# 185003 - He is wondering about the wisdom behind the fact that the number of rak‘ahs of the obligatory prayers is not mentioned in the Holy Qur’an

**the question**

What is wisdom behind ALLAH(SWT) mentioning explicitly that heavens and earth are created in 6 days while ALLAH(SWT) is silent about number of Daily Salah i.e. 5 Daily prayers in The Glorious Quran.

**Detailed answer**

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

Not everything that is mentioned in the Qur’an is more important than everything that is proven in the Prophet’s Sunnah. Not one of the scholars said that, and there is no evidence in the Qur’an or Sunnah to indicate that. Rather the opposite of that occurs frequently. The Holy Qur’an often mentions many things that are details pertaining to the people and stories of the past, such as the dog that accompanied the people of the Cave, and the words of the ant in the story of the Prophet of Allah Sulaymaan, and some minor rulings in Soorat an-Noor and elsewhere, such as the etiquette required of children who should ask for permission before entering their parents’ room, or some of the etiquette of eating and drinking, and other matters that are undoubtedly important, but what is proven in the Prophet’s Sunnah of the details of how to pray, the rates of zakaah and the conditions of it being obligatory, how to perform Hajj and so on, are more important and of higher significance among the rulings of Islam.

Hence the fact that the number of days of the creation of the heavens and the earth is mentioned in the Holy Qur’an does not indicate at all that it is more important than the number of the obligatory prayers to be offered each day and night. The Holy Qur’an does not explain in detail the

basic pillars of Islam, and the Prophet's Sunnah does not deal only with secondary matters; rather each of them is a revelation that speaks of both major and minor branches of faith.

Secondly:

This shows you that Islam does not differentiate, with regard to legislative issues and basic religious teachings, between that which is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an and that which is proven in the Prophet's Sunnah, especially when it is proven in the Prophet's Sunnah by abundant mutawaatir reports (in which it was narrated by so many from so many that it is inconceivable that they could all have agreed upon a lie), in such a way that there was no difference of opinion concerning the fact that it is proven, as is the case with regard to the number of rak'ahs of the prayers, and the description of its essential parts and its general description.

Therefore it is essential for it to be firmly established in the heart and mind of every Muslim that the Sunnah – which is everything that is attributed to the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) of words and deeds or approval of the words and deeds of others – is one of the two categories of divine revelation that was sent down to the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). The other category of revelation is the Holy Qur'an. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

"Nor does he speak of (his own) desire.

It is only an Inspiration that is inspired"

[an-Najm 53:3-4].

It was narrated from al-Miqdaam ibn Ma'di Yakrib (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Verily I have been given the Qur'an and something like it with it. Soon there will come a time when a man, having eaten his fill, (will recline on his couch) and say: You should adhere to this Qur'an; whatever you find in it to be lawful, take it as lawful, and whatever you find in it to be prohibited, then take it as prohibited. Verily whatever the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) prohibits is the

same as what Allah prohibits.”

Narrated by at-Tirmidhi (2664). He said: It is hasan ghareeb with this isnaad. It was classed as hasan by al-Albaani in as-Silsilah as-Saheehah (2870).

Hence Hassaan ibn ‘Atiyyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Jibreel used to come the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) with the Sunnah as he used to come down to him with the Qur’an. End quote from al-Kifaayah by al-Khateeb (p. 12)

Al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadi (may Allah have mercy on him) included in his important book al-Kifaayah fi ‘Ilm ar-Riwaayah (p. 8) a chapter entitled Chapter on what was narrated about the equality between the rulings of the Book of Allah, may He be exalted, and the rulings of the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), about the obligation to implement and follow both. End quote.

All of this is evidence which should make it clear to the questioner that the Muslim does not differentiate between that which is proven in the Holy Qur’an and that which is proven in the Prophet’s Sunnah, on condition that it be clearly proven in the Sunnah, beyond any doubt. That has been explained previously on our website in the answer to question no. 77243

Thirdly:

When asking about wisdom, the questioner may not realise that what we see of daily events in this world and what we see of countless people’s situations, and what is narrated in the Qur’an and Sunnah of hundreds and thousands of texts that speak about Islamic law or the creation of Allah or Allah Himself, may He be glorified and exalted, may all be subjected to the question of what is the purpose behind it? In fact, you could ask about every single issue that the religious texts did not refer to: what is the wisdom behind the texts not referring to it? and you can imagine the amount that the human brain could produce of such questions. Indeed you can well imagine the amount of trouble that could be caused to our reason by persisting in this questioning of the wisdom behind that and going to extremes in such questioning. That does not mean that there is no wisdom behind all that is mentioned above; but it does mean that the amount of what man may find out

about of wisdom is very little in comparison to this huge number of created things and events, and it is small as a result of the smallness of the human brain in comparison to this huge universe, and in comparison to the huge number of events and causes, and the outcomes thereof, and the connections between them, and in comparison to the greatness of the Creator, may He be glorified and exalted. So what is appropriate for man is to realise the limits of his reasoning, and not waste his energy except on that which will benefit him in this world and in the Hereafter.

Ibn al-Jawzi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

I have seen that man has a natural inclination to find out about the wisdom of Allah in all of His creation and rulings. Perhaps a man may never know the wisdom behind some things – such as decline after perfection – so he pauses in confusion, and the Shaytaan may seize this opportunity to whisper to him: Where is the wisdom behind that?

I say to him: Beware lest you be deceived, O poor man. For it has been proven to you with definitive evidence – after you have seen the precision and perfection of His creation – how great the wisdom of the Maker is, even if some of that wisdom remains hidden from you, and that is because of your weak reasoning.

Moreover, kings always have some secrets, so who are you to learn, despite your weakness, all of His wisdom and reasons behind things? You should be content with believing in His wisdom in general terms. Beware of trying to find out the wisdom behind things that is hidden from you, for you are one of His creation, one small speck among all that He has created, so how can you want to issue a ruling about the One Who created you?

His wisdom is proven to you in His decrees and His dominion, so strive hard to see some of the wisdom, for this will astonish you, and try to overlook what is hidden from you (of wisdom and reasons), for the one whose vision is weak should not stare at the light of the sun.

End quote from Sayd al-Khaatir (p. 156)

Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Blessed be Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, the Most Wise of those who are wise, Possessor of ultimate wisdom and overwhelming blessings, Whose wisdom reaches as far as His power, and Who in all things has brilliant wisdom, as He has in all things overwhelming power, and all guidance comes from Him. What we have mentioned is but a drop in the ocean, otherwise human minds are incapable and are too weak and limited to encompass His perfect wisdom in any matter of His creation.

End quote from Shifa' al-'Aleel (p. 239)

Fourthly:

Perhaps one of the greatest reasons why the Holy Qur'an kept silent about the number of rak'ahs in the daily obligatory prayers is to prove to the scholars and their followers the importance of the Prophet's Sunnah, which is the second category of revelation that was sent down to Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), so that it might be a definitive argument that will defeat all those whom the Shaytaan tries to make doubt the Sunnah and cast aspersions on its validity.

Al-Khateeb al-Baghdadi narrated in al-Kifaayah (p. 15) from al-Hasan that 'Imraan ibn Husayn was sitting, with two of his companions, when a man among the people said: Do not quote anything to us except the Qur'an. He said to him: Come closer. So he came closer. Then he said: What do you think, if you and your companions rely only on the Qur'an, would you find in it that Zuhr prayer is four rak'ahs, and 'Asr prayer is four rak'ahs, and Maghrib is three, of which you recite (something other than al-Faatihah) in two? What do you think, if you and your companions rely only on the Qur'an, would you find that circumambulation (tawaaf) around the Ka'bah is seven circuits, and that going between as-Safa and al-Marwah (is seven laps)? Then he said: O people, learn from us, for if you do not, you will go astray.

End quote.

In al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah al-Kuwaitiyyah (1/49-51) there are some useful comments which we will quote here:

Issues of fiqh may be divided, with regard to understanding the wisdom behind the ruling or not, into two categories:

1.

Rulings of which the wisdom behind them is understandable, which may be called rulings based on clear reason. These are the rulings of which the wisdom behind them is readily understandable, either because the reason is clearly stated or because it may be easily concluded.

These issues are the most common of the things that Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, has ordained. Out of concern for us, He did not test us with rulings of which the wisdom behind them is beyond our comprehension, so that we would not get confused. Examples include the prescription of prayer, zakaah, fasting and Hajj in general; the rulings that make it obligatory to give the mahr in marriage, observe ‘iddah following divorce or death of the husband, and spend on one’s wife, children and relatives; and the ruling that permits divorce when married life becomes impossible… And there are thousands of other such fiqhi rulings.

2.

Rulings having to do with acts of worship. In the case of these rulings we do not necessarily understand the connection between the action and the ruling, and the ruling that prescribes how to do that action. Examples include the number of prayers, the number of rak‘ahs, and most of the actions of Hajj.

By the mercy of Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, such rulings are very few in relation to those rulings of which the wisdom behind them is understood. The prescription of these rulings having to do with acts of worship is a test to see whether the individual is truly a believer.

What should be understood in this context is that nothing of the fundamental issues or minor issues of Islamic teachings is contrary to reason, but there may be something that is beyond our minds to grasp, and there is a big difference between the two matters. If a person is convinced – rationally – that Allah exists, and that He is wise and He alone is deserving of lordship, to the

exclusion of all others, and he is convinced – rationally – of what he has seen of miracles and signs that point to the truthfulness of the Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) who conveyed the message from his Lord, then he has confirmed that Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, is the Lawgiver and the Lord, and he has affirmed that he is a slave. So if, when Allah enjoins something or forbids something, he says, “I will not comply until I know the reason behind what You have commanded or forbidden,” by doing that he will have proved himself to be lying when he claimed to believe in Allah and His Messenger. For reason has a limit beyond which it cannot go, just as physical faculties have a limit beyond which they cannot go.

The one who rebels against the rulings of Allah, may He be exalted, that have to do with worship is like a sick person who goes to a trustworthy doctor, who is known for his knowledge and honesty, and that doctor prescribes different kinds of medicine for him, some of which are to be taken before food, some during the meal, and some after eating, in varying amounts, but he says to the doctor: I will not take your medicines until you explain to me the reason why one has to be taken before food, another after eating, and another during the meal, and why do the doses vary in amount? Does this patient really trust his doctor? The same is applicable to the one who claims to believe in Allah and His Messenger, then he rebels against the rulings of which he does not understand the wisdom behind them. When a true believer is given a command or prohibition, he says: I hear and I obey – especially after what we have stated, that there are no rulings that are contrary to sound reasoning. Not knowing something does not mean that it is not there. How many rulings there are, of which the wisdom behind them was not known in the past, then we discovered the great wisdom behind them. The wisdom behind the prohibition on pork was hidden to many people, then we discovered what this filthy animal carries of diseases and abhorrent characteristics, from which Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, wanted to protect Muslim society. Something similar may be said about the command to wash seven times a vessel that has been licked by a dog, one of which should be with dirt… And there are other rulings which in the future we will discover the wisdom behind them, even if it is hidden from us at present.

We hope that this answer has dealt precisely with the issues you were asking about.

And Allah knows best.