻ through *du'ā'* and *dhikr* can compensate for missed prayers. While these are beautiful acts of worship that bring you closer to Allah ﷻ, they cannot substitute for the specific obligation of *salah*. Prayer has a unique structure, timing, and physical components that cannot be replaced by other forms of worship, no matter how sincere or frequent.

Myth 8: "I can pay *fidya* (monetary compensation) to cover my missed prayers instead of making them up."

This is a significant misconception that confuses the rules for different Islamic obligations. *Fidya* exists for specific circumstances where physical inability makes certain acts of worship impossible—such as elderly or chronically ill people who cannot fast during Ramadan, or those who cannot physically perform parts of Hajj. However, there is no *fidya* option for missed prayers in Islamic law.

Prayer is a personal, physical act of worship that cannot be "bought out" or substituted with money. Unlike fasting, where *fidya* exists for those who are permanently unable to fast, prayer remains an individual obligation that must be fulfilled through the physical act itself. You cannot hire someone to pray for you, nor can you donate money to charity as a substitute for your missed prayers.

The logic is clear: if monetary compensation could replace prayer, it would fundamentally alter the nature of this pillar of Islam. Prayer is about your personal relationship with Allah ﷻ, your physical submission, your time dedicated to Him, and your spiritual discipline. These elements cannot be purchased or outsourced.

Some people may confuse this with the concept of charity being encouraged alongside repentance, but charity is meant to accompany your makeup prayers, not replace them. The sincere regret, the time invested, the physical act of standing before Allah ﷻ—these irreplaceable elements of prayer cannot be substituted with any amount of money.

If you're physically unable to perform prayers due to permanent disability, scholars have specific rulings about modified prayer positions, but even then, the obligation remains in whatever form you're capable of performing. The path to clearing your prayer debt leads through the prayer mat, not through your wallet.

Anse Dr. Tamara Gray recommends the Fast and Friendly Fiqh class at the Ribāṭ Riverstead. Know your *fara'id*. Knowing your fiqh is beautifying your worship. Afshan recommends *The Shafi'i Manual of Purity, Prayer & Fasting* by Tashfeen Ekram found at the Rabata Bookshop (bookshop.rabata.org).

The Reality Check

These misconceptions often stem from a desire to find shortcuts or to minimize the weight of missed prayers. However, the consistent position of Islamic scholarship across all schools of thought is clear: missed prayers must be made up, period. This isn't about being harsh or legalistic—it's about maintaining the integrity of our most fundamental obligation to Allah ﷻ. The beauty is that Allah ﷻ has given us the opportunity to make up for what we missed, rather than leaving us helpless before our debt. Embrace this chance to clear your account while you still can, rather than looking for ways around this mercy that Allah ﷻ has provided.

Daily *Duas* for the Journey

Morning *Du‘ā‘*: "Ya Allah ﷻ, grant me the strength and consistency to fulfill my prayers today, both current and *qaḍā‘*."

Evening Reflection: "Alhamdulillah for another day of drawing closer to completion. Ya Allah ﷻ, accept my efforts and keep me steadfast."

Before Beginning *qaḍā‘* Prayers: "Ya Ar-Rahman, Ya Ar-Raheem, I turn to You in humility to make up for what I have missed. Accept this prayer as You accepted it from the righteous before me."

When Feeling Overwhelmed by the Numbers: "Ya Sabur (The Patient), You are patient with my shortcomings. Grant me patience with this journey and trust in Your mercy that extends beyond my debt."

During Moments of Weakness: "Ya Qadeer (The All-Powerful), You have power over all things. Grant me the strength to continue when my resolve weakens, and make this path easy for me."

When Struggling with Consistency: "Ya Wadud (The Loving), You love those who turn to You. Help me turn to You consistently through these prayers, and let Your love motivate me when discipline fails."

After Completing a Milestone: "Ya Shakur (The Appreciative), You appreciate even the smallest efforts. I am grateful that You have allowed me to complete [number] prayers. Accept this progress and grant me strength to continue."

When Feeling Spiritually Distant: "Ya Wali (The Protecting Friend), be my companion in this journey. Draw me closer to You with each prayer, and let me feel Your presence in my worship."

Before Sleep: "Ya Ghafur (The Forgiving), Ya Tawwab (The Acceptor of Repentance), I end this day seeking Your forgiveness for my past negligence and Your acceptance of my efforts to make amends."

When Facing Setbacks or Missed Days: "Ya Haleem (The Gentle), You are gentle with Your servants. Be gentle with me in my struggles, and help me return to this path without despair or self-condemnation."

Qada Prayer Calculation Worksheet

A Practical Tool for Determining Your Makeup Prayers

Important: Calculate to the best of your ability. Allah ﷻ accepts sincere estimates when exact counts are impossible. The goal is accountability, not perfection.

Step 1: Determine Your Time Period

Time Period	Your Input	Notes
Start Date (when you became obligated)		Usually around puberty/first menstruation
End Date (when you began praying regularly)		When you established consistent prayer
Total Days		Calculate: End Date - Start Date

Step 2: Calculate Exempt Days

Exempt Period	Days per Occurrence	Number of Times	Total Days
Menstruation	_____ days (avg: 7)	_____ cycles	_____ days
Post-childbirth (Nifas)	_____ days (avg: 40)	_____ times	_____ days
Severe illness (unconscious/unable)			_____ days
TOTAL EXEMPT DAYS			_____ days

Quick Menstruation Calculator

- Years in period: _____ years
- Approximate cycles: _____ years × 12 months = _____ cycles
- Total menstrual days: _____ cycles × _____ days = _____ days

Step 3: Final Calculation

Calculation	Days
Total Missed Days	_____ days
Minus: Exempt Days	- _____ days
DAYS OF PRAYERS TO MAKE UP	_____ days

Your Total *qaḍā'* Prayers

_____ days × 5 prayers = _____ total prayers to make up

Step 4: Create Your Plan

Strategy	Prayers per Day	Time to Complete
Conservative (1 extra per day)	6 total (5 current + 1 <i>qaḍā'</i>)	_____ days (_____ years)
Moderate (2 extra per day)	7 total (5 current + 2 <i>qaḍā'</i>)	_____ days (_____ years)
Intensive (5 extra per day)	10 total (5 current + 5 <i>qaḍā'</i>)	_____ days (_____ years)

My chosen strategy: _____

My daily goal: _____ *qaḍā'* prayers per day

My target completion date: _____

Example: Nausheena's Calculation

Time Period: Summer 1990 to December 1993 = 3.5 years = 1,275 days

Menstruation: 7 days × 42 cycles = 294 days

Final Count: 1,275 - 294 = 981 days of prayers

Total Prayers: 981 × 5 = 4,905 makeup prayers

Important Reminders

- ✓ Only count days when you were physically and mentally capable of prayer
- ✓ Estimates are acceptable when exact counts are impossible
- ✓ Start with a sustainable daily goal: consistency beats intensity
- ✓ Each completed prayer is progress, regardless of how many remain
- ✓ Allah's ﷻ mercy encompasses all things: approach with hope, not fear

"Indeed, Allah ﷻ loves those who turn to Him constantly" (2:222).

Qada Prayer Tracker

Wk	Fajr	Dhuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha	Witr
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