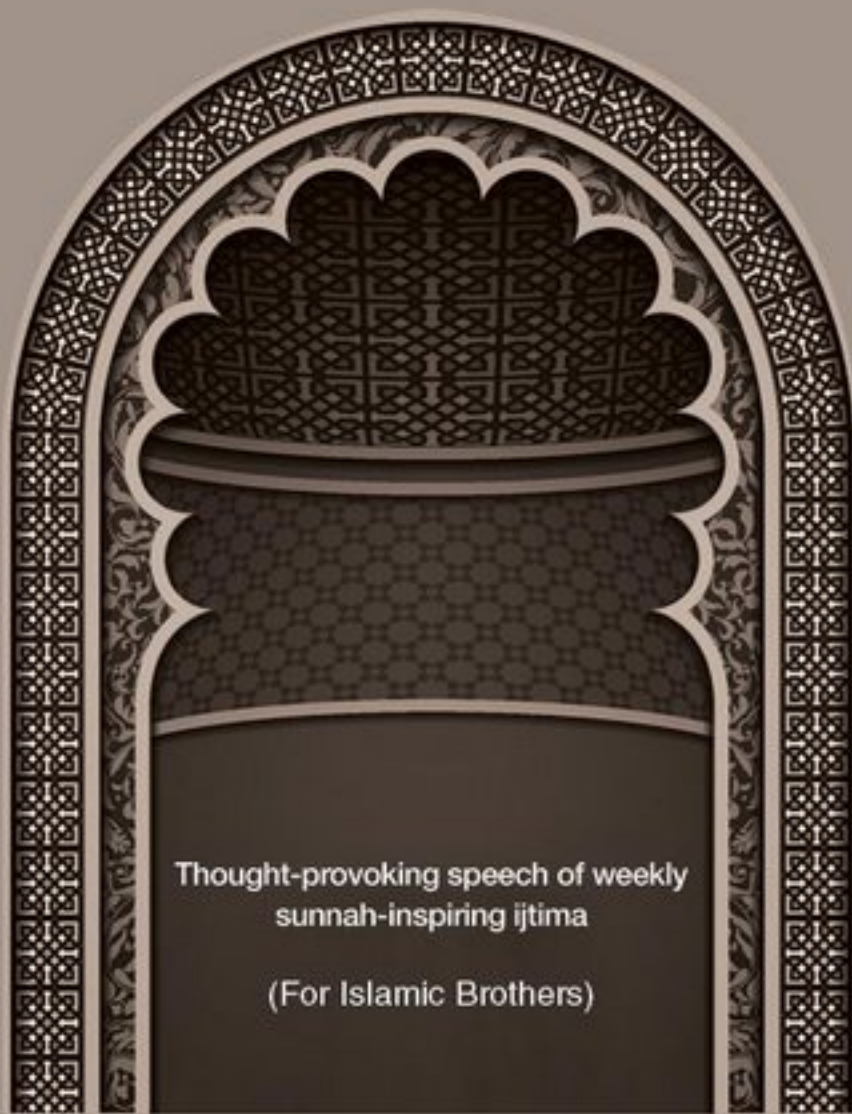


The Importance and Excellence of

Salah

23-March-2023



Thought-provoking speech of weekly
sunnah-inspiring ijtima

(For Islamic Brothers)

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ
 أَمَا بَعْدُ فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Importance and Excellence of Salah

وَعَلَى الْإِكِّ وَأَصْحَبِكَ يَا حَبِيبَ اللَّهِ

الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ

وَعَلَى الْإِكِّ وَأَصْحَبِكَ يَا نُوْرَ اللَّهِ

الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ

نَوَيْتُ سُنَّتَ الْإِعْتِكَافِ

Translation: “I have made the intention of Sunnah *i’tikāf*.”

Dear Islamic brothers, whenever you enter a masjid, make the intention of *i’tikāf*, for you will gain the reward of *i’tikāf* as long as you stay in the masjid. Remember, inside a masjid, there is no *shar‘ī* permission to eat and drink, sleep or have suhoor and iftar, and not even to drink Zamzam water or the water on which *dam* has been performed. However, if the intention of *i’tikāf* is made, all these acts will become permissible. One should not make intention to observe *i’tikāf* only to eat, drink or sleep, but rather it should be made for pleasing Allah Almighty.

It is stated in *Fatāwā Shāmī*: “If a person wants to eat, drink or sleep in a masjid, he should make intention to observe *i’tikāf* and do the dhikr of Allah for some time. Then, he may proceed as he wishes (i.e. if he now wants to eat, drink or sleep, he can do so).”

Excellence of sending *ṣalāt* upon the Prophet ﷺ

Sayyidunā Jābir رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates that the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

مَنْ أَدْرَكَ شَهْرَ رَمَضَانَ وَلَمْ يُصْنِهِ فَقَدْ شَتَّى وَمَنْ أَدْرَكَ وَالدَّيْنِ أَوْ أَحَدَهُمَا فَلَمْ يَرِيْهُ فَقَدْ شَتَّى، وَمَنْ ذَكَرْتُ عِنْدَهُ فَلَمْ يُصَلِّ عَلَيَّ فَقَدْ شَتَّى

Translation: Whoever reached Ramadan and did not observe its fasts is unfortunate. The one who has his parents or one of them and did not show good conduct towards them is unfortunate. The one before whom I was mentioned but he did not recite *ṣalāt* upon me is also unfortunate.¹

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ has stated: *أَفْضَلُ الْعَمَلِ النَّبِيُّ الصَّادِقَةُ*, “A truthful intention is the best action.”² O devotees of the Prophet! Make good intentions before every action, because a good intention leads a person to Paradise. Before listening to the speech, make good intentions, such as:

- You will listen to the entire speech to gain the knowledge of Islam.
- You will sit in a respectful manner.
- You will refrain from acting lazy during the speech.
- You will listen to the speech to reform yourself.
- Whatever you learn, you will try to convey it to others.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

¹ *Majma' al-Zawā'id*: 4,773

² *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr*: 1,284

O devotees of the Prophet! It is a great blessing of Allah that He has allowed us to reach the month of Ramadan once again. The virtues of this blessed month are innumerable! It is a month in which good deeds can be accumulated as Allah has made the reward of a voluntary (*nafl*) act equivalent to an obligatory (*fard*) act, and the reward of an obligatory act is increased seventy-fold. The transgressing devils are imprisoned, and the doors of Paradise are opened. The advantages this month brings are that people develop the mindset to perform good deeds, they become inclined towards offering salah, and masjids become vibrant. O devotees of the Prophet! We do offer salah, but the question is, do we offer it correctly? Do we know the importance of salah? In today's weekly *ijtimā'*, we will hear about the importance and excellence of salah, the benefits of offering salah, and the consequences of missing it.

A grave with flames

The renowned spiritual guide and leader of Ahl al-Sunnah, Maulana Ilyās 'Aṭṭār al-Qādirī mentions the following admonitory account on page 20 of his booklet entitled '*Kafan Choron Kay Inkishafat*':

Someone's sister passed away. After her burial, her brother realised that a bag containing money had fallen in the grave. Therefore, he returned to his sister's grave. Having dug up her grave to take out the bag, he saw that fire was blazing in the grave. Quickly filling the grave with soil however he could, he went to his mother in a state of grief and asked: "Beloved mother! How were my sister's actions?"

"Son, why do you ask?", she replied.

He answered, "I saw a blazing fire in my sister's grave!"

Hearing this, the mother began to cry and said, “Alas! Your sister was lazy in offering salah and would offer it after the stipulated time (as *qaḍā'*).¹

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Dear Islamic brothers, we learn from this admonitory incident that it is a very grave sin to be lazy in offering salah. To do so is a cause of punishment in the grave. We should also offer the five daily salahs with zeal in congregation in the masjid. Regardless of whether or not it is Ramadan, we should refrain from being lazy in offering salah as this is a sign of the hypocrites. When the hypocrites used to stand for salah with the believers, they would stand lazily as they had no faith in their heart from which they could attain the passion to worship and experience its joy; they only offered salah to show off to people. In verse 142 of Sūrah al-Nisā', Allah has stated regarding them:

وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَىٰ

Translation from *Kanz al-Īmān*: And when they stand up for salah, they therefore unwillingly do it for show.²

Regarding this verse, it is mentioned in *Tafsīr Şirāṭ al-Jinān*:

Signs of laziness include:

- Not offering salah, or
- Only offering salah in the presence of people and not when alone, or

¹ *Mukāshafat al-Qulūb*, p. 189

² *al-Quran*, 4:52

- Offering salah with humility and submission in the presence of people and hastily in solitude, or
- Letting the mind wander here and there during salah and not trying to offer it with full concentration.¹

Alas! In today's day and age, people miss salah merely due to laziness, but the same laziness quickly transforms to vigour when it comes to committing sin. There are even some people who deliberately do not offer salah for weeks or months just because they missed one salah or a few. If an Islamic brother tries to encourage such a person to offer salah, he responds: "إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ | I will start offering salah again from the following Friday", or, "I will start offering salah regularly from the month of Ramadan." Thus, they مَعَادَ اللَّهِ boldly acknowledge without any shame that they will continue to commit the major sin of missing salah until Friday or the month of Ramadan. Undoubtedly, this is the consequence of having no fear of Allah, nor the yearning for worship; otherwise, one who fears Allah in his heart and yearns to worship offers salah regularly at all costs and refrains from the disobedience of Allah. Do not forget that missing salah deliberately is a major sin, haram and an act that leads to Hell. In verse 59 of Sūrah Maryam, Allah Almighty has stated:

فَخَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهْوَاتِ فَسُوفَ يَلْقَوْنَ غِيَاً ﴿٥٩﴾

Translation from Kanz al-Īmān: So, after them in their place came those unworthy successors who missed salah and pursued their lusts; so, they will therefore soon encounter the jungle of Ghayy in Hell (i.e. a dreadful valley in the Hellfire).²

¹ *Ṣirāṭ al-Jinān*, vol. 2, p. 335

² *al-Quran*, 19:59

A horrifying well of a dreadful valley in Hell

Dear Islamic brothers, there is mention of 'غَيِّ' [Ghayy] in the above-mentioned verse; this refers to a valley in Hell. Mufti Muhammad Amjad Ali A'zamī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ has stated:

Ghayy is a valley in Hell, which is hotter and deeper than others. It has a well named 'هَبَّ هَبَّ' [Hab Hab]. When the fire of the Hell is about to extinguish, Allah opens this well due to which the fire of Hell blazes just as before. Allah has stated:

كُلَّمَا خَبَتْ زِدْنَاهُمْ سَعِيرًا ﴿٩٤﴾

Translation from Kanz al-Īmān: Whenever it will be about to extinguish, We will intensify the flame.¹

This well is for those who do not offer salah, adulterers/fornicators, alcoholics, usurers and those who distress their parents.²

The punishment of Hell and afflictions of the world

Dear Islamic brothers, you just heard that there is a valley in Hell named 'Ghayy', which is hotter and deeper than others. When the fire of Hell is about to extinguish, the valley is opened due to which the fire of Hell begins to blaze again. Think for a moment: what will become of the person who is put in this frightful valley for not offering salah?

Remember that Hell is a place where Allah's wrath is manifested. Just as His mercy and blessings have no end and are beyond human intellect and comprehension, similarly, His wrath has no end. The pain experienced in all the following scenarios is insignificant compared to

¹ al-Quran, 17:97

² Bahar-e-Shariat, vol. 1, p. 434

the pain those in Hell will face: the pain of having nails pulled using a plier; the pain of getting stabbed; the pain of being beaten with sticks; the pain of getting runover by a heavy vehicle, causing all the body's bones to crush; the pain of having salt being poured on a wound; the pain of being skinned alive; and the pain of undergoing surgery without anaesthetics used. The same is true of the pain experienced when one has a headache, fever and stomach ache, or the pain one faces when dealing with other potentially more serious medical issues, such as a heart attack, cancer, kidney stones, rashes and severe anxiety. Suppose that all worldly illnesses and calamities afflicted one person, even so they would not be equal to the lightest punishment in Hell.

Lightest punishment in Hell

What is the lightest punishment in Hell? Regarding this, the Prophet ﷺ said:

The person who will be given the lightest punishment in Hell will be made to wear shoes of fire, due to which his brain will boil just as a cauldron boils. He will think that his punishment is the most severe, though he is being afflicted with the lightest punishment.¹

Dear Islamic brothers, fear the punishment of Hell! Have mercy on your weak bodies; get rid of laziness; and while protecting yourself from sins, start offering salah. Alas! Some people miss salah due to being occupied in useless talks and activities, and do not even realise that they are constantly disobeying Allah. Our generous Lord is bestowing abundant blessings upon us day and night without us even asking, but some of us do not even bow down in His court just five times throughout the whole day. Alas! We recite invocations that people inform us of in order to protect ourselves from worldly diseases, worries and troubles, but each one of us should ponder over how much we comply with the command

¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim: 517*

given throughout the Holy Quran by our Creator to offer salah? How many times do we respond to the call to attend the masjid? Everyone should contemplate whether the voice from the masjid that calls us towards success five times a day is only listened to (as a formality) and then ignored, or do we leave every act and head to the masjid? Unfortunately, despite hearing about the punishment of the grave, terrors of Hell and horrors of Judgement Day, many are still heedless. May Allah grant us true awakening from this sleep of heedlessness.

اٰمِيْنَ بِجَاذِ النَّبِيِّ الْاَمِيْنِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

صَلُّوْا عَلَيَّ الْحَبِيْبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيَّ مُحَمَّدٍ

Note that five salah are obligatory daily upon every sane Muslim man and woman who have reached puberty. The one who denies the obligation of salah is out of the fold of Islam even if his name and other acts are like Muslims. The person who considers salah to be obligatory but misses even one salah deliberately is a grave sinner and deserving of punishment in Hell.

The Reviver of Islam, the Imam of Ahl al-Sunnah, Imam Aḥmad Razā Khān رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, has said: “The one who deliberately misses a single salah is worthy of staying in Hell for thousands of years as long as he does not repent and make up for the salah.”¹ Given that a person has to remain in Hell for thousands of years for deliberately missing just one salah, imagine how severe the punishment is for the one who deliberately misses all the salahs of a day or does not offer salah at all.

Even Satan himself seeks refuge from the one who deliberately misses salah. It has been narrated that a person was going somewhere in a jungle. Satan also accompanied him. That individual did not offer a

¹ *al-Fatāwā al-Razawīyyah*, vol. 9, p. 158

single salah throughout the day. Night set in, and Satan started fleeing from him. Surprised, the person asked him as to why he was fleeing, so Satan replied,

I only refused to perform prostration before Adam [عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام] once throughout my life and became accursed, and today, you have missed all five salahs. I am fearful of punishment befalling you and also getting caught up in it.¹

Dear Islamic brothers, we should also be punctual in offering salah and offer all five in congregation in the first row of the masjid with the first takbir. To instil fear of divine punishment and develop the habit of offering salah, let us listen to four warnings for not offering salah:

1. *Sayyidunā* Abū Darda' رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ has said: “My close friend صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ advised me, ‘Do not associate any partner with Allah even if you are cut into pieces and burnt. Do not deliberately miss the obligatory salah, because protection is lifted from the one who deliberately misses salah. And do not drink alcohol, because it is the root of every evil.’”²
2. The one who misses salah will meet Allah in a state that He will inflict His wrath upon him.³
3. The one who misses salah has lowered his family and wealth.⁴
4. The one who deliberately misses salah is not under the protection of Allah.⁵

Mufti Aḥmad Yār Khān Na‘īmī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ has said:

¹ *Durrah al-Nāṣihīn*, p. 144

² *Sunan Ibn Mājah*: 4,034

³ *Majma‘ al-Zawāid*: 2

⁴ *Kanz al-‘Ummāl*: 19,085

⁵ *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*: 13,023

The one who does not offer salah is not under the protection of Allah. By virtue of salah, a person is protected from disasters in the world, a bad ending at the time of death, being unsuccessful in the test of the grave, and from calamities on the Day of Judgement by the grace of Allah.¹

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Dear Islamic brothers, being negligent in offering salah leads to the displeasure of Allah, being worthy of Hell and a lack of blessings in family and wealth. Commanding us to offer salah punctually, Allah Almighty has stated in verse 238 of Sūrah al-Baqarah:

حَفِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ ﴿٢٣٨﴾

Translation from Kanz al-Īmān: Guard all your salahs and (particularly) the middle salah, and stand with courtesy in the majestic court of Allah.²

The importance of salah can also be understood from the fact that the Prophet of Allah, Sayyidunā Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, made a specific *du‘ā* for himself and his offspring to consistently offer salah. This *du‘ā* is mentioned in verse 40 of Sūrah Ibrāhīm:

رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي ۗ رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ ﴿٤٠﴾

Translation from Kanz al-Īmān: 'O my Lord, make me the one who keeps Salah established, and (also) to some of my offspring. O our Lord, and answer my supplication.'

¹ *Mirāt al-Manājīh*, vol. 1, p. 79

² *al-Quran*, 2:238

On the Day of Judgement, the very first thing that people will be questioned about is salah. It is stated in a Hadith, **أَوَّلُ مَا يُحَاسَبُ بِهِ الْعَبْدُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ صَلَاتُهُ** (The first thing a person will be questioned about on the Day of Judgement is his salah).

‘Allāmah ‘Abd al-Ra‘ūf al-Munāwī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ has written in the commentary of this Hadith, “Undoubtedly, salah is a sign of faith and the foundation of worship.”¹ A person came to the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ and asked thrice about the best deed, to which the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied in the same manner three times about salah being the best deed.²

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

O devotees of the Prophet! We too should understand the significance of salah and punctually offer all five in congregation in the masjid’s first row with the first takbir. Not only should we go ourselves, but we should also take our mature children with us, albeit not those who are not. It is stated in volume 16 of *Fatāwā Razawiyah*, pg. 434: “It is prohibited to take immature children to the masjid. A Hadith states **جَنِّبُوا مَسَاجِدَكُمْ صِبْيَانَكُمْ وَمَجَانِينَكُمْ** (Protect your masjids from your immature children and insane people).”³

If we offer salah regularly and take our sensible children to the masjid, they will be inclined towards salah from childhood. Moreover, they will habitually offer salah when they become adults, because something embedded in the minds of children during childhood naturally becomes ingrained in their mind when they grow up.

¹ *al-Taysir*, vol. 1, p. 391

² *Musnad Ahmad*, *Musnad Abdullah Bin ‘Amr Bin al-‘Āṣ*, vol. 2, p. 580, *hadith: 6613*

³ *Sunan Ibn Mājah: 750*

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Three sayings of Allah Almighty about salah

Dear Islamic brothers, despite knowing the importance of salah, if someone does not offer it, he is very unwise and makes himself deserving of Hell. Offering salah is a source of blessings in the world and Hereafter. Not only have we been commanded throughout the Quran to offer salah, but through mention of its reward, we are also encouraged to perform it. Let us listen to three sayings of Allah Almighty in this regard. In verse 162 of Sūrah al-Nisā', Allah has stated:

وَالْمُقِيمِينَ الصَّلَاةَ وَالْمُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أُولَٰئِكَ سَنُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٦٢﴾

Translation from Kanz al-Īmān: And those who keep salah established, and give zakah, and believe in Allah and the Last Day; to such (people), We shall soon give a great reward.¹

In verses 3 and 4 of Sūrah al-Anfāl, Allah has stated:

الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيَتَّزِقُونَ زَقَاتِهِمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ﴿٣﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا لَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَ

مَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٤﴾

Translation from Kanz al-Īmān: Those who keep salah established and spend some in Our path from what We have provided for them. Only these are true Muslims; for them are ranks with their Lord, and forgiveness and honourable sustenance.²

¹ al-Quran, 4:162

² al-Quran, 8:3-4

In verse 12 of Surah al-Mā'idah, Allah has stated:

وَقَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ لَئِنْ أَقَمْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَيْتُمُ الزَّكَاةَ وَآمَنْتُمْ بِرُسُلِي وَعَزَّرْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَقْرَضْتُمُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ

Translation from Kanz al-Īmān: And Allah said, 'Indeed, I am with you. Undoubtedly, if you keep salah established, and pay zakah, and believe in My Messengers and respect them, and lend Allah a good loan; so, I will definitely remove your sins, and I will definitely admit you to Gardens; beneath which rivers flow.'¹

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ How great are Allah's bounties that lie in store for those who offer salah! In some instances, they are given glad tidings of forgiveness, and in other instances, they are given news of immense reward. Hadiths are replete with encouragement to offer salah. If we become engaged in preparing for salah as soon as its time starts by leaving all our worldly activities and then offer it with utmost humility and presence of the heart, not only will we attain immense worldly goodness, but we will also attain its benefit in the hereafter: salah will become a means of our forgiveness and salvation on the Day of Judgement.

Forgiveness for the one who offered salah with humility and presence of heart

The Prophet ﷺ has stated,

Allah has made five salahs obligatory. It is upon Allah's mercy to forgive the one who performs wudu for them properly, offers them at their appointed times, and performs their *rukū'* and *sujūd*

¹ al-Quran, 5:12

with humility. And the one who does not perform them, Allah has no reward for him; He may forgive him or punish him.

Sins are forgiven due to salah

O devotees of the Prophet! The fortunate Muslims who offer all five salahs are forgiven their sins. The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ has said: “If any of you has a stream in his courtyard and he bathes in it five times a day, will there be any dirt left on him?”

The people replied, “No.”

The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ then said: “Salah washes away sins just as water washes away dirt.”¹

Each salah is an expiation for the past sins

Suppose that someone who offers salah regularly commits a sin between two salahs; the next salah becomes an expiation for the sins, as Allah Almighty forgives the sins which are committed between two salahs.

Sayyidunā Hārith رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ has narrated: “One day, we and *Sayyidunā* ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ were sitting when a muezzin came. *Sayyidunā* ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ asked for water and performed wudu.

He then said: “I have seen the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ performing wudu in the same manner, and I have heard the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ saying, ‘The person who performs wudu the way I have performed this wudu and then offers Ḥuḥr Salah, Allah forgives his sins, that is, the sins which were committed between Fajr Salah and Ḥuḥr Salah. When he offers ‘Asr Salah, Allah forgives the sins committed between Ḥuḥr Salah and ‘Asr Salah. When he offers Maghrib Salah, Allah forgives the sins committed between ‘Asr Salah and Maghrib Salah. When he offers ‘Ishā’ Salah,

¹ *Sunan Ibn Mājah: 1,397*

Allah forgives the sins committed between Maghrib Salah and ‘Ishā’ Salah. Then, he may spend the whole night lying down, and when he performs wudu after getting up and offers Fajr Salah, the sins committed between ‘Ishā’ Salah and Fajr Salah are forgiven. These are the virtuous deeds which remove evil.¹

There is cure in salah

O devotees of the Prophet! Allah Almighty cures from illness the fortunate people who offer all five salahs due to their blessing. Nowadays, such new diseases are appearing, the names of which have never been heard before. Despite spending thousands on treatment, these diseases are only increasing. If we act upon the sayings of Allah and His Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ and offer salah punctually, we can gain protection from illnesses. **إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ**

The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ has said: **إِنَّ فِي الصَّلَاةِ شِفَاءً** (Indeed, there is cure in salah).² Therefore, regardless of whether we are ill or healthy, we should be punctual in relation to salah in every state and also strive to make our family members habitual in offering salah.

Blessings in sustenance

O devotees of the Prophet! Allah places blessings in the sustenance of the fortunate people who offer all five salahs. In today’s challenging age, despite spending the whole day earning money, many are seen complaining: “I earn such and such amount of money, but even then, there is no blessing in it.” Remember, offering all five salahs properly with humility and focus whilst observing *t‘adīl arkān*—pausing in *rukū‘*, *sujūd*, *qawmah* and *jalsah* for at least the duration in which **سُبْحَانَ اللهِ** can

¹ *al-Aḥādīth al-Mukhtārah*: 324

² *Sunan Ibn Mājah*: 3,458

be said once—and all the *wājibāt*, Sunnahs and manners is a source of blessing for one’s livelihood.¹

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Dear Islamic brothers, salah is a great form of worship. For a believer, salah is an act that leads one towards Paradise. Paradise becomes *wājib* for the one who offers two units of salah with utmost humility and full concentration. Two units of salah are better than this world and whatever it contains. Salah is an action beloved to Allah Almighty. In exchange for every *sajdah* in salah, one righteous deed is written down and one sin is erased, and there is an increase in rank by one. Someone who offers salah will enter Paradise on the Day of Judgement with ease. Salah leads to the removal of sins and washes away their effect. One salah does away with the sins committed between it and the previous salah. The one who offers salah spends the night in goodness. Salah eliminates immorality. The infallible angels seek forgiveness from Allah Almighty for the one who offers salah. The one who offers salah remains under the protection of Allah Almighty. Salah supplicates for the protection of the one who offers it. An individual who offers salah is a complete believer and will be rewarded in full. Salah disgraces Satan.

Let us all make the intention that from now onwards, we will not miss any salah. **إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ** We will offer all five salahs in the masjid in congregation in the first row. **إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ** We will encourage others to offer salah as well. **إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ** We will fill the masjids and strive for this cause. **إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ** In order to adopt this mindset, we will strengthen our affiliation with the Islamic environment of Dawat-e-Islami—the movement of the Prophet’s devotees—and actively take part in the 12 Madani activities

¹ *Rah-e-Ilm, p. 501*

of the *zeli halqah*. **رَبِّ شَاءَ اللهُ** We will continue acting upon pious deeds and travel with the Madani *qāfilāh*.

Encouragement for pious deed 33

Dear Islamic brothers, the blessed month of Ramadan has commenced. To attain the blessings of this month and spend it performing righteous deeds, affiliate yourselves with the religious environment of Dawat-e-Islami, actively participate in the 12 religious works, travel with the Madani *qāfilāhs* and act upon pious deeds. **الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ** The blessings of Ramadan are countless. The passion for worship increases in this month. Whether it be the young or old, all turn towards the masjid. To further enhance this passion, act upon pious deed 33 from the 72 pious deeds granted by the renowned spiritual guide and leader of Ahl al-Sunnah, Mawlānā Ilyās ‘Aṭṭār al-Qādirī **دَامَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمْ الْعَالِيَةِ**, which is: “*Today, have you offered Tahajjud Salah; or in the case of not having slept at night, have you offered salah al-layl?*”

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Dear Islamic brothers, we were listening to the importance and virtues of salah. Do not forget that salah is a pillar of Islam. Salah saves one from illnesses. Salah is a means of gaining blessings in sustenance. Salah not only saves one from the punishment of the grave, but it is also a source of light in the dark grave. Wherever the commanded to offer salah is given in the Quran and Hadith, it refers to offering it with all its *farāiḍ* and *wājibāt*. For men, one of the *wājib* acts is to perform salah in congregation. Hadith are replete with mention of virtues for the one who offers salah in congregation. Let us listen to three sayings of the Prophet **صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ** for purposes of encouragement in this regard:

1. Salah in congregation is 27 times greater than the salah offered alone.¹
2. Whoever performed wudu properly, then set out to perform the obligatory salah and offered it with the imam, his sins will be forgiven.²
3. When a person offers salah in congregation and then asks Allah to fulfil his need, Allah does not like for that person to return before his need is fulfilled.³

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Dear Islamic brothers, you heard about the immense blessings attained by the one offering salah in congregation. Hence, we should also develop the habit of offering the five daily salahs in the masjid in congregation in the first row. At times, many disabled and elderly people come to the masjid with great difficulty to offer salah in congregation and offer it in a manner that is easy for them. If such individuals can give preference to offering salah in congregation despite facing great hardship, we should show even greater enthusiasm for offering salah in congregation.

In worldly matters, many people try to surpass each other. For example, if we see a mansion, we desire to construct something similar; if we see someone wearing fine clothes, we desire to wear the same; when we see someone's brand new car, we yearn to have the same; when we see someone's flourishing business, we too desire becoming rich. In short, we have become so greedy for worldly wealth that we do not tire despite striving for it day and night. If only after seeing someone doing

¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 645

² *Shu'ab al-Īmān*: 2,727

³ *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā'*: 10,591

virtuous deeds, we also become habitual in doing so. If only after seeing others go to the masjid, we too yearn to perform the five daily salahs in congregation. If only upon seeing the love that others possess for the masjid, we also become those who have love for the masjid. **أَلْحَدِّثْهُ**
 The Reviver of Islam, the Imam of Ahl al-Sunnah, Imam Aḥmad Razā Khān **رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ**, undertook many journeys and faced great hardships during them, yet he always offered salah in congregation. In this regard, let us listen to a faith-refreshing story.

The imam's love for salah

At the age of 52, Imam Aḥmad Razā Khān **رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ** travelled for Hajj for the second time. After performing the Hajj rites, he fell so ill that he was bedridden for more than two months. When he recovered to some degree, he prepared to visit the blessed shrine of the Prophet **صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ**. As such, he left by boat via Jeddah and reached Rabigh after three days, and from there, he travelled on a camel towards Madinah. On the way, when he reached Bir al-Sheikh, his destination was a short distance away. However, there was little time left for Fajr Salah. The camel riders intended to stop at the destination, but there was a strong possibility that the time for Fajr Salah time would elapse by then. Observing this situation, Imam Aḥmad Razā Khān **رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ**, along with his fellow travellers, stopped there and the caravan left.

The imam had a bucket (made from a specific type of jute), but there was no rope, and the well was quite deep too. Therefore, he tied *'imāmahs* together to withdraw water, made ablution and offered Fajr Salah within its stipulated time. However, he was now concerned about the resultant weakness from his lengthy illness and how it would prevent him from walking the remaining distance. But then he turned around and

saw an unknown camel owner who was waiting with his camel. Thus, he praised Allah and mounted the camel.¹

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

سُبْحَانَ اللهِ Dear Islamic brothers, such was Imam Aḥmad Razā Khān's devotion for salah and acts of worship, that despite the difficulties incurred from a lengthy illness, extreme weakness and undergoing a strenuous journey, he let the caravan depart but did not leave out the most superior act of worship: salah. We should offer salah punctually regardless of whether it is an occasion of sorrow or joy. Those who do not know how to offer salah should not feel ashamed at all in learning it. As for those who know how to offer salah but do not offer it and keep falling prey to satanic whispers such as, "I am a sinful person, how can I stand in the court of Allah?" or "Let us become pious first and grow a beard, then we will start offering salah", such people should ignore these satanic whispers and start offering salah. إِنَّ شَاءَ اللهُ By virtue of its blessings, they will gain success in refraining from sins. Allah Almighty says in verse 45 of Sūrah al-ʿAnkabūt:

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ط

Translation from Kanz al-Īmān: Indeed, salah stops indecency and evil.²

Commenting on the above-mentioned Quranic verse, Mufti Naʿīm al-Dīn Murādbādī رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ has stated:

The one who is punctual in salah and performs it properly, ultimately gives up the evils he was engaged in.

It is narrated from *Sayyidunā* Anas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ that a young man from the Ansar who used to commit many major sins would offer salah

¹ *Malfuzaat-e-Ala Hazrat*, p. 217

² *al-Quran*: 29:45

with the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ. A complaint was lodged against him to the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and upon this, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “His salah will prevent him from these evils one day.” Hence, very soon after, he repented and became a better person.¹

A thief became a saint due to the blessing of salah

Let us listen to an amazing story in this regard:

It is mentioned that a thief entered the house of *Sayyidatunā* Rābi‘ah al-Baṣriyyah رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهَا at night. He searched through the whole house but could not find anything except for a vessel.

When he intended to leave, she said: “If you are a smart thief, then you will not leave empty handed.”

“I could not find anything”, he responded.

She replied: “O poor man! Perform wudu using this vessel, enter the room and offer two units of salah. You will leave from here with something.”

He performed wudu as per her instructions. When he stood for salah, *Sayyidatunā* Rābi‘ah رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهَا supplicated in the following manner: “O Allah Almighty! This man came to my house but could not find anything. Now, I have made him stand in Your court. Do not deprive him of Your grace and mercy.”

When he completed his salah, he experienced the joy of worship. Therefore, he remained engaged in offering salah until the last part of the night.

¹ *Khazāin al-‘Irfān*

When the time of suhoor arrived, *Sayyidatuna* Rābi‘ah al-Baṣriyyah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا heard him scolding his *nafs* in the state of sajdah saying: “When my Lord will ask me, ‘Were you not ashamed of disobeying Me? You used to conceal sins from people, but now you are present in My court with piles of sins!’ When He will manifest His wrath before me and distance me from His merciful court, what answer will I give?”

Sayyidatunā Rābi‘ah al-Baṣriyyah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا asked him: “O brother! How was your night?”

He said: “It went well. I remained standing with humility in the court of my merciful Lord, and he reformed my crookedness, accepted my excuse, forgave my sins, and made me accomplish my purpose.” The individual then left with an anxiousness look on his face.

Sayyidatunā Rābi‘ah al-Baṣriyyah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا raised her hands towards the sky and pleaded: “O generous Lord! That individual stood in Your court once and You accepted him, whereas I have been standing before You for a long time. Have You also accepted me too?”

Suddenly, she heard the following with the ears of her heart: “O Rābi‘ah! We accepted him because of you, and it was because of you that We blessed him with Our closeness.”¹

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

O devotees of the *awliyā*! You have heard how salah is such a beautiful form of worship, for when a thief came with the intention to steal and instead stood for salah upon the instruction of a pious person of Allah—Rābi‘ah al-Baṣriyyah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا—he was so engrossed in the joy of salah that he remained occupied in salah for the entire night and came onto the right path in the morning by repenting from his sins.

¹ *al-Rawd al-Fāiq*, p. 15

Unfortunately, there are a number of people in our society who despite offering salah, do not refrain from haram and impermissible acts. Why is this the case? Dear Islamic brothers, it is possible that we are not mindful of the outward and inner Sunnahs and manners of salah, which has kept us deprived of the blessings of salah until now. If we performed wudu properly and offered salah with humility and submissiveness while abiding by all the outward and inner Sunnahs and manners, we too would see the blessings of salah. Alas! A great number of Muslims do not offer salah at all. Moreover, those who do offer it, a lot of them do not know the basic rulings of salah. Due to this, they make mistakes in their salah which leads to them wasting it. Therefore, along with making a firm intention to punctually offer salah, we should also pay full attention towards offering salah correctly so that it is not wasted. To avoid making mistakes in salah, to learn its correct method and important rulings, read the book '*Laws of Salah*' written by the renowned spiritual guide and leader of Ahl al-Sunnah, Mawlānā Ilyās 'Aṭṭār al-Qādirī دَامَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمُ الْعَالِيَةِ and travel with the Madani *qāfilāh*. Participating in the 7-day *Blessings of Salah* course will also prove to be extremely beneficial. Besides this, affiliate yourselves with the Islamic environment of Dawat-e-Islami and offer your services to its various departments.

Department for Ramadan I'tikāf

Performing *i'tikāf* in Ramadan is a Sunnah of our Prophet ﷺ. Under the supervision of Dawat-e-Islami, this beautiful Sunnah is acted upon in Pakistan and in many masjids throughout the world in the form of a collective *i'tikāf* for the entire month of Ramadan and also the last 10 days of Ramadan. For this purpose, an entire department called '*Ramadan I'tikāf*' has been established. The responsibilities of this department include running the entire *i'tikāf* according to the month's schedule. This includes teaching participants about wudu, ghusl, salah and other necessary rulings alongside offering the five daily salah,

Tahajjud, Ishrāq Salah, Chāsht Salah, Awwābīn and Salah al-Tawbah. Additionally, they are taught various supplications and Sunnahs. They also get to listen to faith-enhancing Sunnah-inspired speeches delivered by trained *muballighs*. At the time of iftar, spiritually uplifting supplications take place. Moreover, the highlight of the *i'tikāf* is that the renowned spiritual guide and leader of Ahl al-Sunnah, Mawlānā Ilyās ‘Aṭṭār al-Qādirī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَالِيَةِ, conducts Madani Muzakaraha.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Sunnahs and manners of *i'tikāf*

Dear Islamic brothers, let us listen to a few Madani pearls about the Sunnahs and manners of *i'tikāf*. First, listen to the following two sayings of the beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

- The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ has said: “Whoever observes *i'tikāf* with faith and the intention to gain reward, all of his previous sins will be forgiven.”¹
- The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ has said: “The one who has observed *i'tikāf* for 10 days in Ramadan is like the one who has performed Hajj and Umrah twice.”²
- *I'tikāf* in the last ten days of Ramadan is Sunnah mu'akkadah *‘alā al-Kifāyah*. This means that if everyone left it out, then everyone will be questioned; and if one person from the whole city observes it, then all will be absolved of its duty.³

¹ *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaghīr*: 8,480

² *Shu‘ab al-Īmān*: 3,966

³ *Faizan-e-Ramadan*, p. 235

Announcement

The remaining Sunnahs and etiquettes of *i'tikāf* will be mentioned in the study circles. Please take part in them to learn more.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ