

Missed prayers — what to do

A prayer missed is not a prayer cancelled. The texts give one instruction; the schools fill in the rest.

★ Pray it when you remember

مَنْ نَسِيَ صَلَاةً فَلْيَصِلْ إِذَا ذَكَرَهَا، لَا كَفَّارَةَ لَهَا إِلَّا ذَلِكَ

“Whoever forgets a prayer, let him pray it when he remembers it. There is no expiation for it except that.”

Sahih al-Bukhari 597

★ Why it is still owed

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي

“And establish prayer for My remembrance.” The verse Anas recited straight after the hadith: the prayer is owed to Allah, so it is owed late as well.

Qur'an 20:14

★ No negligence in sleep

They slept past Fajr on a journey and woke to the heat of the sun. He عليه السلام said: there is no negligence in sleep; the negligence is in being awake.

Sunan Abi Dawud 437 · sahih

★ A fixed time, still a duty

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا

“Indeed, prayer has been decreed upon the believers a decree of specified times.” The time is fixed; missing it does not cancel the debt.

Qur'an 4:103

★ He prayed one late himself

At al-Khandaq ‘Umar could not pray ‘Asr till sunset. He عليه السلام said he had not prayed either; they made wudu at Buthan, prayed ‘Asr after sunset, then Maghrib.

Sahih al-Bukhari 596

★ In their original order

Making them up in the order they were missed is held obligatory by the Hanafi, Maliki and Hanbali schools and recommended by the Shafi'i. A fiqh ruling, not a hadith.

Fiqh: tartib al-fawa'it · the four schools

★ Where the schools differ

For prayers abandoned deliberately the four schools say they must still be prayed. Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Hazm held no qada' is accepted for them — only tawbah and more voluntary prayer. The difference stands.

Fiqh: a disputed position, not a text

★ Not a small thing

أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهْوَةَ

“There came after them successors who neglected prayer and pursued desires; so they are going to meet evil.”

Qur'an 19:59

★ The line it crosses

“The covenant between us and them is the prayer; whoever abandons it has disbelieved.” Reported from Buraydah.

Sunan at-Tirmidhi 2621 · sahih