

# The Miraculous Night Journey and the Divine Reduction of the Number of Daily Prayers in Islam

## The Anti-Islamic Allegations:

1) Some enemies of Islam claim that the Prophet, peace be upon him by asking Allah Exalted He to reduce the number of daily prayers that constitute a change in divine decree.

However, how can this be the case when our Lord, the Almighty, and Glorious, has stated: “My Word cannot be changed, nor am I unjust to My creation.” Quran ([50:29](#))

2) Some deniers of the Sunnah claim that this authentic Hadith in Sahih [al-Bukhari](#) regarding the Night Journey and Ascension (Isra and Mi'raj), in which Allah enjoined prayer upon the Prophet Muhammad, contained an account stating that the Prophet Muhammad had heard advice from the Prophet Moses to ask for a reduction in the number of prayers.

Those Sunnah deniers claim that this [Authentic hadith](#) is a fabricated hadith, and concocted by the Jews, who are enemies of Islam, with the aim of highlighting that the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) is superior and more virtuous than the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

3) If Allah is all-knowing, why does He need to negotiate the number of prayers with Muhammad?

## The Muslim Response:

### Introduction:

Considering the number of breaths one takes in a 24-hour day, it may seem reasonable to pray 50 times within that period. If we assume that an average prayer takes ten minutes, multiplying it by 50 results in 500

minutes. When you divide this by 60, you get a total of 8.4 hours out of 24. So, theoretically, it could be possible.

When we realise that no amount of worship can ever repay Allah Almighty for His favours to us, we appreciate that 5 salah is very little compared to what He deserves and what He could have commanded us to do.

(Please be sure to read to the end especially the wisdom behind the initial 50 prayers per day and reducing them to 5 per day at the end of this article)

### **Response to the First False Claim:**

To respond to the first false claim that the Prophet, peace be upon him by asking Allah Exalted He to reduce the number of daily prayers that constitute a change in divine decree and Allah's words in contravention of Qurana (50:29).

We must direct the reader to read the full text of the authentic Hadith found in Sahih [al-Bukhari](#), which explains the complete story of the obligation of the five daily prayers and their reduction from fifty prayers to five prayers. We can read from the authentic Hadith that Allah did not impose the fifty prayers as an absolute requirement.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) were both informed by the angel Gabriel (peace be upon him) that Allah had allowed them to request a reduction in the number of prayers.

Thus, there was no change in Allah's command regarding the obligatory number of prayers in an absolute sense. In other words, Allah had already accepted the request and intercession of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to reduce the number of prayers from fifty to five in a day and night.

Thus, it becomes evident that Allah, the Almighty, allowed the intercession of the Prophet (peace be upon him) before the issuance of the final divine command, which made the obligation of the five daily prayers. It also shows us that Allah is compassionate and generous towards us.

Furthermore, it is clear that when a divine command is issued, there is no altering of Allah's words. This is what is explicitly stated in the Noble Quranic verse. "My Word cannot be changed, nor am I unjust to My creation." Quran ([50:29](#))

**As it is known, and as mentioned in the text of the authentic hadith in [Bukhari](#), if it were not for the fact that the Angel Gabriel (peace be upon him) knew that the final divine command to establish the prayers had not yet been issued, and that Allah, the Almighty, would accept their intercession when the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) or the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) requested a reduction in the number of prayers.**

**It means, in other words, that if the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) or the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) had known that the initial number of fifty prayers was the final divine command when they requested a reduction, it would not have meant that they were disobeying Allah's command.**

**Allah Almighty intends ease for us and does not intend hardship. He wants to lighten our burden, and He is the Most Generous, the all-Kind, the all-Merciful.**

**This in accordance with the following noble verses from the Quran:**

**Allah Exalted he says:**

**“And it is Allah's Will to lighten your burdens, for humankind was created weak.”**

**Quran ([4:28](#))**

**And**

**“Allah in□ends ease for you, not hardship, so that you may complete the prescribed period and proclaim the greatness of Allah for guiding you, and perhaps you will be grateful.”**

**Quran ([2:185](#))**

**Response to the Second False Claim:**

The false claim of the enemies of Islam and deniers of the noble Prophetic Sunnah is that the [authentic hadith](#) found in Sahih al-Bukhari is fabricated, concocted, and inserted into Sahih al-Bukhari by the Jews, who are enemies of Islam. This hadith mentions the Night Journey and Ascension (Isra and Mi'raj) of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the story of the obligation and reduction of prayers from fifty to five prayers per day and night after discussions between the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the Prophet Moses, the son of Imran. This claim is nothing but pure nonsense.

The enemies of Islam and deniers of the Authentic Sunnah and this authentic hadith go step further in telling lies to claim, that this authentic hadith is a fabricated hadith, and concocted by the Jews, who are enemies of Islam, with the aim of highlighting that the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) is superior and more virtuous than the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

To refute this pure fallacy and debunk this blatant lie, we firstly assert that [the hadith is authentic in Sahih al-Bukhari](#), which is one of the most authentic collections of Prophetic traditions in Islam.

Additionally, as Muslims, we love all the Prophets of Allah and His Messengers, and we do not differentiate in our belief in them. Whoever does not believe in any one of the Prophets of Allah is not a Muslim.

**This aligns with the words of Allah, the Almighty.**

“The Messenger firmly believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and so do the believers. They all believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, and His messengers. They proclaim, “We make no distinction between any of His messengers.” And they say, “We hear and obey. We seek Your forgiveness, our Lord! And to You alone is the final return.”

Quran (2:28)

**Despite the fact that we, as Muslims, believe in what is mentioned in the previous noble verse and do not differentiate in our belief among the Prophets and Messengers, it is well-known that the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, is the leader of the Prophets and Messengers and the master of the children of Adam. This is in accordance with what is authentically narrated in the following two hadiths about the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him.**

**Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying:**

**I shall be pre-eminent amongst the descendants of Adam on the Day of Resurrection and I will be the first intercessor and the first whose intercession will be accepted (by Allah).**

**Reference: Sahih Muslim [2278](#)**

**In-book reference: Book 43, Hadith 3**

**USC-MSA web (English) reference: Book 30, Hadith 5655  
(deprecated numbering scheme)**

**And**

**Narrated Abu Sa'eed:**

That the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “I am the master of the children of Adam on the Day of Judgement, and I am not boasting. The Banner of Praise will be in my hand, and I am not boasting. There will not be a Prophet on that day, not Adam nor anyone other than him, except that he will be under my banner. And I am the first one for whom the earth will be opened for, and I am not bragging.”

Grade: Hasan (Darussalam)

Reference: Jami` at-Tirmidhi [3615](#)

In-book reference: Book 49, Hadith 11

English translation: Vol. 1, Book 46, Hadith 3615

## **Refuting Claims of the Fabrication of the Authentic Hadith: A Logical Perspective:**

Now, we come to refute the foolish claim that the [authentic hadith](#) concerning the Night Journey (Isra and Mi'raj) and the obligation of prayer was fabricated by the enemies of Islam, specifically the Jews, in order to portray the Prophet Moses, the son of Amram, as superior to the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him.

They base this on the notion that Prophet Moses advised Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, multiple times to return to Allah and request a reduction in the number of prayers. In reality, the assertion that the Jews concocted and inserted this hadith into Sahih al-Bukhari to elevate Prophet Moses above the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, is a false and absurd claim.

In the same hadith, Prophet Moses criticizes the Jews for their weakness, disobedience to Allah's commands, and their lack of obedience to him, except for a few among them. Does it make any sense that the Jews would fabricate this authentic hadith to criticize themselves and depict themselves as hardened sinners in the eyes of Allah, the Most Compassionate and the Most Merciful? This argument lacks even a modicum of logic.

## **Response to the Third False Claim:**

Now we've reached the third and final false claim made by the enemies of Islam, presented in the form of a question as follows: How is it that Allah,

the All-Knowing, needs to negotiate with the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) regarding the number of prayers?

To refute this false claim, we direct the reader to revisit this article from its beginning, where we have repeatedly debunked the assertion that Allah, the Almighty, negotiated with the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) regarding the number of prayers. We have shown that Allah, in His infinite wisdom, allowed consultation and that His words remained unchanged.

Furthermore, in the following lines, we provide further clarification:

**The false claim and the assumption that Allah, the Almighty, negotiated with the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) only reveal that the inquirer or the questioner is confused between two different matters:**

The All-Encompassing Knowledge of the All-Knower Allah Exalted He and The Commandments of Allah Exalted He.

**These two are separate and different:**

The All-Encompassing Knowledge of the All-Knower is an attribute of Allah Exalted He and The Commandments of Allah Exalted He are subject to change if He wills.

Firstly:

Not Allah Exalted He who is negotiating the number of prayers with Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him= sallallahu alaihi wassallam), it's the other way around.

The Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alaihiw assallam) is the one who asked (you used work negotiated but we say he asked) Allah for a reduction of the number of the daily prayers, and that is because Prophet Muhammed peace be upon him as mercy to mankind has been sent to remove difficulties and make things easy for us as taught in the Quran:

Quran (7:157) ...[the Prophet] who will enjoin upon them the doing of what is right and forbid them the doing of what is wrong, and make lawful to



them the good things of life and forbid them the bad things, and lift from them their burdens and the shackles that were upon them [aforetime].

Due to distortion in the practices of previous religions as a result of which rules imposed on their followers by their preachers had become intolerable and unbearable.

Islam seems more practical and logical and this was all due to the mercy of Allah Exalted he that He chose to express through the merciful personality of the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wassallam):

Quran (21:107) And [thus, O Prophet,] We have sent you as [an evidence of Our] grace towards all the worlds.

Since the Prophet is evidence of Allah's mercy on earth, therefore it is displayed in his actions and teachings to make things easier for his followers so that they are grateful to Allah Exalted He and easily succeed in the hereafter.

Due to the pleading that the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wassallam=peace be upon him) made at the door of Allah's mercy, that is why these prayers were cut short from fifty to only five per day.

### **Among the things which Allah revealed to him then, was:**

“Fifty prayers were enjoined on his followers in a day and a night.”

.....The Prophet (صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم) turned towards Gabriel for advice and Gabriel did not disapprove of that. So he ascended with him for the fifth time.

The Prophet (صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم) said, “O Lord, my followers are weak in their bodies, hearts, hearing and constitution, so lighten our burden.” On that the Irresistible said, “O Muhammad!” the Prophet replied, “Labbaik and Sa`daik.” Allah said, “The Word that comes from Me does not change, so it will be as I enjoined on you in the Mother of the Book.”

Allah added, “Every good deed will be rewarded as ten times so it is fifty (prayers) in the Mother of the Book (in reward) but you are to perform only five (in practice).”..... (Sahih Al Bukhari – Kitab Al Tawheed) (Source: Sayings and Teachings of Prophet Muhammad (صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم))

Allah Exalted He in His Mercy reduced the number every time the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) turned towards his Lord and pleaded. At the fifth instance it was reduced to 5 but the rewards for each prayer is 10 times therefore even though we perform 5 prayers we get reward of 50!

and this was due to special mercy of Allah Exalted He, this act of His was in addition to the Prophet's request.

To answer your question in the most basic way, Allah Exalted He is All Knowing and He in His all encompassing knowledge already knew that they will be reduced to 5 but He had already written in His Ummul Kitab (Mother of all the books, Master of all scriptures) that there will be 50 but after the Prophet's intercession reduced them. How did He do it? Just as He has mentioned in the Quran:

(Al Quran 13:39) God erases or confirms whatever He will, and the Ummul Kitab (source of scripture or master scripture) is with Him.

Therefore it was already in the knowledge of the All Knower that the prayers will eventually be reduced to 5 but He changed and confirmed it in His Ummul Kitab (source of scripture or master scripture) only after the Prophet's intercession and that is all to make us realize His graciousness and the honor and special status that He has given to his final messenger.

**The renowned scholar Ibn Hajar mentioned that there are many wisdoms behind Allah, the Almighty, reducing the number of daily prayers from fifty to only five. Among these are:**

The command of Allah, the Almighty, initially ordained the obligatory number of daily prayers to be fifty. However, Allah, in His infinite knowledge, later reduced them to five daily prayers, demonstrating the utmost importance and significance of prayer.

Prayer serves as the cornerstone of the Islamic faith and is the primary pillar of Islam. If prayers are sound, then entire actions of a Muslim are sound, by the mercy of Allah.

Furthermore, the reduction in the number of daily prayers to five not only reflects the generosity and mercy of Allah towards the believers but also highlights His generosity and mercy in the calculation of our rewards. He rewards us for five prayers as if they were fifty. This magnanimity and mercy of Allah are profound, as He multiplies the rewards and compensations for those He wishes.

It also teaches us that by turning to Allah and seeking His intercession, He, in His generosity, answers prayers. This is precisely what happened when

**the Prophet, peace be upon him, interceded for the reduction in the number of prayers, out of his compassion and mercy for his Ummah.**

**1) Manifesting Allah's Mercy and Favor upon this Ummah: It demonstrates Allah's mercy by lightening the burden and granting the reward of fifty prayers.**

**Allah's generosity the other aspect of this episode is Allah's generosity, as He gave the Ummah the reward of praying 50 times even though the obligation is only to pray 5 times.**

فَقَالَ هِيَ خَمْسٌ وَهِيَ خَمْسُونَ، لَا يُبَدَّلُ الْقَوْلُ لَدَيَّ. رواه البخاري ومسلم

**'These are five prayers and they are all (equal to) fifty (in reward) for My Word does not change.'** (Bukhari and Muslim)

**2) Honoring the Prophet's Status:**

**It signifies the nobility of the Prophet and his elevated rank with his Lord. Allah lightened the obligation for his Ummah due to his supplication and intercession.**

**3) Emphasizing Communication with Allah:**

**Allah honored His Ummah with direct communication and dialogue. The Prophet repeatedly returned to Allah, lowering the count by five each time.**

**4) Highlighting the Importance of Supplication:**

**It underscores the significance of asking and repeating one's requests. Allah loves to be asked.**

**5) Acknowledging the Virtue of Moses:**

**It showcases the merit of the Prophet Moses and his compassion for the Ummah of Muhammad. This event also underscores the unity of the people of faith and their loyalty to one another.**

**6) Despite the elevated status of the Prophet, peace be upon him, in the sight of Allah, and his belovedness to Allah, this journey is compelling evidence that Allah, the Almighty, has no absolute partner in sovereignty, judgment, and command.**

**He is the sole legislator, for He is the One who permits, forbids, and ordains the religion for us. The status of the Prophet, peace be upon him, is that he is the servant of Allah and His messenger, the seal of the prophets and messengers.**

**In order to demonstrate that the Holy Prophet Muhammad is not all-knowing or God or son of God but a Slave and Servant of Allah. This is contrary to those individuals who assert that he attained omniscience during the Night of Ascension (Isra and Mi'raj), or that he was created from light rather than being a human being. This serves as conclusive evidence that he did not, in fact, acquire omniscience as claimed by these heretical beliefs.**

**The narrative of the Night of Ascension, during which Prophet Muhammad, as the devoted servant of Allah, was summoned by Allah the only true God to ascend to the heavens to communicate with Allah and receive guidance on the foremost pillar of Islam, which is prayer, is instrumental in illustrating this point.**

**These are some of the profound lessons and wisdoms underlying the reduction of prayers from fifty to five.**

**7) Likewise, we learn from this blessed dialogue between the Prophet, peace be upon him, and the Prophet Moses, peace be upon him, the significance of consultation in Islam, and the importance of listening to advice.**

**8) The Prophet's manners, peace be upon him, in seeking the counsel of Gabriel, peace be upon him, before meeting his Lord, the Almighty and Glorious.**

**9) The distinction of our Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, over all his fellow Prophets, peace be upon them.**

**10) The confirmation of the attribute of speech for Allah, the Almighty and Glorious.**

**11) The confirmation of the attribute of exaltation for Allah, the Almighty and Glorious.**

**Allah Knows Best.**