

WEEKLY BOOKLET:363

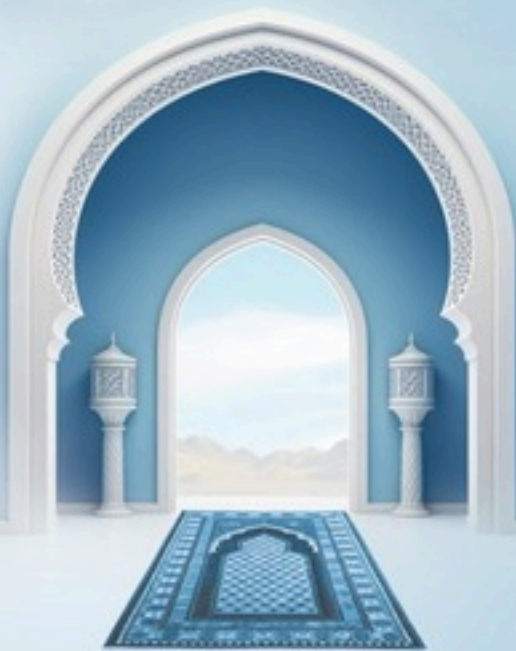


An episode from the book **The Key to Paradise** written by
Ameer Ahl al-Sunnah دَامَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمُ الْعَالِيَةَ

Diversions from **Prayer**

English

- Clothing has an effect on the heart
- Ruling on keeping birds
- Effective means of blessing in sustenance
- Why does a slave forget units of prayer?



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نماز سے توجہ ہٹانے والی چیزیں

Diversions from Prayer

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Diversions from Prayer



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الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى خَاتَمِ النَّبِيِّينَ
أَنَابَعْدُ فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Supplication for reading this book

Recite the following supplication before you read a religious book or begin an Islamic lesson; you will remember whatever you study **انْشَاءَ اللَّهُ**.

اللَّهُمَّ افْتَحْ عَلَيْنَا حِكْمَتَكَ وَانْشُرْ
عَلَيْنَا رَحْمَتَكَ يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

O Allah! Open the doors of knowledge and wisdom for us and have mercy on us! O He Who is the Most Glorious and Honourable! (Al-Mustatraf, vol. 1, p. 40)

Note:

Recite *shalāt* upon the beloved Prophet ﷺ once before and after.

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الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى خَاتَمِ النَّبِيِّينَ
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Diversions from Prayer¹

Attar’s supplication: O Allah Almighty! Whoever reads or listens to the **18**-page booklet *Diversions from Prayer*, grant him the felicity of offering prayer with complete concentration and confer upon him and his parents forgiveness without account.

أَمِيرُنْ بِجَاهِ خَاتَمِ النَّبِيِّينَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Excellence of *Ṣalāt*

Addressing the one who recited praise and *ṣalāt* after prayer, the beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ stated, “Supplicate; it will be accepted. Seek; it will be granted.”²

صَلُّوا عَلَيَّ الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ مُحَمَّدٍ

Ruling on offering prayer after putting on a patterned shawl

It is related in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* that the Mother of the believers

¹ This subject matter has been extracted from Amīr Ahl al-Sunnah’s book *Faizan-e-Namaz* translated into English under the name *The Key to Paradise* pp. 273 – 283.

² Sunan al-Nasā’ī, p. 220, Hadith 1281

Diversions from Prayer

Sayyidah ‘Ā’ishah Ṣiddīqah رضى الله عنها has narrated that the Final Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ offered prayer in a **خَيْصَصَة** with prints on it. He صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ glanced at its designs. After he صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ finished praying, he صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, ‘Take this shawl of mine to Abū Jahm and bring the *anbijāniyyah* of Abū Jahm because this shawl has just diverted my attention from prayer.’ It is also narrated that the Holy Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “I began to see its patterns during prayer, so I fear that it may divert me.”¹

Clothing has an effect on the heart

Commenting on the above Hadith, Ḥakīm al-Ummah Mufti Aḥmad Yār Khan رضى الله عنه has stated that **خَيْصَصَة** in Arabic, means a shawl with designs. It was a woollen black-coloured shawl which Abū Jahm رضى الله عنه had presented to the Holy Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ as a gift. Having worn this shawl, the beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ offered prayer. *Anbijāniyyah* is an ascription to the name of a Syrian town where plain clothes are manufactured. Just as in our time, muslin from Bhagalpur, Boriya, and Dhaka and cotton cloth from Lailpur are famous.

Merely returning the shawl would have disappointed Abū Jahm رضى الله عنه, therefore, the beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ asked for another shawl in exchange, so that Abū Jahm رضى الله عنه would be happy. Sufis have stated that clothes have an effect on the heart, especially on a pure and ‘bright’ one. For example, if there is a

¹ Bukhārī, vol. 1, p. 149, Hadith 373

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tiny black spot on a piece of white cloth, the spot is visible from a distance. This also shows that the *mihrāb* of a masjid should be simple. This is better because the attention of a worshipper will not be diverted. According to some sufis, it is better to offer prayer on a plain mat rather than one that has designs and prints on it. Their viewpoint is based on the same above-mentioned Hadith. Remember! All of this is actually aimed at teaching the *ummah*. Different states pass over the noble heart of the blessed Prophet ﷺ. At times, he ﷺ feared a decrease in humility and concentration due to the designs on a piece of clothing, and sometimes, he ﷺ offered prayer in the battleground under the shade of swords, but his concentration remained unaffected. Sometimes, his humanity manifests and at other times, the luminescence of his attribute of light.¹

It is permissible to offer prayer in clothing that has designs on it

O devotees of the beloved Prophet! No one should get under the impression that it is impermissible to offer prayer in colourful clothes or in ones that have designs on them. The ruling on this matter is that whether it is a design on clothes, something heavy in the pocket or anything else which creates a hurdle in the attainment of concentration during prayer, refraining from

¹ Mir'āt al-Manājīh, vol. 1, p. 466 Selected

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such a thing is better and rewardable.

New blessed sandals

The beloved Prophet ﷺ once wore a pair of new blessed sandals and found them good, so he ﷺ performed a prostration in gratitude and said, “I have shown humility to my Lord, so that He will not show wrath to me.” He ﷺ then went out and bestowed those blessed sandals upon the first beggar whom he ﷺ met. Afterwards, he ﷺ said to Sayyidunā ‘Alī al-Murtaḍā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, “Buy me sandals made from old and soft leather.” He ﷺ then wore them.¹

Gold ring

Before gold was declared forbidden for men, the Final Prophet ﷺ had a gold ring on his blessed finger. He ﷺ was seated on the blessed *minbar* when he ﷺ removed the ring and said, “This preoccupied me. One gaze of mine remained towards it and one gaze towards you [i.e., those present].”²

Gold is forbidden for men

O devotees of the beloved Prophet! Initially, gold was permissible for men to wear, but it was declared impermissible

¹ Iḥyā' al-'Ulūm (Urdu), vol. 1, p. 509

² Iḥyā' al-'Ulūm (Urdu), vol. 1, p. 509

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later on. Sayyidunā ‘Alī رضي الله عنه has stated, “Taking silk in his right hand and gold in the left, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم declared, ‘Both of these things are forbidden for the men of my *ummah*.’”¹

Gold ring thrown away

The beloved Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم once saw a person who had a gold ring on his finger. Taking off the ring from his finger, he صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم threw it away and warned, “Does anyone keep an ember in his hand?” After the beloved Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم left, someone suggested to the person, “Pick up your ring and use it for any other purpose [instead of wearing it].” He replied, ‘By Allah Almighty! I will never take that when the beloved Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم has thrown it away.’”²

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Misfortune of love for a bird (Parable)

A worshipper worshipped Allah Almighty in a forest for a long period of time. He once saw a bird chirping inside its nest in a tree, so he thought to himself, ‘How wonderful it will be, if I find a place for worship near this tree! I will continue to enjoy

¹ Sunan Abū Dāwūd, vol. 4, p. 71, Hadith 4057; Bahār-e-Sharī‘at, vol. 3, p. 424

² Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, p. 891, Hadith 5472

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hearing the sound of this bird.’ He then did that. Allah Almighty revealed to the Prophet ﷺ of that time: ‘Say to so-and-so worshipper! You have become attached to creation. I have downgraded your station in such a way that you will no longer be able to attain it by any deed.’¹

Ruling on keeping birds

O devotees of prayer! To keep birds, etc., is permissible, but to keep oneself occupied in them in such a way that it becomes a hurdle to concentration in prayer and inclination to other acts of worship, is not appropriate. It is necessary to feed and provide them with water abundantly, so that you are not the cause of hunger and thirst to them in any way. My master Imam Aḥmad Razā Khan رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ has stated: ‘One should offer feed and water (to animals), seventy times (i.e., multiple times) a day; otherwise, rearing them and keeping them hungry and thirsty is a severe sin.’² It is necessary to refrain from inflicting every type of cruelty on animals. Oppressing an animal is a bigger sin than oppressing even a Muslim. A Muslim can file a lawsuit, etc., but an oppressed animal cannot complain to anyone. Also remember that the prayer of an oppressed animal against its oppressor is answered.

صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ

¹ Iḥyā' al-‘Ulūm (Urdu), vol. 5, p. 121

² Fatāwā Riḍāwiyyah, vol. 24, p. 644

A blessed Companion gave his garden as charity (Parable)

Sayyidunā Abū Ṭalḥah al-Anṣārī رضي الله عنه was offering prayer in his garden, when suddenly, a grey-coloured pigeon flew here and there, trying to find a way out of the garden. He رضي الله عنه liked this scene and fixed his gaze on it for a moment. As he رضي الله عنه turned his attention to prayer, he could not remember how many units he had offered. He رضي الله عنه said, ‘My wealth [i.e. garden] has cast me into tribulation.’ Therefore, he رضي الله عنه came to the court of the beloved Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم, and having related the incident, he رضي الله عنه humbly said, ‘O Prophet of Allah! Now, that garden is *ṣadaqah*; spend it however you wish.’¹

Tābi‘ī saint donated his garden as charity (Parable)

A Tābi‘ī saint رحمته الله عليه offered prayer in his date-palm tree garden. Laden with fruits, the trees were bowing. His eye fell on them, so he رحمته الله عليه liked them and could not remember how many units he رحمته الله عليه had offered. He رحمته الله عليه mentioned it to the leader of the believers, Sayyidunā Uthmān al-Ghanī رضي الله عنه and proclaimed: ‘Now, that garden is *ṣadaqah*; spend it in the path of Allah Almighty.’ Therefore, Sayyidunā Uthmān al-Ghanī رضي الله عنه sold it for fifty thousand.²

¹ Muwaṭṭa’ Imam Mālik, vol. 1, p. 107, Hadith 225

² Iḥyā’ al-‘Ulūm (Urdu), vol. 1, p. 510

Diversions from Prayer

Fear of annoying a friend, but...

O seekers of Heaven! Have you noticed? When the garden of a Companion of the holy Prophet and that of a Tābi'i saint became a hurdle in the attainment of concentration during prayer, they gave them as charity in the way of Allah Almighty. **سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ!** Our pious predecessors had deep attachment to prayer! Sadly, on the contrary, here are we heedless people. Most of us have forgotten prayer. By means of azan, we are invited to come to the masjid to offer prayer, five times a day, but we do not take note of it. If the president of a country or a minister sends an invitation to someone, he will be over the moon. He will boast of it among people a lot, saying, 'I am invited by the so-and-so minister on such-and-such a date.' Regretfully, the invitation from an official is seen as a feather in one's cap, but the invitation from the muezzin who calls us to offer prayer in the divine court is given no regard at all. If a relative or a friend invites you to attend a wedding or any other ceremony, you accept it even unwillingly. At times, you fear that he will get annoyed if you do not accept his invitation. But, if you do not accept the invitation from the muezzin who calls out **سَمِعَ عَلَى السَّلَاةِ** i.e. 'come towards Prayer', Allah Almighty will be displeased. Have you ever thought about that?

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

The prayer offered with concentration relieves grief

On pages 74-75 of the 84-page book *The Path of Knowledge*, published by Dawat-e-Islami's Maktaba-tul-Madinah, it is stated:

‘A student of Islamic studies is not supposed to worry about the matters of the world because worrying about the matters of the world is extremely harmful and has no benefit. To worry about the world brings about darkness in the heart, and to ponder over the Hereafter brings about light in the heart, and the effect of this light manifests in prayer. Grieving for the world prevents a person from virtuous deeds and pondering over the Hereafter inspires him to do good deeds. Also remember that offering prayer with humility and concentration and keeping oneself occupied in acquiring Islamic knowledge remove worry and grief.’¹

Effective means of blessing in sustenance

On page 80 of the same book *The Path of Knowledge*, it is stated:

‘An effective means of having blessing in sustenance is that a man should offer prayer with humility and concentration, performing the essentials of prayer

¹ The Path of Knowledge, pp. 74-75

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slowly and performing its *wājib* acts, *sunan* and etiquettes completely, with due care.¹

Ten means of living a long life

The following are things that bring about an increase in the lifespan of a person;

1. Doing good deeds.
2. Not causing pain to Muslims.
3. Respecting elders.
4. Good conduct with relatives.
5. Reciting the following words three times each, in the morning and evening, on a daily basis:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، مِلْءَ الْبَيْتَانِ، وَمُنْتَهَى الْعِلْمِ، وَمَبْدَأَ الرِّضَا،
وَزِينَةَ الْعَرْشِ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، مِلْءَ الْبَيْتَانِ، وَمُنْتَهَى
الْعِلْمِ، وَمَبْدَأَ الرِّضَا، وَزِينَةَ الْعَرْشِ

6. Refraining from cutting lush green trees unnecessarily.
7. Performing ablution thoroughly, whilst paying attention to *sunan* and etiquettes.

¹ The Path of Knowledge, p. 80

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8. Offering prayer with concentration and humility.
9. To perform Hajj and *Umrah* with the same *ihrām*, i.e. to perform *Hajj Qirān*.
10. To look after your health.

All of these matters are reasons for a long life.¹

Why does a slave forget units of prayer?

The Final Prophet of Allah ﷺ has stated:

When the call to prayer is announced, Satan runs away, turning his back and breaking wind, so that he will not hear the azan. After the azan, he returns. When the *iqāmah* is recited, he runs away once again. After the *iqāmah*, he comes and begins to whisper to the worshipper, saying, ‘Remember such-and-such a thing, remember such-and-such a thing,’ regarding things which he had not recalled, until the person does not remember how many units he has offered.²

Azan drives away Satan

Commenting on the above blessed Hadith, Ḥakīm al-Ummah, Mufti Aḥmad Yār Khan Na‘īmī رحمه الله عليه has stated that:

¹ The Path of Knowledge, pp. 83-84, slightly amended

² Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhari, vol. 1, p. 222, Hadith 608

Diversions from Prayer

Satan's running away has been used in the literal sense here. The effect of azan is that it drives away Satan. This is why azan is called out when plague spreads because this pandemic arises from the effect of Jinn. Moreover, azan is called out in the ear of a new-born baby because Satan is present at the time of its birth and the baby cries because Satan strikes it. Likewise, after the burial of a Muslim, azan is called out at the head-side of the grave. That is the time when the deceased person has to go through a test, and Satan tries to trick him. By the blessing of azan, Satan will run away, the buried Muslim will gain comfort, and his heart will incline to his new abode. He will also recall the answers to the questions from *Nakīrayn*.¹ (In order to get detailed information about calling out azan at the grave, read the booklet “إِيْدَانُ الْأَجْرِيحِ أَذَانُ الْقَبْرِ” included in the fifth volume of the referenced edition of *Fatāwā Razawiyyah*.)

Forgotten things come to mind during Prayer

Mufti Aḥmad Yār Khan رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ has further stated:

From experience, it is obvious that those things come into the mind of a person during prayer that do not come into his mind when outside prayer. This also shows that for the purpose of putting human beings to the test, Allah Almighty has given Satan the power to

¹ Mir'āt al-Manājīh, vol. 1, p. 409

influence their hearts. No matter how hard efforts you make, you do not succeed in completely getting rid of satanic whispers. Therefore, you should not worry about satanic whispers and continue to offer prayer. One should not give up eating food because of flies.¹

Satan informed about the location of the treasure

(Parable)

A person buried his wealth somewhere and forgot. He came to the court of Imam A'zam Abū Ḥanīfah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ and mentioned his problem. Imam A'zam رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ advised, "Keep offering *nafl* prayer all night and you will recall [where you have buried the treasure]." The person started offering prayer. After he had offered only a few units, he recalled where he had buried the wealth (and he ended *nafl* prayer). Then, coming to the court of Imam A'zam رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, he recounted the whole story. Imam A'zam رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ commented, "I knew that Satan would not let you offer *nafl* prayer all night and would make you remember where you had buried your wealth, so that you would give up offering prayer."²

O devotees of the beloved Prophet! This parable shows that the person offered *nafl* prayer with humility and concentration for pleasing Allah Almighty following the advice of Imam A'zam

¹ Mir'āt al-Manājīh, vol. 1, p. 410

² Khayrāt al-Ḥisān, pp. 71, summarized

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سَمِعْتُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ، so his problem was solved. Remember! When you recite any litany or invocation for the accomplishment of any worldly task, you should also make the intention of reward. For example, when you travel with a Madani Qafilah of Dawat-e-Islami or recite any litany or invocation for the acquisition of blessing in sustenance, recovery from disease, payment of debt, birth of a child or for finding a suitable marriage partner, etc., make sure that you intend to please Allah Almighty. If Allah Almighty wills, your aim will be fulfilled. Similarly, when offering *Ṣalāt al-Ḥājah*, etc, you should make the intention of earning reward.

What to do if you forget the number of units in prayer

Bahār-e-Sharī‘at states:

- If a person is doubtful about the number of units he has offered, for example, he is doubtful whether he has offered three units or four, and this has happened for the first time after he has reached puberty, he must break prayer by performing *salām* or doing anything which is contrary to prayer. Or alternatively, he should offer prayer according to his strong presumption, but he must offer this prayer again in any case. The mere intention of breaking prayer is not sufficient (i.e., he must perform a prayer-invalidating action).

If this has not happened for the first time, but rather he has already become doubtful in his life about the number of

Diversions from Prayer

units, he should act upon his strong presumption. If there is no strong presumption, he should consider the lesser number of units to have been offered. For example, if he is doubtful about three or four units, he should consider that he has offered three units. If he has doubt about two or three, he should consider that he has offered two and so forth. He must perform *qa'dah* in the third as well as in the fourth unit because the third unit may possibly be the fourth one. After performing the fourth unit, he must perform *sajdat al-sahw* in the *qa'dah* and perform *salām*. If he has strong presumption, there is no need to perform *sajdat al-sahw*. However, if he takes a pause thinking for as long as **سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ** can be recited three times, *sajdat al-sahw* will become *wājib*.

- If a worshipper becomes doubtful about the number of units after he has finished prayer, this will not be taken into consideration. However, after prayer, if he is convinced that he has missed any obligatory act, but does not know for sure which act he has missed, it is obligatory to offer prayer again.¹

صَلُّوا عَلَيَّ الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ مُحَمَّدٍ

¹ Bahār-e-Sharī'at, vol. 1, p. 718

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He would misuse the internet

Dear Islamic brothers! In order to develop a passion for learning rulings on ablution, *ghusl* and prayer, to increase the fear of Allah in your heart, to get rid of sins and to develop the mindset of treading on the path to Paradise, stay affiliated with the Madani environment of Dawat-e-Islami – the Madani movement of the devotees of the beloved Prophet. Listen to a Madani parable for persuasion:

A young man from the Orangi Town area of Karachi used to commit sins day and night. He would gamble on snooker, cricket, etc., watch movies and dramas along with his bad friends and would watch vulgar movies on his personal computer.

Around four or five years before the writing of this, he was once using the internet and browsing different website, when suddenly, a preacher delivering a speech appeared on the screen. He wanted to change the channel but it was as if the manner of the preacher captivated him. He started listening to the speech. The preacher was motivating audience to have fear of Allah Almighty. During the speech, the young man also felt guilty of his sins and was impressed by those words.

Upon obtaining further information, he came to know that the speech was being delivered at Sahra-e-Madīnah, near Toll Plaza, Karachi during the Sunnah-inspiring congregation of Dawat-e-Islami. By the grace of Allah Almighty, during the same

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congregation, not only did he become a disciple of al-Ghawth al-A‘zam رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, he also joined the Madani environment of Dawat-e-Islami for protection from sins. That way, he was blessed with repentance. In addition, he also witnessed the blessings of Dawat-e-Islami. For example, he once saw in his dream that a Madrasa-tul-Madinah (for adults) had been set up in al-Masjid al-Nabawī and Islamic brothers had been reciting the noble Quran. On another occasion, he dreamt that the weekly Sunnah-inspiring congregation of Dawat-e-Islami was taking place in al-Masjid al-Nabawī and a preacher of Dawat-e-Islami was delivering a speech. By the grace of Allah Almighty, he was made responsible for ‘pious deeds’ at an area level and was blessed with travelling with a Madani Qafilah each month for more or less eleven months.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Offer prayer like the one departing this life

The Final Prophet of Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ has said, “When any of you offers prayer, he should offer it like a departing person, presuming that now he will never be able to offer prayer again.”¹

Say farewell to everything of yours at the time of prayer

¹ Al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaghīr, p. 50, Hadith 716

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Commenting on the above blessed Hadith, Sayyidunā Imam Muhammad al-Ghazālī رحمته الله عليه has stated: “In other words, offer prayer like the person who is going towards his Lord, leaving his lower self, getting away from his desires and saying farewell to his life.”¹

Sayyidunā Bakr b. ‘Abdullāh al-Muzanī رحمته الله عليه has stated: If you want to benefit from your prayer, you should say (these words to yourself before starting prayer): ‘Maybe I will never be able to offer prayer again after this one.’²

This is the last prayer of my life

At the time of prayer, remember death and develop the mindset: ‘This is the last prayer of my life.’ The holy Prophet صلّى الله عليه وآله وسلم has cautioned, “Remember death in your prayer because when any person remembers death during his prayer, he will certainly offer prayer in an excellent manner. Offer prayer like the person who has no hope of being able to offer another prayer.”³

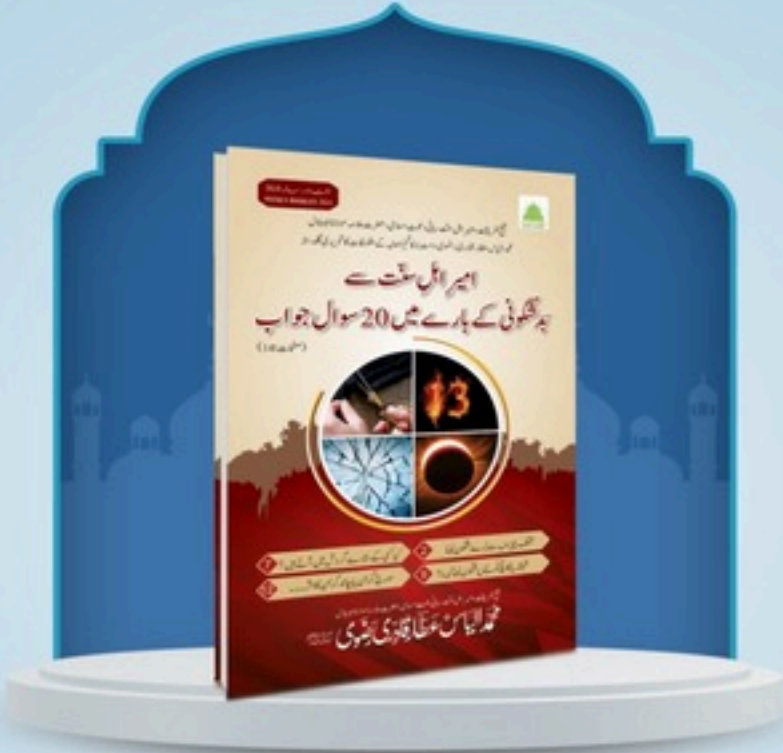
¹ Ihyā’ al-‘Ulūm, vol. 1, p. 205

² Qiṣar al-Amāl, vol. 3, p. 328, number 104

³ Kanz al-‘Ummāl, vol. 7, p. 212, Hadith 20075

Diversions from Prayer

Next Week's Booklet



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