In many of the verses of the Qur’an, the performance of Salāt al-Lāl and staying awake a portion of the night - after midnight - in the worship of Allāh (Glory and Greatness be to Him) has been mentioned, of which, we present some of these verses:

“...and those who ask forgiveness in the morning times.”

“Say your special (tahajjud) prayer during some part of the night...”

“And they who pass the night prostrating themselves before their Lord and standing.”

“They used to sleep but little in the night. And in the morning they asked forgiveness.”

The Salāt al-Lāl was Wajib upon the Messenger of Allāh and no Prophet had been sent before him except that it was obligatory upon them as well.

In the ahādith from the Ahl al-Bait (peace be upon all of them), it has been emphatically mentioned that:

1. Salāt al-Lāl protects one during the daytime.
2. Salāt al-Lāl is a Kaffārah for the sins committed in the day.
3. That house in which Salāt al-Lāl is recited beams with light for those who are in the heavens just as the stars beam with light for those who are on earth.
4. The great and noble people of our nation are those who are protectors of the Qurān and who stay awake the night in worship.
5. There are three things which raise a person’s rank and station: (1) Initiating the greeting to a fellow Muslim, (2) feeding poor people, (3) Salāt in the darkness of the night when all other people are busy sleeping.
6. Salāt al-Lāl makes one’s face beautiful; beautifies one’s etiquette; gives a pleasant smell to one’s body and increases one’s daily sustenance. It also removes sorrow and grief and gives strength to the eyes.
7. One who does not read the Salāt al-Lāl is not considered as a Shī’a of the Ahl al-Bait.
8. One who is not able to perform the Salāt al-Lāl is truly a very unfortunate person.
9. Committing sins is one of the reasons for one to be unsuccessful in the performance of Salāt al-Lāl.
10. The performance of Salāt al-Lāl leads to gaining the pleasure of Allāh (Glory and Greatness be to Him); love of the Angels; is the Sunnah of the Prophets; leads to the light of true recognition of Allāh (Glory and Greatness be to Him); is the foundation of belief; tranquility of the soul; destruction of Shaitān; a weapon against one’s enemies; acceptance of one’s supplications; acceptance of one’s actions; increases the blessings in one’s sustenance; intercession when the Angel of Death comes; brightness in the grave; protects the person while in the grave; ease in the answering of the angels Munkir and Nakir and is the companion and friend in the grave.

Method of Reciting Salāt al-Lāl

Salāt al-Lāl is 11 Rak‘at in which the first 8 Rak‘at are prayed in four Salāt of two Rak‘at each with the intention of Salāt al-Lāl (we finish each two Rak‘at of Salāt off with the Salām and then start the next set of Salāt until we have completed 8 Rak‘at). Following this, two Rak‘at would be read with the intention of Salāt ash-Shaf‘. Once this is recited, one Rak‘at with the intention of Salāt al-Witr would be recited.
The time of Ṣalāt al-Lail is the last one third of the night.\textsuperscript{13}

It is a commonly held belief that the closer that the Ṣalāt al-Lail is read to the time of Ṣalāt al-Fajr, the better it is, however, in many ḥadīth it has been mentioned that a little bit after the middle of the night, the Prophet of Islam and the A’immah (blessings of Allāh be upon all of them), performed the Ṣalāt al-Lail. The narrations that mention these are great and it is has been mentioned that this is the time when one’s supplications are answered.\textsuperscript{14}

However, it has also been mentioned that the Messenger of Allāh (blessings of Allāh be upon him and his family) used to recite the Ṣalāt al-Lail in three stages:

1. Four Rak‘at after the middle of the night.
2. Four Rak‘at in the last one-third of the night.
3. Three Rak‘at near to the time of Fajr while performing a very long Rukū‘.\textsuperscript{15}

It has been narrated that when Imām ʿAlī ibn Mūsā al-Riḍā (peace be upon him) was on his way from Madinah to Khursān, he first recited the Ṣalāt of Ja‘far at-Tayyar and counted that Ṣalāt as a part of the Ṣalāt al-Lail.\textsuperscript{16}

It is Mustaḥab that after each two Rak‘at, the Tasbīḥ of Fāṭima az-Zahrā (blessings be upon her) is performed.\textsuperscript{17}

In the second Rak‘at of each of the two Rak‘at Ṣalāt, it is Mustaḥab that before going into Rukū‘, the Qunūt is performed. It is also Mustaḥab that in the Qunūt, if possible, one sheds tears for the fear of Allāh and for the fear of the punishment of Allāh (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and if one can not cry, he should at least ‘pretend’ to cry.\textsuperscript{18}

It is Mustaḥab that in the first and second Rak‘at of the Ṣalāt al-Lail that after Sūrah al-Fatīha, Sūrah al-Ikhlās is recited 30 times.\textsuperscript{19} If one is not able to recite this, then in the first Rak‘at after al-Fatīha, one should recite Sūrah al-Ikhlās and in the second Rak‘at after Sūrah al-Fatīha, one should recite Sūrah al-Kāfūrūn.

It is better that in the second Rak‘at of the first Ṣalāt, Sūrah al-Muzzammil is read and in the second Rak‘at of the second Ṣalāt, Sūrah an-Nabā is read. It is Mustaḥab that in the first Rak‘at of the third Ṣalāt, Sūrah Yā Sin is read, and in the second Rak‘at (of the third Ṣalāt), Sūrah ad-Dukhān is read – alternately, one can read Sūrah Wāqiyah in place of Yā Sin and Sūrah al-Muddathir in place of Sūrah ad-Dukhān. It is Mustaḥab that in the first Rak‘at of the fourth Ṣalāt, Sūrah al-Mulk is read and in the second Rak‘at of the fourth Ṣalāt, Sūrah al-Insān is read.\textsuperscript{20}

It has been mentioned that Imām Muhammad ibn ʿAli al-Bāqīr (peace be upon him) used to recite Sūrah al-Ikhlās in the Ṣalāt al-Shaf‘ and Ṣalāt al-Witr and after reciting this Sūrah, would say:

\[ \text{كَذَالِكَ الْلَّهُ رَبّيُّ} \]

“This is Allāh my Lord.”\textsuperscript{21}

Recitation of Sūrah al-Ikhlās is counted as the recitation of one-third of the Qur‘ān, thus, who ever recites this Sūrah in the three Rak‘at (Ṣalāt al-Shaf‘ and Ṣalāt al-Witr) is as if he has recited the entire Qur‘ān.\textsuperscript{22}

\textbf{Qunūt of Ṣalāt al-Witr}

The Ṣalāt al-Witr is one Rak‘at and is the Ṣalāt and whispered supplication that completes the Ṣalāt al-Lail. As it has been mentioned in the ḥadīth, the Ṣalāt is the Me‘rūj of the believer, and the Ṣalāt al-Witr is the wave that carries the believer to the higher realms. It has been specifically mentioned in the ḥadīth that, “The more a person stands while in the Ṣalāt al-Witr will have to stand less on the Day of Judgement.”\textsuperscript{23}

The main item that carries one during this spiritual journey is the Qunūt of the Ṣalāt al-Witr in which those who are the true servants of Allāh, spend countless hours, engrossed in supplication and tears and asking forgiveness for their sins.

The Prophet of Islam Muhammad ibn ʿAbdullah (blessings of Allāh be upon him and his family) has said: “Whichever of you prolongs the Qunūt in his Ṣalāt al-Witr will have more ease on the Day of Judgement.”\textsuperscript{24}

In the Wājib Ṣalāt, the Qunūt is in place for the servant to supplicate to his Lord however in the Ṣalāt al-Witr, it is for asking forgiveness to Allāh.\textsuperscript{25}

The following verse of the Qur‘ān has been constantly mentioned in the ḥadīth in reference to asking forgiveness during the Ṣalāt and especially during the Ṣalāt al-Witr:

\[ \ldots and in the morning time, they used to ask for forgiveness \]

\textsuperscript{26}
During the Qunūt of the Ṣalāt al-Witr, there are many supplications, which can be recited, and although it is not possible to list all of them here, we will mention the most important forms of seeking forgiveness.

At the time of asking forgiveness, one should lift his left hand for asking forgiveness and use the right hand to count the number of times 27 and if one uses a tasbih made from the dirt of Kerbalā, then the reward of the forgiveness is increased.

It has been related that the Prophet of Islam Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdullah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) would ask forgiveness 70 times during the Ṣalāt al-Witr.28

Imām Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad as-ṣādiq (peace be upon him) has said: “Whosoever recites the following in the Ṣalāt al-Witr 70 times and continues to do so for one entire year will be counted by Allah as a Mustaghfirin bil asbār or one who used to ask forgiveness during the night time and will make Jannah Waḥib upon that person.”29

In another hadith it has been mentioned that, “Whosoever says the following 100 times at the end of his Qunūt and continues to do so for forty nights will be counted as a Mustaghfirin bil asbār or one who used to ask forgiveness during the night time.”30

The Prophet of Islam Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdullah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) used to ask for forgiveness 70 times in the Qunūt of Ṣalāt al-Witr followed by reciting the below line seven times:

1. Recite the following 70 times:

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ رَبِّي وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ

“I seek repentance from Allah, my Lord and to Him I turn back.”

2. Followed by reciting the following seven times:

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُومُ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ

“I seek repentance from Allah the One whom there is no god except Him, the Living and Self-Subsisting and to Him I turn back.”

One of the most important acts in the Qunūt of Ṣalāt al-Witr is supplication for forty believers (men or women) amongst one’s family, friends, those who have asked to be prayed for, the deceased and the Shīʿa of Imām Al-Muṭṭaṣim ʿAlī ibn Abī Tālib (peace be upon him). Whosoever does this will be assured that his supplications are answered.33

One should then say the following three hundred times:

الْعُفُوُّ

“I ask for forgiveness.”

Following this, the following should be said once:

رَبَّ اغْفِرْنِي وَارْحَمْنِي وَثَبِّ عَلَيْ مَثَلَ أَنَّ اسْتَوَاكَ الرَّحْمِ

“Lord, please forgive me and have mercy upon me and turn back towards me. Verily You are the Oft-Turning back, Most Merciful.”34

It has been mentioned that Imām ʿAlī ibn al-Husayn as-Sajjād (peace be upon him) used to recite the following line three hundred times in his Qunūt during the Ṣalāt al-Witr:

الْعُفُوُّ

“I ask for forgiveness.”35

ʿAlamah ʿAlim has mentioned that the word (الْعُفُوُّ) can also be recited as (الْعُفُوُّ) (with a fathāh instead of a dhammah) on the last letter.

* Please do not forget this humble servant of Allāh (Glory and Greatness be to Him) in your prayers and especially in the blessed Qunūt of the Ṣalāt Al-Lail.

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27 Bihār Al-Āmīr, Vol. 87, Pg. 208
28 Bihār Al-Āmīr, Vol. 87, Pg. 123; Tahdīb, Vol. 1, Pg. 272
29 Bihār Al-Āmīr, Vol. 87, Pg. 120; Al-Faqīḥ, Vol. 1, Pg. 39
30 Bihār Al-Āmīr, Vol. 87, Pg. 225; Mushīḥ of Kaʿfāmī, Pg. 53
31 Bihār Al-Āmīr, Vol. 87, Pg. 287; Al-Faqīḥ, Vol. 1, Pg. 39
32 Bihār Al-Āmīr, Vol. 87, Pg. 308; Mushīḥ of Al-Kaʿfāmī, Page 58
33 Bihār Al-Āmīr, Vol., 87, Pg., 284; Mushīḥ Al-Muttahajjīd, Pg. 10
34 Bihār Al-Āmīr, Vol., 87, Pg., 275; Mushīḥ Al-Muttahajjīd, Pg. 10
35 Bihār Al-Āmīr, Vol., 87, Pg., 275; Mushīḥ Al-Muttahajjīd, Pg. 10
The Concise Method of Reciting Ṣalāt al-Lāl

Ṣalāt al-Lāl is 11 ṣalāt in which:

1. The first 8 ṣalāt are prayed in four ṣalāt of two ṣalāt each with the intention of Ṣalāt al-Lāl (after each two ṣalāt, give the Salām, finish the ṣalāt and then stand for the next set of ṣalāt.)

2. Following this, two ṣalāt would be read with the intention of Ṣalāt ash-Shaf’ (this ṣalāt is performed exactly as ṣalātul Fajr).

3. Once this is recited, one ṣalāt with the intention of ṣalāt al-Witr would be recited. In this ṣalāt, recite Sūrah Al-Fatihah once, Sūrah al-Ikhlas three times followed by Sūrah al-Falaq and Sūrah al-Nās once each.

Once this part of the ṣalāt is finished, we raise our hands in Qunūt such that our palms are facing the sky and our hands are level with our eyes and perform the following:

Qunūt of ṣalāt al-Witr

1. Recite the following 70 times:

I seek repentance from Allāh, my Lord and to Him I turn back.

2. Followed by reciting the following seven times:

I seek repentance from Allāh the One whom there is no god except Him, the Living and Self-Subsisting and to Him I turn back.

3. One of the most important acts in the Qunūt of the ṣalāt al-Witr is supplication for forty believers (men or women) amongst one’s family, friends, those who have asked to be prayed for, the deceased and the Shi’ah of Amīr Al-Mo’mīnīn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭalib (peace be upon him). Whosoever does this will be assured that his supplications are answered.

4. One should then say the following three hundred times:

Lord, please forgive me and have mercy upon me and turn back towards me. Verily You are the Oft-Turning back, Most Merciful.

Please do not forget all of the believers throughout the world in your ṣalāt al-Lāl, especially those downtrodden and oppressed Muslims of Palestine, Iraq, Kashmir, Chechniya, Bosnia, and all over the globe – this humble servant of Allāh (Glory and Greatness be to Him) as well.

May Allāh (Glory and Greatness be to Him) hasten the advent of the 12th Imām (may Allāh hasten his return) to fill this world with justice and equality.