

محاضرات تعظيم قدر الصلاة

**Lectures on Magnifying the
Status of Prayer**

Lectures on Magnifying the Status of Prayer

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Introduction

Indeed, all praise is for Allah. We praise Him, we seek His help, and we ask for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil of our own selves and from the evil of our deeds. Whomever Allah guides, none can misguide, and whomever He allows to go astray, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, alone, with no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and His Messenger.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ وَأَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah, and let every soul consider what it has sent forth. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is All-Aware of what you do.}

[Surat al-Hashr: 18]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.}

[Surat Āl 'Imrān: 102]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ۖ 70 يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا 71﴾

{O you who believe, fear Allah and say what is right,

He will guide you to righteous deeds and forgive your sins. Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger will surely achieve a supreme triumph.}

[Surat al-Ahzāb: 70-71]

Indeed, the status of prayer is tremendous with Allah: it is the second pillar of Islam and among its great foundations. It is the backbone of the religion, without which a Muslim's religion does not stand. It is the first matter for which the servants will be called to account on the Day of Resurrection. It is the coolness of the eyes of the lovers and the comfort of the souls of the believers. Allah Almighty has bestowed upon it the status, honor, exaltation, and sanctity that He has not granted to any other act of worship: He prescribed it from above the seven heavens, enjoined it upon all His Prophets and noble Messengers, and it was the final commandment of the Seal of the Prophets (ﷺ) and the leader of the Messengers.

Dear reader, you will find in this book what Allah Almighty has made easy to compile regarding the veneration of this great rite, together with reminders of its importance and a clarification of its impact on the lives of the Muslims.

I implore Allah, the Most Generous, to make it a treasure for us and for all who cooperated with us in preparing it, publishing it, and benefiting from it.

Makkah, Abdul-Karim ibn 'Awad al-Sulami
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Contents of the book title

First: Linguistically, “ta’zeem”: veneration. It is the verbal noun of ‘azzama, meaning magnifying and veneration. To “ta’zeem” something is to magnify it, declare its greatness, and honor it.

Second: Salāh linguistically: It is a verbal noun derived from the expression “sallā salātan”², and the word “Salāh” bears three meanings:

It is used to mean supplication, as He Almighty says:

﴿وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ صَلَاتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَهُمْ﴾

{And pray for them. Your prayer is a source of comfort for them.} [Surat at-Tawbah: 103] That is: supplicate for them, for your supplication for them calms their souls and pleases them; and among this is his saying: "If one of you is invited to a meal, let him answer the invitation; and if he is fasting, let him supplicate."³ i.e., let him supplicate for the host for forgiveness and blessing.

And prayer was named supplication because supplication is one of its components⁴.

¹ "Al-'Ayn" (2/91) and "Al-Misbāh al-Munīr fī Gharīb Al-Sharh Al-Kabīr" (2/417).

² Al-Mufradāt Fi Gharīb Al-Qur'an, (p. 491).

³ Narrated by At-Tirmidhi (3/ 141); classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albāni.

⁴ See: "Al-'Ayn" (7/153), "Tahdhīb al-Lughah" (12/166), and "An-Nihāyah fī Gharīb al-Hadīth wa Al-Athar" (3/50).

It also carries the meaning of mercy, blessing, and seeking forgiveness. Allah Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ﴾

{Indeed, Allah sends His blessings upon the Prophet, and His angels pray for him.} [Surat al-Ahzāb: 56] Also the Hadīth in which the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"اللهم صل على آل فلان "

"Allāhumma salli ‘ala āli fulān (O Allah, bless the family of so-and-so)."¹ Meaning: have mercy upon them².

And he also says:

"مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمٍ يُصَلِّي عَلَيَّ، إِلَّا صَلَّتُ عَلَيْهِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ مَا صَلَّى عَلَيَّ، فَلْيُقِلَّ الْعَبْدُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ أَوْ لِيُكْثِرْ "

"There is no Muslim who invokes peace and blessings upon me except that the angels invoke blessings upon him for as long as he invokes peace and blessings upon me. Let the servant then do little of that or much of it."³ i.e., invoke mercy upon him and seek forgiveness for him.

It is also used in the sense of praise; as in His saying, Exalted be He:

﴿أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ﴾

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (2/129).

² "Lisān Al-‘Arab" by Ibn Manzhūr: (14/465).

³ Narrated by Ibn Mājah (1/294); classified as Hasan (good) by Al-Albāni.

{Upon them are blessings and mercy from their Lord.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 157] i.e., praise for them from Allah Almighty.

Third: Salāh technically: It is an act of worship consisting of specific words and actions, which begins with Takbīr and concludes with Taslīm.¹

Fourth: What is meant by holding prayer in high esteem: It is knowing its status and importance, increasing love for it in the heart, and establishing it as Allah Almighty has willed.

Some verses of prayer in the Qur'an

The verses concerning prayer in the Qur'an come in several meanings, including:

Verses enjoin establishing prayer and maintaining it:

Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ 43﴾

{And establish prayer, give zakah, and bow [to Allah] with those who bow.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 43]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ 110﴾

{And establish prayer and give zakah. Whatever good you send forth for yourselves, you will find it with Allah, for Allah is All-Seeing of what you do.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 110]

¹ Kashshāf al-Qinā' 'an Matn al-Iqnā' (1/221); Ash-Sharh Al-Mumtī' 'Ala Zād Al-Mustaqni' (4/89).

{حُفِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ} (238)

{Be mindful of the prayers, especially the middle prayer; and stand before Allah in complete devotion.}

[Surat al-Baqarah: 238]

Allah Almighty says:

{أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ قِيلَ لَهُمْ كُفُّوا أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتُوا الزَّكَاةَ فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَخْشَوْنَ النَّاسَ كَخَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ أَوْ أَشَدَّ خَشْيَةً وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا لِمَ كَتَبْتَ عَلَيْنَا الْقِتَالَ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنَا إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ قُلْ مَتَّعَ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلًا وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا} (77)

{Have you not seen those who were told, “Restrain your hands [from fighting], establish prayer, and give zakah”? However, when fighting was ordained for them, a group of them feared people as one should fear Allah or even more. They said, “Our Lord, why have You ordained fighting for us? If only you had spared us for a little while.” Say, “The enjoyment of this world is little, and the Hereafter is better for those who fear Allah. And you will not be wronged, even as much as a thread of a date stone.”} [Surat an-Nisā': 77]

Allah Almighty says:

{فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَّوْفُوعًا} (103)

{When you have finished the prayer, remember Allah, standing, sitting, or lying down. But when you are safe again, establish regular prayer. Indeed,

prayer is prescribed for the believers at specific times.} [Surat an-Nisā': 103]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَأَنْ أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّقُوا وَهُوَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ 72﴾

{and to establish prayer and fear Him, for it is He to Whom you will all be gathered.} [Surat al-An'ām: 72]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ وَأَخِيهِ أَنْ تَبَوَّءَا لِقَوْمِكَمَا بِمِصْرَ بُيُوتًا وَأَجْعَلُوا بُيُوتَكُمْ قِبْلَةً وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ 87﴾

{We inspired Moses and his brother, "Provide houses for your people in Egypt, and make your houses face the qiblah direction, establish prayer, and give glad tidings to the believers."} [Surat Yūnus: 87]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفِي النَّهَارِ وَزُلْفَا مِنْ اللَّيْلِ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ذَلِكَ ذَكَرَىٰ لِلذَّكَرِينَ 114﴾

{Establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at some hours of the night. Indeed, good deeds wipe out evil deeds. This is a reminder for those who are mindful.} [Surat Hūd: 114]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿قُلْ لِعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا يُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَا بَيْعَ فِيهِ وَلَا جُلٍّ 31﴾

{Tell My slaves who believe to establish prayer and spend from what We have provided for them, secretly and openly, before there comes a Day when

there will be no bargaining or friendship.} [Surat Ibrāhīm: 31]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْءَانَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْءَانَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا 78﴾

{Establish prayer at the decline of the sun until the darkness of the night, and the recitation of dawn [prayer], for the recitation of dawn is ever witnessed [by the angels].} [Surat al-Isrā': 78]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي 14﴾

{Indeed, I am Allah; none has the right to be worshiped except Me, so worship Me and establish prayer to remember Me.} [Surat Taha: 14]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ مِّلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ هُوَ سَمَّاكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَفِي هَذَا لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَى وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ 78﴾

{Strive in the cause of Allah in a due manner. He has chosen you and has not imposed upon you any hardship in religion — the faith of your father Abraham. He named you as Muslims earlier and in this [Qur'an] so that the Messenger might be a witness over you and you might be witnesses over mankind. So establish prayer, give zakah, and hold fast to Allah, for He is your Protector; what an

excellent Protector and an excellent Helper!} [Surat al-Hajj: 78]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ﴾ (56)

{Establish prayer, give zakah and obey the Messenger, so that you may be shown mercy.} [Surat an-Nūr: 78]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْتَهِي عَنْ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ﴾ (45)

{Recite [O Prophet] what is revealed to you of the Book, and establish prayer, for indeed prayer restrains one from immoral acts and wickedness. Indeed, the remembrance of Allah is of greater merit. And Allah knows all that you do.} [Surat al-‘Ankabūt: 45]

The Almighty Allah said:

﴿مُنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ وَاتَّقُوهُ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُرْكَبِينَ﴾ (31)

{Turn to Him [in repentance] and fear Him, and establish prayer, and do not be among those who associate partners with Allah,} [Surat ar-Rūm: 31]

And Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَأَقِمْنَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَيْنِ الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِعْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ﴾

{Establish prayer and give Zakah; and obey Allah and His Messenger.} [Surat al-Ahzāb: 33]

And Allah Almighty said:

﴿ءَأَسَفَقْتُمْ أَنْ تُقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقْتُمْ فَإِذْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَتَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾ (13)

{Are you afraid of giving charities before your consultations with him? If you are unable to do so, and Allah has pardoned you, then establish prayer and give zakah, and obey Allah and His Messenger. And Allah is All-Aware of what you do.} [Surat al-Mujādalah: 13]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَقُومُ أَدْنَىٰ مِنْ ثُلُثَيِ اللَّيْلِ وَنِصْفَهُ وَثُلُثَهُ وَطَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ مَعَكَ
وَاللَّهُ يَقْدِرُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ عِلْمَ أَن لَّنْ نَّحْصُوهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ فَاقْرَءُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِّنَ
الْقُرْآنِ عِلْمَ أَن سَيَكُونُ مِنْكُم مَّرْضَىٰ وَءَاخَرُونَ يَضْرِبُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَبْتَغُونَ
مِن فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَءَاخَرُونَ يَقْتُلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَاقرءوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنْهُ وَأَقِيمُوا
الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَقْرِضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ مِّنْ خَيْرٍ
تَّجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرٌ وَأَعْظَمُ أَجْرًا وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ 20﴾

{Indeed, your Lord knows that you stand up in prayer for nearly two-thirds of the night, or half of it, or one-third of it, as do others among your companions. Allah determines the night and the day; He knows that you cannot keep an accurate count of it, so He pardoned you. Recite then as much of the Qur'an as is easy for you. He knows that there are some among you who will be ill, and others traveling in the land, seeking the grace of Allah, and others fighting in Allah's way. So recite as much of it as is easy for you; establish prayer and give zakah; and lend to Allah a goodly loan. Whatever good you send forth for yourselves, you will find it with Allah, much better in condition and much greater in reward. And seek forgiveness of Allah, for indeed

Allah is All-Forgiving, Most-Merciful.} [Surat al-Muzzammil: 20]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا
الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ ۝5﴾

{Although they were commanded only to worship Allah with sincere devotion to Him, being inclined to the true faith, and to establish prayer and give zakah; that is the true religion.} [Surat al-Bayyinah: 5]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَأَنْحَرْ ۝2﴾

{so pray and offer sacrifice to your Lord alone.} [Surat al-Kawthar: 2]

Qur'anic Verses Clarifying the Effect of Prayer:

Allah Almighty says that prayer protects against fear and grief.

Allah Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ
عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ۝277﴾

{Those who believe, do righteous deeds, establish prayer, and give zakah, will have their reward with their Lord; and they will have no fear, nor will they grieve.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 277]

The worshiper attains Allah's mercy, the angels invoke Allah's forgiveness for him, and Allah Almighty brings him out of darkness into light.

Allah Almighty says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا 41 وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا 42 هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَلِّيْ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَلَائِكَتُهُ لِيُخْرِجَكُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَكَانَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا 43 تَحِيَّتُهُمْ يَوْمَ يَلْقَوْنَهُ سَلَامٌ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَرِيمًا 44﴾

{O you who believe, remember Allah much, and glorify Him morning and evening.

It is He Who confers blessings upon you, and His angels pray for you, so that He may bring you out of the depths of darkness into the light. And He is Most Merciful to the believers.

Their greeting on the Day they meet Him will be, "Peace," and He has prepared for them a generous reward.} [Surat Al-Qalam: 41-44] At-Tabari (may Allah have mercy upon him) said regarding the meaning of His statement:

﴿وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا﴾

{And glorify Him morning and evening.} i.e., offer to Him in the morning: the Fajr prayer, and in the evening: the 'Asr prayer¹.

Prayer is a cause for being admitted to Paradise, salvation from the Fire, and the attainment of the highest ranks.

Allah Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ 2 الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ 3 أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا لَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ 4﴾

{The true believers are those whose hearts are filled with awe when Allah is mentioned, and their

¹ Tafsir At-Tabari (20/279).

faith increases when His verses are recited to them, and they put their trust only in their Lord;

those who establish prayer and spend out of what We have provided for them.

Such are the true believers; they will have high ranks with their Lord, and forgiveness and honorable provision.} [Surat al-Anfāl: 2-4]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً وَيَدْرَءُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةِ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَقَبَى الدَّارِ 22 جَنَّتٌ عَدْنٌ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَن صَلَحَ مِن ءَابَائِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّتِهِمْ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن كُلِّ بَابٍ 23﴾

{And those who observe patience, seeking the pleasure of their Lord, and establish prayer, and spend from what We have provided for them, secretly and in public, and repel evil with good — it is they who will have the final abode,

Gardens of Eternity, which they will enter together with their righteous parents, their spouses and their offspring. Angels will enter upon them from every gate,} [Surat ar-Ra'd: 22-23]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ 1 الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ 2 وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ 3 وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ 4 وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ 5 إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ 6 فَمَن ابْتَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ 7 وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمْتِنَتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ 8 وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَوَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ 9 أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ 10 الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ 11﴾

{The believers have attained true success:

those who humble themselves in their prayers,
and those who turn away from all that is vain,
and those who give zakah,
and those who guard their sexual desires,
except with their wives or slave women they
may own, for then they are free of blame.

But whoever seeks anything beyond that, it is
they who are the transgressors.

And those who are faithful to their trusts and
pledges,

and those who properly observe their prayers.

Such will be the inheritors

who will inherit Paradise; they will abide
therein forever.} [Surat al-Mu'minūn: 1-11].

Allah has linked success to it.

Allah Almighty says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ارْكَعُوا وَاسْجُدُوا وَاعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ وَافْعَلُوا الْخَيْرَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

{77

{O you who believe, bow down and prostrate,
worship Your Lord and do good, so that you may
succeed.} [Surat al-Hajj: 77]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ 1 الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خُشِعُونَ 2﴾

{The believers have attained true success:

those who humble themselves in their prayers,}

[Surat al-Mu'minūn: 1-2]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى 14 وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى 15﴾

{Indeed, he who purifies himself will attain success,

and remembers his Lord's Name and prays.
[Surat al-A'la: 14-15]

Clarification that prayer restrains one from immoral acts and wickedness.

Allah Almighty says:

﴿أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ
وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ 45﴾

{Recite [O Prophet] what is revealed to you of the Book, and establish prayer, for indeed prayer restrains one from immoral acts and wickedness. Indeed, the remembrance of Allah is of greater merit. And Allah knows all that you do.} [Surat al-'Ankabūt: 45]

It trains the worshiper in strong determination, whose manifestations include: high aspiration, strength of will, manhood, chivalry, activeness, and nobility.

As Allah Almighty said in the words of Luqman:

﴿يَبْنِي أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ وَامْرُءٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَنَّهُ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأَصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَكَ إِنَّ
ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزَمِ الْأُمُورِ 17﴾

{“O my dear son, establish prayer, enjoin what is right, and forbid what is wrong, and be patient with whatever befalls you. This is a matter of firm resolve.} [Surat Luqmān: 17].

Prayer is among the signs of allegiance between the believers and a condition for brotherhood in religion.

Allah Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رُكْعُونَ 55﴾

{Your only allies are Allah, His Messenger, and those believers who establish prayer and give zakah with humble submission.} [Surat al-Mā'idah: 55]

Allah Almighty says:

﴿فَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتَوْا الزَّكَاةَ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَنُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ 11﴾

{Yet if they repent, establish, prayer and give zakah, then they are your brothers in faith. We explain the verses in detail for people who know.} [Surat at-Tawbah: 11]

Prayer is a means whereby sins are forgiven and their effects upon the soul and upon humanity are removed.

Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَيْ النَّهَارِ وَزُلَفًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرَىٰ لِلذَّكْرَيْنِ 114﴾

{Establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at some hours of the night. Indeed, good deeds wipe out evil deeds. This is a reminder for those who are mindful.} [Surat Hūd: 114]

Allah Almighty praises the believers—the praying people, those who bow and prostrate—and gives them glad tidings.

Allah Almighty says:

﴿الَّذِينَ الْعَبْدُونَ أَلْحَمِدُونَ أَلَسْخُورَ الرَّكْعُونَ أَلَسْجُدُونَ أَلْأَمْرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَالنَّاهُونَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَالْحَافِظُونَ لِحُدُودِ اللَّهِ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ 112

{[Those believers] are the ones who repent, who constantly worship, who praise Him, who fast, who bow down and prostrate, who enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, and who observe the limits set by Allah; give glad tidings to the believers.} [Surat at-Tawbah: 112].

﴿إِنَّمَا يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهَا خَرُّوا سُجَّدًا وَسَبَّحُوا بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُمْ لَا
يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ﴾ 15

{The true believers in Our verses are only those who, when they are reminded of them, fall in prostration and glorify their Lord with praise, and they do not show arrogance.}

[Surat as-Sajdah: 15]

Verses alluding to the prayer of the Prophets (peace be upon them) and of former nations:

Allah Almighty has informed us in the Noble Qur'an that He ordained these prayers upon all nations and prophets (peace be upon them) before our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

Allah Almighty said:

﴿أَوَلَيْكَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ ذُرِّيَةِ آدَمَ وَمِمَّنْ حَمَلْنَا مَعَ نُوحٍ وَمِنْ
ذُرِّيَةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْرَءِيلَ وَمِمَّنْ هَدَيْنَا وَاجْتَبَيْنَا إِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُ الرَّحْمَنِ خَرُّوا

سُجَّدًا وَبُكْيًا 58 فَخَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهْوَاتِ
فَسَوْفَ يَلْقَوْنَ غَيًّا 59 إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ
وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا 60﴾

{These are the prophets whom Allah has favored from among the descendants of Adam, and from those whom We carried with Noah [in the Ark], and from the descendants of Abraham and Israel [i.e., Jacob], and from those whom We guided and chose. Whenever the verses of the Most Compassionate were recited to them, they fell down in prostration, weeping.

But they were succeeded by generations who neglected prayer and pursued their desires; so they will meet their doom,

except those who repent and believe and do righteous deeds — it is they who will enter Paradise, and they will not be wronged in the least.}

[Surat Maryam: 58-60]

Ibrāhim (Abraham) (peace be upon him).

Allah Almighty has informed us that He prescribed prayer upon Abraham (peace be upon him), and that when Abraham settled his offspring in Makkah, he chose, among his supplications for himself and his offspring, the establishment of prayer. Allah Almighty says, relating his supplication:

﴿رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ 40﴾

{My Lord, make me steadfast in prayer and those of my offspring. Our Lord, accept my supplication.} [Surat Ibrāhīm: 40]

﴿رَبَّنَا إِنِّي أَسْكَنْتُ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِي زَرْعٍ عِنْدَ بَيْتِكَ الْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ فَاجْعَلْ أَفْئِدَةً مِنَ النَّاسِ تَهْوِي إِلَيْهِمْ وَارْزُقْهُمْ مِنْ النَّامُوتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْكُرُونَ﴾
(37)

{Our Lord, I have settled some of my offspring in a barren valley near Your Sacred House, our Lord, so that they may establish prayer. So make the people's hearts incline towards them, and provide for them fruits, so that they may be grateful.}

[Surat Ibrāhīm: 37]

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Lot (peace be upon them).

Allah has informed us that He revealed to Ibrāhīm (Abraham) (peace be upon him), and to his offspring Isaac (Ishāq) and Jacob (Ya'qūb), and to his nephew Lot (Lūṭ), commanding them to establish the prayer. Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ الْخَيْرَاتِ وَإِقَامَ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءَ الزَّكَاةِ وَكَانُوا لَنَا عَابِدِينَ﴾ (73)

{And We inspired them to do righteous deeds, establish prayer and give zakah; and they were Our true worshipers.} [Surat al-Anbiyā': 73]

Isma'īl (Ishmael) (peace be upon him).

About Isma'īl (peace be upon him) and his commandment to his family, Allah says:

﴿وَكَانَ يَأْمُرُ أَهْلَهُ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ وَكَانَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ مَرْضِيًّا﴾ (55)

{He used to command his people to pray and give zakah, and his Lord was well pleased with him.} [Surat Maryam: 55]

Moses and Aaron (peace be upon them), and the children of Israel.

Allah Almighty informed us about Moses (peace be upon him) when He revealed to him, and the first thing He revealed to him, after the affirmation of Tawhīd (Oneness of Allah), was prayer. Allah Almighty says:

﴿إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي﴾ (14)

{Indeed, I am Allah; none has the right to be worshiped except Me, so worship Me and establish prayer to remember Me.} [Surat Taha: 14]

And He informed that it was revealed to him and his brother, Aaron, to establish prayer.

Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ وَأَخِيهِ أَنْ تَّبَوِّعَا لِقَوْمِكَمَا بِمِصْرَ بِيُوتَنَا وَاجْعَلُوا بُيُوتَكُمْ قِبْلَةً وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ (87)

{We inspired Moses and his brother, “Provide houses for your people in Egypt, and make your houses face the qiblah direction, establish prayer, and give glad tidings to the believers.”} [Surat Yūnus: 87]

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ لَا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ﴾ (83)

{And [remember] when We took a covenant from the Children of Israel, “Do not worship except Allah; be kind to parents and kindred, and to orphans and those in need; speak good words to people; establish prayer; and give Zakah.” But then you turned away, paying no heed, except a few of you.}

[Surat al-Baqarah: 83]

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ وَبَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ نَبِيًّا وَقَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ لَئِنْ أَقَمْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ﴾

{Allah took a covenant from the Children of Israel and appointed twelve chiefs from among them. Allah said, “I am with you. If you establish prayer,}

[Surat al-Mā'idah: 12]

Dāwūd (David) (peace be upon him).

Allah informed us about his bowing:

﴿قَالَ لَقَدْ ظَلَمَكَ بِسُؤَالِ نَعَجَتِكَ إِلَىٰ نُعَاجَةٍ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْخُلَطَاءِ لَيَبْغِي بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَقَلِيلٌ مَّا هُمْ وَظَنَّ دَاوُدُ أَنَّمَا فَتَنَّاهُ فَاسْتَغْفَرَ رَبَّهُ وَخَرَّ رَاكِعًا وَأَنَابَ ۖ﴾ (24)

{David said, “He has certainly wronged you by demanding that your ewe be added to his flock. Indeed, many partners oppress one another, except those who believe and do righteous deeds — and how few they are.” Then David realized that We were only testing him, so he asked his Lord for forgiveness, fell down bowing, and turned to Him in repentance.} [Surat Sād: 24]

Zakariyya (Zachariah) (peace be upon him).

Allah has informed us about Zachariah when the angels came to give him glad tidings of Yahya (John):

﴿فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمَحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَى مُصَدِّقًا
بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ 39﴾

{The angels called out to him while he was standing in the chamber praying, “Allah gives you glad tidings of John, who will believe in the Word of Allah and will be honorable, abstinent [from women], and a prophet from among the righteous.”}

[Surat Āl ‘Imrān: 39].

Yūnus (Jonah) (peace be upon him).

Allah Almighty, Blessed and Exalted, has informed us of the glorification of Yūnus (peace be upon him) and his prayer:

﴿قُلْ لَا أَنُفِثُ لَكَ نَبَأًا وَلَئِن بَدَّلْتُهُ غَسَقَ اللَّيْلِ ثُمَّ طُفِفْتُكَ فِي بَطْنِ يَاقُوتٍ لَّيْسَ لَكَ فِيهِ سَمْعٌ وَلَا نَبَأٌ 143 لَّيْسَ لَكَ فِيهِ سَمْعٌ وَلَا نَبَأٌ 144﴾

{Were it not for the fact that he was one of those who glorify Allah,

he would have stayed in its belly until the Day of Resurrection.} [Surat as-Sāffāt: 143-144] The exegetes said regarding the meaning of “those who glorify” in the verse: namely, the praying people.¹

Maryam (Mary) (peace be upon her).

¹ Tafsīr At-Tabari (21/109).

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَمْرُؤُا إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَى نِسَاءِ
الْعَالَمِينَ 42 يَمْرُؤُا أَقْنِي لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِي وَارْكَعِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ 43﴾

{And [remember] when the angels said, “O Mary, Allah has chosen you, purified you, and chosen you over all women. O Mary, be devoutly obedient to your Lord and prostrate and bow with those who bow [in prayer].”}

[Surat Āl ‘Imrān: 42-43]

‘Isa (Jesus) (peace be upon him).

Allah Almighty has informed us that He enjoined prayer upon Jesus (‘Īsa) (peace be upon him); He says, reporting his words when he made himself known in the cradle to the Children of Israel:

﴿قَالَ إِنِّي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ ءَاتَانِي الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا 30 وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ
وَأَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا 31﴾

{Jesus said, “I am a slave of Allah. He has given me the Scripture and made me a prophet.

He has made me blessed wherever I may be and has enjoined upon me prayer and zakah as long as I am alive.} [Surat Maryam: 30-31]

Shu‘ayb (Jethro) (peace be upon him).

When his people saw that Shu‘ayb held the prayer in great esteem, they denounced him for that. Allah Almighty says, reporting about them:

﴿قَالُوا يُسْعِيْبُ أَصْلَؤُكَ تَأْمُرُكَ أَنْ نَتْرَكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ ءَابَاؤُنَا أَوْ أَنْ نَفْعَلَ فِي أَمْوَالِنَا مَا
نَشَاءُ إِنَّكَ لَأَنْتَ الْحَلِيمُ الرَّشِيدُ 87﴾

{They said, “O Shu‘ayb, does your prayer command you that we should forsake what our

forefathers worshiped, or that we should give up dealing with our wealth as we please? Indeed, you are such a forbearing and right-minded man!”} [Surat Hūd: 87]

Luqmān (peace be upon him)

It was reported about Luqmān, the righteous man, that he used to enjoin his son to prayer; Allah Almighty said, reporting about him:

﴿يٰبُنَيَّ اَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ وَامُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَانْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَاصْبِرْ عَلٰى مَا اَصَابَكَ اِنَّ ذٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزَمِ الْاُمُورِ 17﴾

{“O my dear son, establish prayer, enjoin what is right, and forbid what is wrong, and be patient with whatever befalls you. This is a matter of firm resolve.”} [Surat Luqmān: 17].

﴿وَوَهَبْنَا لِدَاوُدَ سُلَيْمٰنَ نَعَمَ الْعَبْدُ اِنَّهٗ اَوَابٌ 30 اِذْ عَرَضَ عَلَيْهِ بِالْعَشِيِّ الصُّفُفُۙ
الْحِيَادُ 31 فَقَالَ اِنِّىْ اَحْبَبْتُ حُبَّ الْخَيْرِ عَنْ ذِكْرِ رَبِّىْ حَتّٰى تَوَارَتْ بِالْحِجَابِ
32 رُدُوْهُمَا عَلٰى فُطْفُقٍ مَّسْحًا بِالسُّوْقِ وَالْاَعْنَاقِ 33﴾

{And to David We gave Solomon, an excellent and faithful slave who constantly turned [to Us].

One evening, well-trained and swift horses of noble breed were presented before him.

He then said, “I gave preference to the love of fine things over the remembrance of my Lord,” until the sun went out of sight.

[He ordered], “Bring them back to me,” and he began striking [their] shanks and necks.}

[Surat Sād: 30-33] Allah Almighty said about Solomon (peace be upon him): when the horses

distracted him from the afternoon prayer until he missed it, he slaughtered them and gave them in charity.

Muhammad (ﷺ)

Prayer was enjoined upon the Prophet (ﷺ) as two Rak'ahs before sunrise and two in the evening at the outset. Allah Almighty says:

﴿فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَرِ 55﴾

{So be patient, for Allah's promise is true. Seek forgiveness for your sin, and glorify your Lord with His praise evening and morning.} [Surat Ghāfir: 55]

Aisha, Mother of the Believers (may Allah be pleased with her), said: "Allah has prescribed the prayer when He ordained it as two Rak'ahs, both when resident and traveling. The prayer for travel remained as such, while the prayer for residence was increased."¹

Then Qiyām al-Layl was prescribed for the Prophet (ﷺ):

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَرْمِلُ 1 فَمِ اللَّيْلِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا 2 نِصْفَهُ أَوْ أَنْفُسُ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا 3 أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا 4﴾

{O you the enwrapped one,
Stand up in prayer at night except a little,
half of it, or a little less,
or a little more, and recite the Qur'an at a
measured pace. [Surat al-Muzzammil: 1-4]}

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/79).

‘Ā’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: “Indeed, Allah Almighty prescribed Qiyām al-Layl at the start of this Surah. So, the Prophet of Allah (ﷺ) and his Companions performed Qiyām for one year. And Allah held back its concluding portion for twelve months in heaven, till Allah sent down alleviation at the end of this Surah. Consequently, Qiyām al-Layl became optional after being obligatory.”¹

Then, five daily prayers were prescribed. Allah Almighty said:

﴿أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذُلُوكِ السَّمْسِ إِلَى غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا ۝ 78﴾

{Establish prayer at the decline of the sun until the darkness of the night, and the recitation of dawn [prayer], for the recitation of dawn is ever witnessed [by the angels].} [Surat al-Isrā’: 78]

Allah Almighty informed about the Messenger (ﷺ) and those with him among the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) and described them as characterized by abundant praying, the noblest of its pillars are bowing and prostration. So Allah Almighty says:

﴿مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْئَهُ فَآزَرَهُ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَىٰ

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/513).

عَلَى سُوقَةٍ يُعْجَبُ الزَّرَّاعُ لِيَغِيظَ بِهِمُ الْكَفَّارُ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿29﴾

{Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are firm against the disbelievers and compassionate among themselves. You see them bowing and prostrating [in prayer], seeking Allah's grace and pleasure. Their distinguishing sign is on their faces from the effects of prostration. Such is their description in the Torah. And their description in the Gospel is like that of a seed that sprouts its shoot, then makes it strong; then it grows thick and stands straight on its stem, which delights the sowers — so that He may enrage thereby the disbelievers. Allah has promised those among them who believe and do righteous deeds forgiveness and a great reward.} [Surat al-Fat'h: 29]

Verses explaining a manner of the Prayer or one of its types:

The five daily prayers are mentioned in the Noble Qur'an.

Allah Almighty says:

(أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى عَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْءَانَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْءَانَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا ﴿78﴾

{Establish prayer at the decline of the sun until the darkness of the night, and the recitation of dawn [prayer], for the recitation of dawn is ever witnessed [by the angels].} [Surat al-Isrā': 78]

As-Sa'di (may Allah have mercy upon him) said: The sun's decline is its inclining toward the western horizon; included therein are the Zuhr and 'Asr prayers.

Ghasaq of the night: its darkness; included therein are the Maghrib prayer and the 'Ishā' prayer.

And the recitation of dawn [prayer]: i.e., the Fajr prayer; it was referred to as "the Qur'an" because recitation is longer in this prayer¹.

And Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ وَزُلْفًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ﴾

{Establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at some hours of the night.} [Surat Hūd: 114]

As-Sa'di also said:

﴿طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ﴾

"the two ends of the day" i.e., its beginning and its end; included in this are the Fajr prayer and the two prayers of Zuhr and 'Asr.

﴿وَزُلْفًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ﴾

and at some hours of the night. Included in that are the Maghrib and the 'Ishā' prayers, and this also encompasses the midnight prayer (Qiyām al-Layl), for it is among that which brings the servant near and draws him closer to Allah, the Exalted².

¹ Taysir Al-Karim Ar-Rahman (p. 464).

² Taysir Al-Karim Ar-Rahman (p. 391)

Enjoining regular observance of the five daily prayers, with special emphasis on the 'Asr prayer, which is the middle prayer.

Allah Almighty says:

﴿حُفِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ 238﴾

{Be mindful of the prayers, especially the middle prayer; and stand before Allah in complete devotion.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 238] As for the middle prayer, it has been explicitly interpreted in an authentic Hadīth as being the 'Asr prayer, on the authority of 'Alī ibn Abī Tālib (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: The Prophet (ﷺ) said on the Day of al-Ahzāb (the Confederates):

"شغلونا عن الصلاة الوسطى، صلاة العصر، ملأ الله بيوتهم وقبورهم ناراً".

"They distracted us from the middle prayer: the 'Asr prayer. May Allah fill their houses and graves with fire."¹

Explanation of shortening the prayer during travel

Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَإِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَقْصُرُوا مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ إِنَّ خِفَافًا أَنْ يُفْتِنَكُمْ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ كَانُوا لَكُمْ عَدُوًّا مُبِينًا 101﴾

{When you are traveling through the land, there is no blame on you to shorten the prayer, if you fear that the disbelievers may harm you. Indeed, the

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/437).

disbelievers are your open enemy.} [Surat an-Nisā': 101]

Prayer of Fear

Allah Almighty clarifies how to pray the Fear Prayer:

﴿وَإِذَا كُنْتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقَمْتَ لَهُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَلْتَقُمْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا أَسْلِحَتَهُمْ فَإِذَا سَجَدُوا فَلْيَكُونُوا مِنْ وَرَائِكُمْ وَلْتَأْتِ طَائِفَةٌ أُخْرَىٰ لَمْ يُصَلُّوا فَلْيُصَلُّوا مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا حِذْرَهُمْ وَأَسْلِحَتَهُمْ وَذَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ تَغْفُلُونَ عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ فَيَمِيلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَيْلَةً وَحِذَّةً وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ كَانَ بِكُمْ أَدَىٰ مِنْ مَطَرٍ أَوْ كُنْتُمْ مَرَضَىٰ أَنْ تَضَعُوا أَسْلِحَتَكُمْ وَخُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا﴾ (102)

{When you [O Prophet] are with them and lead them in prayer, let a group of them stand [in prayer] with you, carrying their weapons. When they have finished their prostration, let them take their positions in the rear. Then let the other group that has not yet prayed join you in prayer, keeping vigilant and carrying their arms. The disbelievers wish that you would neglect your weapons and belongings, so they could launch a surprise attack on you. But there is no blame on you if you lay down your weapons because of the inconvenience of rain or because you are ill, but take all precautions. Indeed, Allah has prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating punishment.} [Surat an-Nisā': 102]

And reference to the Fear Prayer is made during combat and when the battle is joined:

﴿حَفِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ 238 فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُمْ مَا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ 239﴾

{Be mindful of the prayers, especially the middle prayer; and stand before Allah in complete devotion.

If you are in danger, then pray while walking or riding. But when you are safe, remember Allah as He taught you what you did not know.}

[Surat al-Baqarah: 238-239]

Recommended Night Prayer

Numerous Hadīths mention the Night Prayer and Qiyām al-Layl, among them:

Allah Almighty says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَرْمِلُ 1 فُمْ اللَّيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا 2 نَصَفَهُ أَوْ أَنْقُصْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا 3 أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا 4﴾

{O you the enwrapped one,

Stand up in prayer at night except a little,
half of it, or a little less,

or a little more, and recite the Qur'an at a measured pace.} [Surat al-Muzzammil: 1-4] When Qiyām al-Layl was obligatory upon the Prophet (ﷺ) before the five obligatory prayers were enjoined.

And the command to observe the night prayer came in the words of Allah Almighty:

﴿وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَاسْجُدْ لَهُ وَسَبِّحْهُ لَيْلًا طَوِيلًا 26﴾

{and prostrate to Him at night, and glorify Him at length by night.} [Surat al-Insān: 26]

When Allah Almighty commanded His Prophet (ﷺ) to rely upon Him, He described his state during the night:

﴿وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْعَزِيزِ الرَّحِيمِ 217 الَّذِي يَرَىٰكَ جِئْنَا نَقُومُ 218 وَتَقْلُبُ فِي السُّجُودِ 219 إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ 220﴾

{And put your trust in the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful,

Who sees you when you stand up [for prayer]
and your movements among those who prostrate

Indeed, He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.}
[Surat ash-Shu‘arā’: 217-220].

Allah praises His believing servants who establish the night prayer:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَمًا 64﴾

{And those who spend the night prostrating and standing before their Lord;}

[Surat al-Furqān: 64]

Allah Almighty also says:

﴿تَتَجَافَىٰ جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ 16﴾

{They forsake their beds, invoking their Lord with fear and hope, and spend out of what We have provided for them.} [Surat as-Sajdah: 16]

And Allah Almighty says:

﴿كَانُوا قَلِيلًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُونَ 17 وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ 18﴾

{They used to sleep only a little at night,
and before dawn they would seek forgiveness,
[Surat adh-Dhāriyāt: 17-18]

And Allah Almighty said:

﴿أَمَّنْ هُوَ قَنِتٌ ءَانَاءَ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَائِمًا يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُو رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولَؤُا ٱلْأَلْبَابِ ۝۹﴾

{[Is he better] or the one who constantly worships during the night, prostrating and standing, fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Lord? Say, "Are those who know equal to those who do not know?" It is only the people of understanding who will take heed.} [Surat az-Zumar: 9]

The Jumu'ah (Friday) Prayer

Allah commanded His believing servants to attend the Friday prayer and hasten to it when [the Adhān] is called for it, and to proceed to it from the moment the call is made.

Allah Almighty says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝۹ فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ۝۱۰ وَإِذَا رَأَوْا تِجَارَةً أَوْ لَهْوًا انفَضُّوا إِلَيْهَا وَتَرَكُوكَ قَائِمًا قُلْ مَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ اللَّهِو وَمِنَ التِّجَارَةِ وَاللَّهِ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ۝۱۱﴾

{O you who believe, when the call for prayer is made on Friday, then hasten to the remembrance of Allah and leave off trading. That is better for you, if only you knew.

When the prayer is over, disperse in the land and seek from the bounty of Allah, and remember Allah much so that you may be successful.

When they see some merchandise or amusement, they rush towards it and leave you

standing. Say, “That which is with Allah is better than amusement and merchandise, and Allah is the Best of Providers.”} [Surat al-Jumu‘ah: 9-11].

The Congregational Prayer

Allah Almighty says:

{وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ 43}

{And establish prayer, give zakah, and bow [to Allah] with those who bow.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 43]

Allah Almighty says:

{قُلْ أَمَرَ رَبِّي بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَقِيمُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ
الَّذِينَ كَمَا بَدَأَكُمْ تَعُودُونَ 29}

{Say [O Prophet], “My Lord has enjoined doing what is right; direct your faces [to Him alone] wherever you pray; call upon Him with sincere devotion to Him. Just as He created you first, so you will be brought back to life.”} [Surat al-A‘rāf: 29]

The Duha (Forenoon) Prayer

Allah—glorified and exalted—makes clear the prayer of Dāwūd (David) (peace be upon him) and his turning to Him in repentance, and that Allah subjected the mountains to hymn His praises along with him during the ‘Ishā’ and Duha prayers:

{أَصْبَرَ عَلَى مَا يَقُولُونَ وَادَّكَّرَ عَبْدُنَا دَاوُدَ ذَا الْأَلْبِطِ إِنَّهُ أَوَابٌ 17 إِنَّا سَخَرْنَا
الْجِبَالَ مَعَهُ يُسَبِّحْنَ بِالْعُشِيِّ وَالْإِشْرَاقِ 18}

{Bear with patience whatever they say, and remember Our slave David, the man of strength who constantly turned [to Allah].

We subjected the mountains to join him in glorifying Allah in the evening and the morning,} [Surat Sād: 17-18]

Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) said: "I have recited what is between the two covers (of the Qur’an); I did not know about the Duha prayer except now: {They glorify in the evening and at sunrise}. I used to say: 'Where is the Ishrāq prayer?' Then he said: 'After them is the Ishrāq prayer.'¹

Allah Almighty says:

﴿فِي بُيُوتٍ أَذِنَ اللَّهُ أَنْ تُرْفَعَ وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ﴾
{36}

{[Such niches are lit] in the houses [of worship] that Allah has ordered to raise up, and where His Name is mentioned, and He is glorified therein morning and evening} [Surat an-Nūr: 36]

‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) was asked about the Duha prayer. He said: "It is indeed in the Book of Allah, and no compensation can make up for it." Then he recited:

﴿فِي بُيُوتٍ أَذِنَ اللَّهُ أَنْ تُرْفَعَ وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ﴾
{36}

{[Such niches are lit] in the houses [of worship] that Allah has ordered to raise up, and where His

¹ Tafsīr At-Tabari (21/169)

Name is mentioned, and He is glorified therein morning and evening} [Surat an-Nūr: 36]¹.

The Sunnah Prayer of Tawāf

﴿وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنَا وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى وَعَهِدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَن طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْعَاكِفِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ 125﴾

{And [remember] when We made the House [i.e., Ka'bah] a focal point and a sanctuary for the people. "[O believers], take the Station of Abraham as a place for prayer." We charged Abraham and Ishmael to purify My House for those who perform circumambulation or stay for worship, or those who bow down and prostrate.}

[Surat al-Baqarah: 125]

The Funeral Prayer

﴿وَلَا تُصَلِّ عَلَىٰ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ مَّتَّ أَبَدًا وَلَا تَقُمْ عَلَىٰ قَبْرِهِ إِنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَمَآثُورًا وَهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ 84﴾

{Never offer the funeral prayer for any of them who dies, nor stand by his grave, for they have disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger, and died as evildoers.}

[Surat at-Tawbah: 84]

‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with both of them) reported: I heard ‘Umar ibn al-Khattāb (may Allah be pleased with him) say:

لَمَّا تُوفِّيَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ أَبِي دُعِيَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِلصَّلَاةِ عَلَيْهِ، فَقَامَ إِلَيْهِ، فَلَمَّا وَقَفَ عَلَيْهِ يُرِيدُ الصَّلَاةَ تَحَوَّلْتُ حَتَّى قُمْتُ فِي صَدْرِهِ. فَقُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، أَعَلَىٰ عَدُوِّ اللَّهِ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ أَبِي الْقَائِلِ يَوْمَ كَذَا وَكَذَا كَذَا وَكَذَا؟ - بَعْدُ أَيَّامَهُ -

¹ Narrated by Ibn Abi Shaybah in his 'Musannaf' (2/298).

قَالَ: وَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَتَسَمَّ، حَتَّى إِذَا أَكْثَرْتُ عَلَيْهِ قَالَ: "أَجَزْ عَلَيَّ يَا عُمَرُ إِنِّي قَدْ خُيِّرْتُ فَأَخْتَرْتُ، قَدْ قِيلَ لِي: (أَسْتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ أَوْ لَا تَسْتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ إِنْ تَسْتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً فَلَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ) [التوبة: 80] لَوْ أَعْلَمَ أَبِي لَوْ زِدْتُ عَلَى السَّبْعِينَ غُفِرَ لَهُ لَزِدْتُ"، قَالَ: ثُمَّ صَلَّى عَلَيْهِ وَمَشَى مَعَهُ، فَقَامَ عَلَى قَبْرِهِ حَتَّى فَرَعَ مِنْهُ، قَالَ: فَعُجِبَ لِي وَجُرَأْتِي عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَاللَّهِ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ، فَوَاللَّهِ مَا كَانَ إِلَّا يَسِيرًا حَتَّى نَزَلَتْ هَاتَانِ الْآيَتَانِ: (وَلَا تُصَلِّ عَلَى أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ مَاتَ أَبَدًا وَلَا تَقُمْ عَلَى قَبْرِهِ إِنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَمَآثُورًا وَهُمْ فَسِيفُونَ 84) [التوبة: 84]، قَالَ: فَمَا صَلَّى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَعْدَهُ عَلَى مُنَافِقٍ وَلَا قَامَ عَلَى قَبْرِهِ حَتَّى قَبِضَهُ اللَّهُ.

"When 'Abdullāh ibn Ubayy died, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was called to offer the funeral prayer over him. He went to him, and when he stood over him intending to pray, I moved until I stood before him at his chest. I said: "O Messenger of Allah, will you pray over the enemy of Allah, 'Abdullāh ibn Ubayy—the one who on such-and-such a day said such-and-such?"—recounting his days. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was smiling. When I became insistent, he said: "Step aside from me, O 'Umar. I have been given a choice, and I have chosen. It has been said to me: {Seek forgiveness for them or do not seek forgiveness for them. Even if you seek forgiveness for them seventy times, Allah will never forgive them.} [Surat al-Tawbah: 80] If I knew that were I to increase beyond seventy, it would be forgiven him, I would increase."

Then he offered the funeral prayer for him and accompanied the funeral, and he stood at his grave

until the burial was completed. I was amazed at myself and at my boldness toward the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)—and Allah and His Messenger know best. By Allah, it was only a short while before these two verses were revealed: {And never offer the funeral prayer for any of them who dies, nor stand at his grave. Indeed, they disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger and died while defiantly disobedient.} [Surat al-Tawbah: 84]. Thereafter, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) did not pray over any hypocrite nor stand at his grave until Allah took his soul.¹

The Eid Prayer

In reference to the Eid al-Fitr prayer, Allah Almighty says:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى 14 وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى 15﴾

{Indeed, he who purifies himself will attain success,

and remembers his Lord's Name and prays.}
[Surat Al-A'la: 14-15]

Abu Sa'īd al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him) and others said:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى 14﴾

{Indeed, he who purifies himself will attain success,} He said, "He gave out Zakāt al-Fitr before going out to the Eid prayer."

¹ Narrated by At-Tirmidhi (5/279); classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albāni.

{وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى 15}

{And remembers his Lord's Name and prays.}

He said, "He went out for the Eid prayer and prayed."¹

In reference to the Eid al-Ad'ha prayer, Allah Almighty says:

{فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانْحَرْ 2}

{so pray and offer sacrifice to your Lord alone.}

[Surat al-Kawthar: 2]

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to slaughter the sacrifice before he would pray; then he was commanded to pray first and then slaughter."²

Verses indicating the Conditions of the Prayer and its Pillars:

Conditions of the Prayer

The Condition of Sanity:

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ}

{O you who believe, do not approach the prayer while you are intoxicated until you know what you are saying.}

[Surat an-Nisā': 43]

The Condition of Purification:

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُم مِّنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَمَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً

¹ See Al-Durr al-Manthūr Fi at-Tafsīr Bi al-Ma'thūr (8/485).

² Tafsīr At-Tabari (24/ 653)

فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوْهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيُنِمْذِرَكُمْ نِعْمَتُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿6﴾

{O you who believe, when you rise up for prayer, wash your faces, and your hands up to the elbows; wipe over your heads; and wash your feet up to the ankles. If you are in a state of major impurity, cleanse yourselves [by taking a bath]. But if you are ill, on a journey, or have relieved yourselves, or had sexual contact with women and find no water, then purify yourselves with clean earth, and wipe your faces and hands therewith. Allah does not want to impose hardship on you; rather, He wants to purify you and complete His favor upon you, so that you may be grateful.}

[Surat al-Mā'idah: 6]

Allah Almighty commanded Abraham and his son Ishmael (Ismā'īl) (peace be upon them) to purify the House:

﴿وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنَا وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى وَعَهِدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَن طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ 125﴾

{And [remember] when We made the House [i.e., Ka'bah] a focal point and a sanctuary for the people. "[O believers], take the Station of Abraham as a place for prayer." We charged Abraham and Ishmael to purify My House for those who perform circumambulation or stay for worship, or those who bow down and prostrate.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 125]

﴿وَإِذْ بَوَّأْنَا لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ مَكَانَ الْبَيْتِ أَنْ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِي شَيْئًا وَطَهِّرْ بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ
وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ 26﴾

{And [remember] when We showed to Abraham the site of the House [Ka'bah], "Do not associate anything with Me, and purify My House for those who circumambulate it, and those who stand up in prayer, and those who bow and prostrate.}

[Surat al-Hajj: 26]

The Condition of Covering the 'Awrah (must-cover body parts):

﴿يَبْنِيْءَ آدَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ
الْمُسْرِفِينَ 31﴾

{O children of Adam, dress well for every prayer. Eat and drink, but do not waste, for He does not like the wasteful.}

[Surat al-A'rāf: 31]

Condition of the Commencement of the Due Time of Prayer:

﴿إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْفُوتًا 103﴾

{Indeed, prayer is prescribed for the believers at specific times.}

[Surat an-Nisā': 103]

Condition of Facing the Qiblah:

﴿قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ فَلْنُوَلِّينَاكَ قِبْلَتَكَ تَرْضَاهَا قَوْلٌ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ
الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ
لَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَفِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ 144﴾

{We see the turning of your face [O Prophet] towards heaven; We will surely make you turn

towards a prayer direction that will please you. So turn your face towards the Sacred Mosque [in Makkah], and wherever you are, turn your faces towards it. Those who were given the Scripture know that this is the truth from their Lord, and Allah is not unaware of what they do.}

[Surat al-Baqarah: 144]

The Pillars of the Prayer

The Pillar of Standing:

﴿حُفِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ﴾ (238)

{Be mindful of the prayers, especially the middle prayer; and stand before Allah in complete devotion.}

[Surat al-Baqarah: 238]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ﴾

{O you who believe, when you rise up for prayer,}

[Surat al-Mā'idah: 6]

﴿الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هٰذَا بَطِلًا سُبْحٰنَكَ قِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ﴾ (191)

{Those who remember Allah while standing, sitting, and lying on their sides, and reflect upon the creation of the heavens and earth [saying], “Our Lord, you have not created all this in vain. Glory be to You. Protect us from the punishment of the Fire.}

[Surat Āl-Imrān: 191].

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يَبَيِّنُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَمًا﴾ (64)

{And those who spend the night prostrating and standing before their Lord;}

[Surat al-Furqān: 64]

﴿فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمَحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَى مُصَدِّقًا
بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ 39﴾

{The angels called out to him while he was standing in the chamber praying, “Allah gives you glad tidings of John, who will believe in the Word of Allah and will be honorable, abstinent [from women], and a prophet from among the righteous.”}

[Surat Āl ‘Imrān: 39].

The Two Pillars of Rukū‘ (bowing) and Sujūd (prostration):

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ارْكَعُوا وَاسْجُدُوا وَاعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ وَافْعَلُوا الْخَيْرَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ
77﴾

{O you who believe, bow down and prostrate, worship Your Lord and do good, so that you may succeed.}

[Surat al-Hajj: 77]

﴿وَأَسْجُدْ وَاقْتَرِبْ 19﴾

{Prostrate and draw near.}

[Surat al-‘Alaq: 19]

From the Hadīths of the Prayer

Numerous Hadīths have been narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) clarifying the rulings concerning prayer and its status in the religion.

This includes the following:

The Prophet (ﷺ) informed us that prayer is the greatest among the pillars and great foundations of Islam after the two testimonies of faith. ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ: شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ، وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ، وَالْحَجِّ، وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ"

“Islam was built on five pillars: testifying that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing prayer, giving Zakah, Hajj, and fasting Ramadan.”¹ These are the five pillars of Islam upon which the religion has been built: the first is Tawhid—testifying that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah—then establishing prayer.

The Prophet (ﷺ) informed us that prayer is the mainstay of the religion, without which a person’s religion cannot stand. On the authority of Mu‘ādh ibn Jabal (may Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"رَأْسُ الْأَمْرِ الْإِسْلَامُ، وَعُمُودُهُ الصَّلَاةُ، وَذِرْوَةُ سَنَامِهِ الْجِهَادُ"

“The head of the matter is Islam, its pillar is the prayer, and its peak is jihad.”² And the pillar signifies: that upon which other things are built; and if the pillar falls, whatever was built upon it falls.

¹ Agreed upon, narrated by Al-Bukhārī (1/ 11) and Muslim (1/ 45).

² Narrated by Al-Tirmidhī (5/12); Al-Albānī classified it as Sahīh (authentic).

The Prophet informed us about being held to account in the Hereafter, and that the first of a person's deeds for which he will be held accountable on the Day of Judgment is his prayer; if it is sound, the rest of his deeds will be sound, and if it is corrupt, the rest of his deeds will be corrupt.

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"أَوَّلُ مَا يُحَاسَبُ بِهِ الْعَبْدُ صَلَاتُهُ فَإِنْ صَلَحَتْ صَلَحَ سَائِرُ عَمَلِهِ وَإِنْ فَسَدَتْ فَسَدَتْ سَائِرُ عَمَلِهِ"

"The first thing a servant will be held accountable for is his prayer. If it is sound, the rest of his deeds will be sound; and if his prayer is corrupt, the rest of his deeds will be corrupt."¹ In another version from him:

"أَوَّلُ مَا يُسْأَلُ عَنْهُ الْعَبْدُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يُنْظَرُ فِي صَلَاتِهِ، فَإِنْ صَلَحَتْ فَقَدْ أَفْلَحَ،

"The first of a person's deeds for which he will be held accountable on the Day of Judgment is his prayer; if it is sound, he will succeed." In another version:

"وَأَنْجَحَ"

"he will be granted success."²

وَإِنْ فَسَدَتْ فَقَدْ خَابَ وَخَسِرَ."

¹ [Narrated by At-Tabarāni in "Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat" (2/240); classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albāni]

² Narrated by At-Tirmidhi (2/270) from the Hadith of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him); classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albāni.

“And if it is corrupted, then he has failed and lost.”¹

Thus, it is a part of the greatness of prayer that we reflect upon the matter of the reckoning in the Hereafter; indeed, the first of our deeds for which we will be called to account in the Hereafter is prayer, and the acceptance of prayer is a cause for the acceptance of all deeds.

The Prophet (ﷺ) informed us that the last thing to be lost from the religion is prayer; and when the last of the religion is gone, nothing of it remains.

Abu 'Umāmah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“لَتَنْتَقِضَنَّ عَرَى الْإِسْلَامِ عُرْوَةٌ عُرْوَةٌ، فَكُلَّمَا انْتَقَضَتْ عُرْوَةٌ، تَشَبَثَ النَّاسُ بِالَّتِي تَلِيهَا، فَأُولَئِكَ نَقْضُ: الْحُكْمَ، وَآخِرُهُنَّ: الصَّلَاةُ ”

“The knots of Islam will be undone one by one. Whenever one knot is undone, people will hold on to the one that follows it. The first of them to be undone is the authority, and the last of them is the prayer.”² In another version, Zayd ibn Thābit (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“أَوَّلُ مَا يَرْفَعُ مِنَ النَّاسِ الْأَمَانَةُ وَآخِرُ مَا يَبْقَى مِنْ دِينِهِمُ الصَّلَاةُ وَرَبُّ مَصْلٍ لَا خَلْقَ لَهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ”

¹ Narrated by At-Tabarāni in "Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat" (4/127); classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albāni.

² Narrated by Ibn Hibbān (15/111); Al-Albāni classified it as Sahīh (authentic).

"The first thing to be lifted from the people is trustworthiness, and the last thing to remain of their religion is the prayer; and how many a one who prays has no share with Allah."¹ These are reports from the Prophet (ﷺ) concerning the greatness of prayer, and that it is the last thing to remain of a Muslim's religion.

We find in the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ), in his Hadīths, that the last commandment the Prophet (ﷺ) gave to his Ummah was the prayer:

Umm Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her) reported: Among the last injunctions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was:

"الصَّلَاةُ الصَّلَاةُ، وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ " حَتَّى جَعَلَ نَبِيُّ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُجْلِجُهَا فِي صَدْرِهِ، وَمَا يَفِيزُ بِهَا لِسَانُهُ،

"Prayer, prayer, and those whom your right hands possess," and the Prophet of Allah (ﷺ) continued to repeat it until his chest was gurgling with it, and his tongue could scarcely utter it². So let us consider the greatness of this great advice concerning this ritual—the ritual of prayer.

"الصَّلَاةُ الصَّلَاةُ، وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ "

"Prayer, prayer, and those whom your right hands possess."

¹ [Narrated by Al-Hakīm At-Tirmidhi in Nawādir al-Usūl (p. 1122); Al-Albāni classified it as Sahīh (authentic)]

² [Narrated by Imām Ahmad (44/84); classified by Al-Albāni as Sahīh (Authentic) in Al-Irwā']

When we recall the obligation of the prayer, how the prayer was ordained, we recall its greatness: when Allah Almighty willed to ordain this prayer upon His Ummah, He did not ordain it by revelation through Jibrīl (peace be upon him); rather, He ordained it directly, without an angel intermediary. The Prophet (ﷺ) was taken by night from Makkah to Bayt al-Maqdis, then he was made to ascend to the seventh heaven, where Allah Almighty ordained fifty prayers upon him. This, as some scholars have said, indicates Allah's love for the prayer—initially¹ fifty prayers. Thereafter, Allah Almighty made it easier for His slaves and ordained five prayers in every day and night; thus, they are fifty in reward and five in performance. This shows the magnitude of its status with Allah Almighty, as stated in the Hadith:

"قَدْ أَمُضَيْتُ فَرِيضَتِي، وَخَفَّفْتُ عَنْ عِبَادِي."

"I have enacted My ordinance, and lightened the burden upon My servants."²

The Prophet (ﷺ) ordered fathers and mothers to command their children and teach them prayer when they are seven years old:

¹ Status of Prayer in Islam (p. 15).

² Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (4/111) in his Sahīh from the Hadīth of Anas ibn Mālīk (May Allah be pleased with him).

‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"مُرُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ سَبْعِ سِنِينَ، وَاضْرِبُوهُمْ عَلَيْهَا، وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ عَشْرِ وَفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَهُمْ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ"

“Command your children to offer the prayer when they are seven years old, and beat them for (not offering) it when they are ten, and separate between them in beds.”¹

We see the Prophet’s (ﷺ) veneration of this great religious rite in the context of raising the young to hold the prayer in high esteem, and that fathers and mothers are commanded and directed to order their children to pray and teach them the prayer once they reach this age.

"مُرُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ سَبْعِ سِنِينَ، وَاضْرِبُوهُمْ عَلَيْهَا، وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ عَشْرِ وَفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَهُمْ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ."

“Command your children to offer the prayer when they are seven years old, and beat them for (not offering) it when they are ten, and separate them in beds.”

Because of its considerable importance, both the one who forgets a prayer and the one who oversleeps it are commanded to perform it; they are commanded to make up for it, and this affirms its significance:

¹ Narrated by Ahmad (6/295) and Abu Dāwūd (1/133), and this is his wording; Al-Albānī classified it as Hasan (good) in Al-Irwā’.

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"مَنْ نَسِيَ صَلَاةً فَلْيُصَلِّ إِذَا ذَكَرَهَا، لَا كَفَّارَةَ لَهَا إِلَّا ذَلِكَ "

"Whoever forgets a prayer should perform it when he remembers it, and there is no expiation for it except that."¹ In another version:

"مَنْ نَسِيَ صَلَاةً، أَوْ نَامَ عَنْهَا، فَكَفَّارَتُهَا أَنْ يُصَلِّيَهَا إِذَا ذَكَرَهَا "

"Whoever forgets a prayer or oversleeps it, its expiation is to perform it once he remembers it."² This is an indication of the great status of Prayer: it never ceases to be due upon a person. Whoever forgets a prayer due to a circumstance or sleeps through it due to a circumstance, then when he rises to perform it, he should pray it, for it does not cease to be due.

The Prophet (ﷺ) would remind the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) of the exalted status of the prayer whenever an opportunity was available. Accordingly, as reported in the Hadith from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) passed by a grave and said:

"من صاحب هذا القبر؟ " فقالوا: فلان. فقال: "ركعتان أحب إلي هذا من بقية دنياكم".

¹ Agreed upon, narrated by Al-Bukhārī (1/122) and Muslim (1/477).

² Narrated by Muslim (1/477).

“Who is the dweller of this grave?” They replied: “So-and-so.” He said: “Two Rak’ahs of prayer are more beloved to this person than the remainder of your worldly life.”¹ Allahu akbar! When the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) hear this reminder—that two Rak’ahs alone would be better for this deceased person than the world—it means that if he were given the choice between being returned to life and granted the dominion of the whole world, or being allowed an opportunity to pray only two Rak’ahs, he would choose to pray the two Rak’ahs. This, by Allah, reflects the tremendous status of the prayer with Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He.

The Prophet (ﷺ) would remind the Companions, drawing from what was familiar in their environment, of how the prayer fills the hearts with fear of Allah.

‘Uqbah ibn ‘Ammār (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: I heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say:

"يَعْجَبُ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ رَاعِي غَنَمٍ فِي رَأْسِ سَطِيئَةٍ بِجَبَلٍ، يُؤَدِّنُ بِالصَّلَاةِ، وَيُصَلِّي، فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: انْظُرُوا إِلَى عَبْدِي هَذَا يُؤَدِّنُ، وَيَقِيمُ الصَّلَاةَ، يَخَافُ مِنِّي، قَدْ غَفَرْتُ لِعَبْدِي وَأَدْخَلْتُهُ الْجَنَّةَ"

“Your Lord wonders at a shepherd of goats who calls to prayer at the peak of a mountain, and offers

¹ Narrated by At-Tabarānī in "Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat" (1/282); Al-Albānī said in "Silsilat Al-Ahādīth As-Sahīhah": Its Isnād is Sahīh (authentic) according to the criteria of Muslim.

prayer. Allah Almighty says: 'Look at this servant of Mine; he calls to prayer and offers it, fearing Me. So, I forgive My servant and admit him to Paradise.'"¹ These are several Hadiths reported from the Prophet (ﷺ), reminding us of the greatness of prayer and its status with Allah Almighty. The Prophet (ﷺ) taught them to the noble Companions (may Allah be pleased with them); the Companions transmitted them to the Successors, and the Successors conveyed them to the Successors of the Successors. Thus, generation after generation has passed down these Hadiths until they reached us. So let us enjoin one another—you and us—to be conscious of the exalted status of prayer and to remind people of these authentic Hadiths from the Prophet (ﷺ), which indicate the greatness of prayer and its status.

The Benefits of Prayer, Its Effects, and Its Merits

Prayer is the best of deeds after the two testimonies of faith:

Prayer is the best deed by which the servants draw close to Allah Almighty after bearing witness to the two testimonies of Imān, as reported in some Hadiths: when the Prophet (ﷺ) was asked which deed is best, he said, "Prayer at its proper time."

¹ Narrated by Abu Dāwūd (2/4); classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albānī.

Thus, it is the best of deeds after the two testimonies.

Whoever wishes to draw near to Allah, Blessed and Exalted, and seeks what is most virtuous, should let the very first means that comes to mind for drawing near to Allah, the Majestic and High, be drawing near to Allah, Blessed and Exalted, through prayer.

Thus, prayer connects the believer directly with Allah Almighty, for the greatest purpose of establishing prayer is the remembrance of Allah Almighty, as stated in His words:

﴿إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي 14﴾

{Indeed, I am Allah; none has the right to be worshiped except Me, so worship Me and establish prayer to remember Me.} [Surat Taha: 14] That is: Establish prayer so that you may remember Me by it, for prayer is the greatest means of remembering Allah Almighty; it is the best of all deeds. It behooves the worshipper, when he goes to the prayer, to be mindful that he is now engaged in a deed he performs for Allah Almighty—bowing, prostrating, supplicating, seeking forgiveness, and magnifying his Lord, Allah Almighty. Thus, the greatest fruit of prayer is that it is the best of deeds after the two testimonies of Imān.

Second: It forbids obscenity and evildoing:

As Allah Almighty says:

﴿أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ﴾

{Recite [O Prophet] what is revealed to you of the Book, and establish prayer, for indeed prayer restrains one from immoral acts and wickedness. Indeed, the remembrance of Allah is of greater merit. And Allah knows all that you do.} [Surat al-‘Ankabūt: 45] Thus, whoever commits sins and violations, his remedy lies in establishing the prayer; for whoever establishes it and maintains it, there is no doubt that it will restrain him from immoral acts and wickedness. Among its fruits and virtues in reforming the condition of the slave is that it keeps him away from contraventions of the Shari‘ah.

Third: Sins are washed away and misdeeds are removed:

In an authentic Hadīth, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"أَرَأَيْتُمْ لَوْ أَنَّ نَهْرًا بِبَابِ أَحَدِكُمْ يَغْتَسِلُ مِنْهُ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ خَمْسَ مَرَّاتٍ، هَلْ يَبْقَى مِنْ دَرَنِهِ شَيْءٌ؟" قَالُوا: لَا يَبْقَى مِنْ دَرَنِهِ شَيْءٌ، قَالَ: "فَذَلِكَ مَثَلُ الصَّلَوَاتِ الْخَمْسِ، يَمْحُو اللَّهُ بِهِنَ الْخَطَايَا"،

"Tell me, if there were a river at the door of one of you from which he washed five times a day, would any of his filthiness remain?" They said: "No, nothing of his filthiness would remain." He said: "That is like the five prayers, by which Allah obliterates sins."¹ These prayers wash away sins.

¹ Agreed upon, narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/112) and Muslim (1/462).

When do they wash them? They wash away the sins that a person commits between the prayers, as has come in the Hadith of ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd from the Prophet (ﷺ), who said:

"تَحْتَرِفُونَ، تَحْتَرِفُونَ، فَإِذَا صَلَّيْتُمُ الْفَجْرَ غَسَلْتُمَا، ثُمَّ تَحْتَرِفُونَ تَحْتَرِفُونَ، فَإِذَا صَلَّيْتُمُ الظُّهْرَ غَسَلْتُمَا، ثُمَّ تَحْتَرِفُونَ تَحْتَرِفُونَ، فَإِذَا صَلَّيْتُمُ الْمَغْرِبَ غَسَلْتُمَا، ثُمَّ تَحْتَرِفُونَ تَحْتَرِفُونَ، فَإِذَا صَلَّيْتُمُ الْعِشَاءَ غَسَلْتُمَا، ثُمَّ تَتَأَمَّوْنَ فَلَا يُكْتَبُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَيْءٌ حَتَّى تَسْتَيْقِظُوا."

“You get burned, you get burned; then when you perform the Fajr prayer, it washes them away. Then you get burned, you get burned; then, when you perform the Zuhr prayer, it washes them away. Then you get burned, you get burned; then, when you perform the ‘Asr prayer, it washes them away. Then you get burned, you get burned; then, when you perform the Maghrib prayer, it washes them away. Then you get burned, you get burned; then, when you perform the ‘Ishā’ prayer, it washes them away. Then you sleep, and nothing is recorded against you until you awaken.”¹ You get burned—meaning: you err, you forget, and you fall short; then, when you perform the noon prayer, it washes them away. The expression “you get burned” points to sins being like a fire, with flames and heat; then, when the noon prayer comes, it washes them away. And therein is also an allusion to a supplication.

¹ Narrated by At-Tabarāni in "Al-Mu'jam As-Saghīr" (1/91); classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albāni.

"اللَّهُمَّ اغْسِلْنِي مِنَ خَطَايَايَ بِالتَّلَجِ وَالْمَاءِ وَالْبَرَدِ "

"Allāhumma ighsilni min khatāyāya bith-thalji wa al-mā'i wa al-barad" (O Allah, wash out my sins with snow, water, and hail).¹ Sins have within them a heat, and these prayers cool that heat and wash it away. Among the greatest fruits of prayer is that it washes the sins the servant commits.

Fourth: Light for its possessor in worldly life and the Hereafter:

"Prayer is light," as the Prophet (ﷺ) said in the Hadith of Abu Malik al-Ash'ari (may Allah be pleased with him):

"الطُّهُورُ شَطْرُ الْإِيمَانِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ تَمْلَأُ الْمِيزَانَ، وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ تَمْلَأُنِ -
أَوْ تَمْلَأُ - مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ، وَالصَّلَاةُ نُورٌ، وَالصَّدَقَةُ بُرْهَانٌ وَالصَّبْرُ
ضِيَاءٌ، وَالْقُرْآنُ حُجَّةٌ لَكَ أَوْ عَلَيْكَ، كُلُّ النَّاسِ يَعْدُو فَبَايَعُ نَفْسَهُ فَمُعْتِقُهَا أَوْ مُوْبِقُهَا
"

"Purity is half of faith, al-hamdulillāh (praise be to Allah) fills the Scale, and subhān Allah wa al-hamdulillāh (glory and praise be to Allah) fill — or: fills — what is between the heavens and the earth. Prayer is light, charity is proof, patience is radiance, and the Qur'an is an argument either for you or against you. Every person goes out in the morning and sells his soul; he either saves it from doom or throws it into destruction."²

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/419).

² Narrated by Muslim (1/203).

For prayer is light by which the believer is illumined in this world, with the path of truth and the path of goodness made clear before him. Thus, whoever observes these prayers does not go astray; his prayer will illuminate the way before him, so he sees the truth as truth and Allah makes it easy for him to follow it, and he sees falsehood as false and Allah makes it easy for him to avoid it—as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"وَالصَّلَاةُ نُورٌ"

"Prayer is light." [Narrated by Muslim (40)]¹ Likewise, when he leaves his house, he should ask Allah, Blessed and Exalted, to place light in his heart, light in his hearing, light in his sight, light on his right, light on his left, light above him, light below him, and to make him a light.

Fifth: One's ranks are elevated:

By it Allah, Blessed and Exalted, raises ranks and erases sins, as reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) regarding the effects of prostration in particular. On the authority of Thawbān (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: I asked the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) about the most beloved deeds to Allah. He said: "عَلَيْكَ بِكَثْرَةِ السُّجُودِ لِلَّهِ، فَإِنَّكَ لَا تَسْجُدُ لِلَّهِ سَجْدَةً، إِلَّا رَفَعَكَ اللَّهُ بِهَا دَرَجَةً، وَحَطَّ عَنْكَ بِهَا خَطِيئَةٌ"،

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/203).

“Make frequent prostration to Allah; every prostration you make for Allah, He will raise your position a degree and will remit one of your sins.”¹ Whenever the Muslim increases in prostrations and increases in prayers, there is no doubt that the prayers elevate him with Allah Almighty; by them Allah Almighty elevates degrees and erases sins. Going to the mosque raises one’s degrees and removes misdeeds. So whoever wishes to be elevated in this world in degrees with Allah, the first thing that should come to mind is to increase the voluntary prayers, after preserving, perfecting, and establishing the obligatory prayers that Allah Almighty has prescribed. Whoever desires to be elevated in degrees with Allah, let him increase in prayers outside the times of prohibition, and let him know that every time he offers a prayer, he is raised in degrees with the Lord of the worlds, Glorified and Exalted.

Sixth: Hospitality and an honorable abode in Paradise for one who goes to the mosque in the morning or in the evening:

As reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) in the Hadīth of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him):

"مَنْ عَدَا إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ وَرَاحَ، أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُ نُزُلَهُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ كُلَّمَا عَدَا أَوْ رَاحَ."

“Whoever goes to the mosque in the morning and in the evening, Allah prepares an honorable abode

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/353).

with good hospitality for him in Paradise every time he goes in the morning or in the evening.”¹

Seventh: Increase in closeness to Allah and love for Him:

The more a believer performs the prayer, the closer he is to his Lord. The Messenger (ﷺ) said about prostration in the Hadith of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him):

”أَقْرَبُ مَا يَكُونُ الْعَبْدُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ، وَهُوَ سَاجِدٌ، فَأَكْثِرُوا الدُّعَاءَ.”

“The nearest a slave is to his Lord when he is prostrating, so increase supplication.”²

Magnifying the Status of Prayer among the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them)

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) nurtured the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) with the love of Allah Almighty and reverence for Him, and veneration for His rites, Exalted be He. We will mention below examples of the states of some Companions with prayer, among them:

Abu Bakr as-Siddīq (may Allah be pleased with him)

When we review the Prophet’s biography (ﷺ), we see how great his concern and care were—especially for prayer—before the Hijrah in Makkah,

¹ Agreed upon, narrated by Al-Bukhārī (1/ 133) and Muslim (1/ 463).

² Narrated by Muslim (1/350).

when the Muslims were suffering from the harm and persecution of the disbelievers of Quraysh.

Abu Bakr As-Siddīq (may Allah be pleased with him) was steadfast in observing the prayer. It is reported in his biography that he built in his house a place of prayer in which he would pray—i.e., he set aside in his home a mosque for that purpose. He was a man who, when he recited the Qur'an, was overcome by weeping; thus, he would pray and recite, and this became a means of inviting the polytheists' women and their children to Islam, as they would pass by and observe Abu Bakr As-Siddīq (may Allah be pleased with him) in his prayers. 'Ā'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) used to relate this as she described his keenness regarding the prayer during that period before the Hijrah¹.

Furthermore, we observe Abu Bakr as-Siddīq's (may Allah be pleased with him) reverence for the prayer and his humility in it from 'Ā'ishah's (may Allah be pleased with her) description, when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) ordered that he lead the people in prayer. It is as though she (may Allah be pleased with her) objected to that by saying that he (may Allah be pleased with him) was a soft-hearted man; when he recites the Qur'an, he cannot help but weep. Nevertheless, he (may Allah be pleased with

¹ "As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah" by Ibn Kathīr (2/64)

him) led the people in prayer during the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ).¹

‘Umar ibn al-Khattāb (may Allah be pleased with him)

Out of his veneration for prayer, ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him)—when he was stabbed and carried from the mosque to his home—Al-Miswar ibn Makhramah said: On the night ‘Umar ibn al-Khattāb (may Allah be pleased with him) was stabbed, I entered along with Ibn ‘Abbās to see him. When it was time for the Fajr prayer the following morning, they awakened him and said: “The prayer!” He said: “Yes! And there is no share in Islam for he who abandons prayer.” So ‘Umar performed prayer while blood was profusely flowing from his wound.²

As part of his veneration for the status of prayer—in his educational approach and in raising his family—‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) would encourage his family to pray, to revere it, and he would command them to it, as has been reported from Zayd ibn Aslam, from his father: that ‘Umar ibn al-Khattāb (may Allah be pleased with him) would pray at night as much as Allah willed; then, when it was toward the end of the night, he would

¹ See: *Sahīh Al-Bukhārī* (1/133)

² See: “*Tārīkh Dimashq*” by Ibn ‘Asākir (44/419); “*At-Tabaqāt al-Kubra*” by Ibn Sa’d (3/263); “*Siyar A’lām An-Nubalā*” (Rāshidūn/92).

awaken his family for prayer, saying to them: "Prayer, prayer," then he would recite this verse:

﴿وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا لَا نَسْأَلُكَ رِزْقًا نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكَ وَالْعُوبَىٰ
لِلنَّافِقِينَ﴾ (132)

{Enjoin your household to perform prayer and adhere to it firmly. We ask no provision from you; rather, it is We Who give you provision. And the best outcome is for those who fear Allah.} [Surat Tā-ha: 132]¹.

Indeed, numerous and significant reports have been transmitted from ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) attesting to his veneration of the status of prayer.

His son ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said: ‘Umar went out to one of his gardens and returned when the people had already offered the ‘Asr prayer. He said: "I only went out to my garden, and when I returned, the people had prayed. My garden is a charity for the poor."²

Observe how he gave in charity this orchard, which had been the cause of his delaying this great obligation; this indicates his reverence (may Allah be pleased with him) for the great status of prayer.

Al-Hasan (may Allah have mercy upon him) said: "‘Umar would come across a verse in his daily recitation, and it would choke him; he would weep

¹ Narrated by Al-Bayhaqī in Shu‘ab al-Imān (4/466)

² "Musnad al-Fārūq" (1/162).

till he collapsed, then remain in his house till people visited him, thinking him ill.”

Yahya ibn Ja'da reported: 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said: Were it not for three, I would have loved to have met Allah: that I place my forehead in prostration to Allah; or that I sit in gatherings in which fine speech is selected as carefully as dates are selected; or that I go forth in the cause of Allah, Mighty and Majestic.”¹

'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (may Allah be pleased with him).

'Ubaydullāh ibn 'Adī entered upon 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (may Allah be pleased with him)—while he was under the siege—and said: “You are the Imām of the people at large, and what we see has befallen you, while an imām of the turmoil (fitnah) is leading us in prayer, and we feel uncomfortable about it?” He said: “Prayer is the best of people's deeds; if people do good, then do good along with them, and if they do wrong, avoid their wrongdoing.”²

It is also reported that he would read the entire Qur'an in one Rak'ah, on the authority of Ibn Sīrīn, who said: When 'Uthmān (may Allah be pleased with him) was killed, the wife of 'Uthmān said: “You have killed him, while he would spend the entire

¹ Hilyat al-Awliyā' wa Tabaqāt al-Asfiyā' (1/51).

² Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (1/141).

night in prayer, reciting the Qur'an in a single Rak'ah"¹.

'Ali ibn Abi Tālib (may Allah be pleased with him)

'Ali ibn Abi Tālib (may Allah be pleased with him) was deeply concerned about the prayer. He would pass along the road, calling out: "The prayer! The prayer!" By that, he would awaken the people for the Fajr prayer. Al-Hasan (may Allah be pleased with him) said, regarding his going out from his house on the day he was stabbed: When he went out of the door, he called out: "O people, the prayer! The prayer!" This was his practice every day, with his staff. Then the two men intercepted him, and Ibn Muljam struck him on the head.²

'Adiyy ibn Hātim (may Allah be pleased with him)

He used to say: "Whenever the time for prayer came, I would be longing for it"³, indicating his immense longing for prayer and his love for it.

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him)

He used to describe in many of his Hadiths the prayers of the Prophet (ﷺ), and to illustrate his great emulation of the Messenger (ﷺ) in every act of the prayer and every utterance thereof.

¹ At-Tabaqāt al-Kubra, by Ibn Sa'd (3/72).

² Tarīkh At-Tabari (3/157).

³ Hayāt As-Sahābah (4/125).

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: I have not seen anyone whose prayer more closely resembled that of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) than the son of Umm Sulaym, i.e., Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him).

His grandson Thumāmah ibn Abdullah ibn Anas said: Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) used to pray until his feet would crack and bleed due to the length of his standing in prayer.¹

Al-Zuhrī (may Allah have mercy on him) said: I visited Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him) in Damascus while he was weeping. I said to him: 'What makes you weep?' He said: 'I do not know anything that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and his Companions were upon except this prayer, and you have done with it what you have done.' In another narration: 'And this prayer has been lost'—meaning what the 'Umayyad caliphs used to delay the prayer until the end of its extended time.

'Umar ibn al-Khattāb (may Allah be pleased with him) sent him during the Battle of Tustar. He said (may Allah be pleased with him): On that day, we did not perform the Fajr Prayer until midday; I would not be pleased with that prayer in exchange for the whole world.²

¹ Siyar A'lām An-Nubalā' (3/400)

² "Al-Bidāyah wa An-Nihāyah" (9/89).

Rabī'ah ibn Ka'b al-Aslami (may Allah be pleased with him)

Some of the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) would come to the Prophet (ﷺ) and ask him about a great matter, seeking his companionship in Paradise. The Prophet (ﷺ) would say to him: "Then help me in your request by making frequent prostration," as reported in the story of Rabī'ah ibn Ka'b Al-Aslami (may Allah be pleased with him), who said:

كنت أبيت مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فأتيته بوضوءه وحاجته فقال لي: "سل" فقلت: أسألك مرافقتك في الجنة. قال: "أو غير ذلك" قلت: هو ذلك. قال: "فأعني على نفسك بكثرة السجود"

I used to spend the night with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and when I brought him his water for ablution and his needs, he told me to make a request. I said: "I ask for your companionship in Paradise." He asked if I had any other request to make, and when I replied that that was all, he said: "Then help me to accomplish this for you by devoting yourself to frequent prostration." Narrated by Muslim¹. This is one of the great educational counsels and Prophetic directives by which the Prophet (ﷺ) would direct his Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) to this prayer, to maintaining it, and to magnifying its worth.

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/353)

‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with both of them)

We find that the veneration of the prayer impacted all of the Companions: Here is ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with them). As he was returning from a journey—as related in his biography—the death of one of his sons was announced to him. He dismounted from his mount and offered two Rak’ahs, then said: “We have done what Allah has commanded us,” alluding to His statement, Glorified and Exalted:

{وَأَسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ 45}

{Seek help through patience and prayer. It is strenuous except for the humble,} [Surat al-Baqarah: 45]¹.

The Concept of Kifāyah Al-‘Ilāhiyyah (Divine Sufficiency)

Linguistically, Kifāyah: “kafā–yakfī–kifāyatan” denotes taking care of the affair. And it is said: “kafāhu al-shay’u”: it satisfied his need and made him free of the need of any other².

Al-‘Ilāhiyyah, in linguistic usage, is a name ascribed to the term “‘Ilāh”; it is one of the beautiful names of Allah, and it means: the One Who is truly worthy of worship.

¹ Narrated by Al-Bayhaqī in “Shu‘ab al-Imān” (12/173).

² “Lisān al-‘Arab” by Ibn Manzhūr: (15/225); “al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ”: (p. 1712)

(قُلْ إِنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ)

{Say, "Indeed, He is One God."} [Surat al-An'ām: 19]¹.

The meaning of "divine sufficiency" is that the Muslim holds, with firm conviction, that Allah, may He be Exalted, suffices him in all things, and that everything we desire is with Allah, may He be Exalted. If Allah, the Most High, wills to grant him something, no one—whoever he may be—can prevent it; and if Allah withholds something, no one can grant what He has withheld. In other words, the Muslim believes that the needs he seeks, the aims for which he strives, and the requests he wishes to attain are all, in truth, in the possession of Allah alone, may He be Exalted.

Kifāyah Al-'Ilāhiyyah (Divine Sufficiency): It is to take Allah the Most High alone as sufficient, and to increase one's certainty and conviction regarding this: that all needs, whether small or great, are possessed and controlled by Allah—the One, the Unique, the Owner of Sovereignty, the Self-Sufficient—glorified and exalted is He.

What is the relationship of this to prayer?

The connection of this to prayer is that the reality of prayer is the servant standing before Allah Almighty, in Whose Hand lies all that pertains to him; that you hold a firm conviction that what

¹ "Lisān al-'Arab" (13/467); "Maqāyīs al-Lughah" (1/127).

you desire is in the possession of Allah Almighty. Then, when the time for prayer arrives, you know that you now go and stand before the One in Whose Hand lie all the matters you need; with Him alone they are.

The more this conviction increases, the greater one's turning to prayer becomes, and the believer's understanding of prayer is changed; prayer becomes another realm altogether. Man, by his very nature, is in need, and as the scholars mention, he is always striving to attain what he desires. In his daily life, from morning until evening, he pursues the aims he wishes to obtain and reach. So when this conviction grows within him—the conviction of Divine Sufficiency—that the fulfillment of all these needs lies with Allah Almighty, and that in prayer he stands before the One with Whom is the fulfillment of every need, then his approach to prayer changes and prayer takes on a renewed meaning. Thereafter, whenever he is in need, the first thing he remembers is prayer, because in prayer he stands before Allah Almighty, and Allah Almighty is the One with Whom lies all that he seeks. And when he enters prayer, at its moments of supplication, he recalls the needs he desires and supplicates Allah Almighty for those needs.

When we turn to the texts that point to this and attest to it, the first thing we recall is that Allah

Almighty, in His Book, commanded us to seek help through patience and prayer.

﴿وَأَسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ﴾ (45)

{Seek help through patience and prayer. It is strenuous except for the humble,} [Surat al-Baqarah: 45] Allah Almighty has informed us that He alone is sufficient for His servants.

﴿أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ﴾

{Is Allah not sufficient for His slave?} [Surat az-Zumar: 36] And Allah Almighty informed us that ultimate sufficiency lies with Him.

﴿وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ هَادِيًا وَنَصِيرًا﴾ (31)

{And your Lord is sufficient as a Guide and Helper.} [Surat al-Furqān: 31] The noble Prophet's (ﷺ) Sunnah shows that he applied this matter concerning the prayer; for whenever he was alarmed, whenever he was in need, and whenever a matter distressed him, he would resort to the prayer, as is stated in the authentic Hadith from him, may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, in the Hadith of Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamān (may Allah be pleased with him) who said:

"كان النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم إذا حزبه أمر صلى"

"Whenever anything distressed the Prophet (ﷺ), he would pray."¹ It means: He would hasten and take the initiative toward it due to the presence of

¹ Narrated by Abu Dāwūd (2/35); Al-Albānī classified it as Hasan (sound).

this meaning of divine sufficiency—that he finds sufficiency in Allah, Blessed and Exalted—and that the source of strength, help, and guidance in this is Allah, Blessed and Exalted; so he would seek His help.

Among the Hadiths that convey this meaning is what Abu Dharr (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Prophet (ﷺ) related that Allah Almighty said:

"ابن آدم اركع لي أربع ركعات من أول النهار أكفك آخره"

"O son of Adam! Offer four Rak'ahs for My sake at the beginning of the day, I will suffice you against any harm at the end of it (the day)."¹ I will suffice you: complete sufficiency.

See also: the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) in the Hadīth of Abu Mālik al-Ashja'i, on the authority of his father (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"مَنْ صَلَّى الْفَجْرَ فَهُوَ فِي ذِمَّةِ اللَّهِ"

"Whoever performs the Fajr prayer will be under the protection of Allah."²

Being under Allah's protection means being in His care and preservation; on that day Allah preserves him, guides him, and undertakes to bring

¹ Narrated by At-Tirmidhi (2/340), from the Hadīth of Abu Dharr and Abu al-Dardā' (may Allah be pleased with both of them); classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albāni.

² [Narrated by At-Tabarāni in "Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat", (4/229); classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albāni]

about what he seeks. All of this is connected to the Fajr prayer, as reported from the Prophet (ﷺ).

When we seek to apply this concept practically in prayer, we find that prayer contains specific times designated for supplication, and we are instructed therein to increase supplication—such as during prostration and before the salutation. As for prostration, the Prophet (ﷺ) informed us of the worshiper's nearness to his Lord when he is prostrating. Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"أَقْرَبُ مَا يَكُونُ الْعَبْدُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ، وَهُوَ سَاجِدٌ، فَأَكْثِرُوا الدُّعَاءَ"

"The nearest a slave to his Lord is when he is prostrating, so increase supplication."¹ On the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him), he said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"فَأَمَّا الرُّكُوعُ فَعِظَمُوا فِيهِ الرَّبَّ عِزَّ وَجَلَّ، وَأَمَّا السُّجُودُ فَاجْتَهِدُوا فِي الدُّعَاءِ، فَقَمِنْ أَنْ يَسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ"

"As for bowing, glorify the Lord therein, and as for prostration, strive in supplication, for it is more deserving to be responded to you."² i.e., your supplications will most probably be answered, and this state of prostration is one in which the Muslim worshiper is very near to Allah, Blessed and

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/350).

² Narrated by Muslim (1/348).

Exalted. He knows that Allah suffices and that the needs he seeks after the prayer are with Allah, Blessed and Exalted, to Whom he prostrates. Here he supplicates and is filled with hope, in this state of asking, that Allah Almighty will fulfill for him what he desires and grant him what he has asked.

Furthermore, there is the supplication before Taslīm, which is reported from him (ﷺ) in the Hadīth of ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) taught them the Tashahhud at the end of the prayer, then said:

"ثُمَّ لِيُخَيَّرَ بَعْدَ مِنَ الْمَسْأَلَةِ مَا شَاءَ أَوْ مَا أَحَبَّ"

"Then, afterwards, let him choose whatever request he wills or whatever he likes."¹ In another version:

"ثُمَّ يَتَخَيَّرُ مِنَ الدُّعَاءِ أَعْجَبَهُ إِلَيْهِ"

"Then he may choose whatever supplication he likes most."² i.e., whatever he wishes and prefers, and all that he wishes for and asks for of the good in this life and the Hereafter.

There have been invocations reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) to be said in the prayer, which comprise requests such as seeking forgiveness and repentance from Allah, Blessed and Exalted. It is befitting for the praying Muslim to seek out these

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/302).

² Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (1/167).

transmitted supplications that are reported in the Sunnah—whether in prostration or before the Taslīm—to memorize them and recite them.

Also: he may choose, before the Taslīm, from supplications whatever pertains to the good of this world and the Hereafter, for the supplication here is unrestricted; thus it was said: “Then, let him choose whatever supplication he wishes,” and, “Then he may choose whatever supplication he likes most.” This is the second occasion for supplication.

The third occasion is devoted to asking Allah, Blessed and Exalted, and it contains no praise, extolling, glorification, or the like. This asking is during the sitting between the two prostrations. The sitting between the two prostrations is not merely to separate the two prostrations; rather, it is a specific sitting—indeed, the sitting between the two prostrations is a pillar of the prayer, like prostration and the standing after bowing. This sitting is particular to the requests the worshiper wishes to make, and among the greatest of what he seeks therein is forgiveness. It has been reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he would repeat: “My Lord, forgive me; my Lord, forgive me; my Lord, forgive me.”

What is the relationship between the pursuit of forgiveness and the fulfillment of needs? There is

no doubt that the pursuit of forgiveness is linked to the fulfillment of needs, as Allah Almighty said:

﴿قُلْتُ أَسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا 10 يُرْسِلَ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا 11 وَيُمْدِدْكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَبَنِينَ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ أَنْهَارًا 12﴾

{I said, 'Seek forgiveness from your Lord. Indeed, He is Most Forgiving.

He will shower you with abundant rain from the sky,

and He will give you wealth and children, and bestow upon you gardens and rivers. [Surat Nūh: 11-12]

Also, among what has been reported for the sitting between the two prostrations, in addition to seeking forgiveness, is asking for mercy, well-being, sustenance, guidance, the mending of deficiencies, and elevation in this world and the Hereafter, as comes in the supplication: Ibn 'Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Prophet (ﷺ) used to say between the two prostrations:

"اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي، وَارْحَمْنِي، وَعَافِنِي، وَاهْدِنِي، وَارْزُقْنِي "وَأَجْبِرْنِي، وَارْفَعْنِي.
"O Allah, forgive me, have mercy on me, grant me wellness, guide me, and give me provision¹, console me, and raise me"².

These seven requests encompass all that a person needs for sufficiency in this world and the

¹ Narrated by Abu Dāwūd (1/224); Al-Albānī classified it as Hasan (sound).

² Narrated by At-Tabarānī in Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabīr (12/20) and Ahmad (5/460); Al-Albānī deemed its Isnād good.

Hereafter. If Allah forgives him, has mercy on him, guides him, grants him well-being, provides for him, mends his deficiencies, and elevates him, this reflects the comprehensive sufficiency of Allah, Blessed and Exalted, for His servant in all that he needs. Thus, when we return to the prayer with this understanding—as you know, brothers—a bond with the prayer is established, for a person is always tied to needs. And the more he links these needs to his prayer, the more he realizes the objective of servitude in the prayer, and the greater his humility and submissiveness to Allah, Blessed and Exalted. When humility and submissiveness increase, the greatest intended purpose of establishing the prayer is attained: attachment to Allah, Blessed and Exalted.

The Concept of Al-Hidāyah (Guidance)

“Hidāyah” linguistically: It is derived from “Huda” (guidance), the opposite of misguidance; it is to direct to the destination. “Huda” is right guidance, obedience, and piety. Its plural: hidāyāt. It is said: “I guided him to the path,” i.e., when one directs him to the path¹.

Al-Hādi (The Guide): He is Allah, Blessed and Exalted.

﴿وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهَادِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ۝٥٤﴾

¹ "Al-‘Ayn" (4/77), "Lisān al-‘Arab" (15/355), "Maqāyīs al-Lughah" (6/42).

{Allah surely guides those who believe to the straight path.} [Surat al-Hajj: 54] The believer, when he hears the word “guidance,” finds comfort, for he desires guidance; and everyone who desires guidance desires to be guided.

When we reflect upon guidance in the Noble Qur’an, we find that the scholars (may Allah have mercy upon them) have stated that Allah’s guidance, Blessed and Exalted, for His creation is of four levels, which are mentioned in the Qur’an:

The first stage: General guidance for all creation, meaning that Allah Almighty has guided all creatures, as He Almighty said:

﴿قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ 50﴾

{He said, “Our Lord is the One Who gave everything its form and then guided it.”} [Taha: 50] And He Almighty says:

﴿سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَىٰ 1 الَّذِي خَلَقَ فَسَوَّىٰ 2 وَالَّذِي قَدَّرَ فَهَدَىٰ 3﴾

{Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High, Who created and fashioned in due proportion, and Who determined [the creation] then inspired them,} [Surat al-A’la: 1-3] Allah Almighty has guided the creation to that for which they were created: He guided the sun, the mountains, the eye, and the hands; indeed, He guided everything He created. This is the first level of guidance, which the scholars call general guidance.

The second level: Guidance that is not general; rather, it is specific to the accountable among the jinn and humans. That is to say, Allah Almighty has guided the accountable among His slaves, the jinn and the humans, with a guidance that is the guidance of clarification and direction, making truth plain from falsehood, good from evil, and right from wrong. This guidance is not for all creatures; rather, it is a specific guidance to the accountable among the jinn and humans, as He, the Exalted, says:

{إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا 3}

{Indeed, We showed him the way, whether he is grateful or ungrateful.} [Surat al-Insān: 3] Allah Almighty also said:

{وَهَدَيْنَاهُ النَّجْدَيْنِ 10}

{and shown him the two ways [of right and wrong]?} [Surat al-Balad: 10] i.e., distinguishing the way of goodness from the way of evil.

The third level: Guidance of granting success to the truth and to goodness. This guidance is for some of those who are accountable among the jinn and mankind. That is, not everyone who has received the guidance of directing and instruction has attained the guidance of granting success. For example, at present, nearly seven billion human beings inhabit the earth; not all of them have been

granted the success to embrace Islam—the true religion.

﴿إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ﴾

{The true religion with Allah is Islam.} [Surat Āl ‘Imrān: 19].

This guidance to Islam is the guidance of granting success and inspiration, for Allah Almighty has guided to it some of His accountable servants from among the jinn and humans.

The fourth level: It is not in worldly life; rather, it is in the Hereafter, for entry into Paradise. About the dwellers of Paradise, Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا أَنْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَقَدْ جَاءَتْ
رُسُلٌ رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَتُودُّوْا أَنْ تَكْفُرُوا بِالْحَقِّ أَوْرَثْنَاهُمَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ﴾ (43)

{“All praise be to Allah, Who has guided us to this, for We would not have been guided to this if Allah had not guided us. The messengers of our Lord came with the truth.” They will be called, “This is Paradise that you are made to inherit for what you used to do.”} [Surat al-A‘rāf: 43] These are the levels of guidance.

As for the sources and pillars of guidance as outlined in the Qur’an,

we find that Allah Almighty has mentioned sources, pillars, and foundations of guidance—whoever adheres to them will be guided, and whoever draws near to them will be guided—and they are three:

The first source: The noble Qur'an: the word of Allah Almighty, and Allah Almighty is the Guide.

{وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّى يَسْمَعَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ}

{If any of the polytheists asks you for protection, give it to him, so that he may hear the Word of Allah.} [Surat at-Tawbah: 6] So whoever draws near to the Qur'an will be guided, and his share of guidance will be in proportion to his nearness to the Qur'an.

The individual, the Muslim family, the Muslim society, and the Muslim Ummah—the closer they are to the Qur'an in recitation, contemplation, study, and living by it—the more rightly guided they are; and being distant from the Qur'an is being distant from the very source of guidance.

The second source: the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ): Allah Almighty said about His Prophet (ﷺ):

{وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ 52}

{And you are truly leading people to a straight path,} [Surat ash-Shūra: 52] Allah Almighty also says:

{وَإِنْ تُطِيعُوهُ تَهْتَدُوا وَمَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلْغُ الْمُبِينُ 54}

{If you obey him, you will be guided. The duty of the Messenger is only to convey the message clearly.} [Surat an-Nūr: 54] Following the Prophet (ﷺ)—that is, following the Sunnah—is guidance. Accordingly, guidance is in proportion to one's

closeness to the Sunnah: learning it and applying it, embodying its Prophetic etiquettes, and living by its way of life. Distancing oneself from it is distancing oneself from the sources of guidance. Thus, the Muslim individual, the Muslim family, and the Islamic society—according to their share of the Sunnah—are nearer to guidance and to being guided.

Third source: the Sacred House; the honorable Ka'bah: Allah Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ 96 فِيهِ ءَايَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَن دَخَلَهُ كَانَ ءَامِنًا﴾

{The first House [of worship] established for mankind was the one at Bakkah [i.e., Makkah], full of blessings and guidance for the worlds.

In it are clear signs [such as] the standing place of Abraham; whoever enters it will be safe.} [Surat Āl 'Imrān: 96, 97] Thus, the honorable Ka'bah is the House of Allah, and Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَطَهِّرْ بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ 26﴾

{And purify My House for those who circumambulate it, and those who stand up in prayer, and those who bow and prostrate.} [Surat al-Hajj: 26] Thus, the Ka'bah is the House of Allah, and Allah, Blessed and Exalted, is the Guide.

We find the summation of these three sources in the prayer.

Thus, the prayer comprises the recitation of the Qur'an; indeed, it contains the supplication for guidance in Sūrat al-Fātihah, in Allah's statement:

﴿إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ 6﴾

{Guide us to the straight path,} [Surat al-Fātihah: 6] Thus, prayer encompasses the foremost source of guidance, which is the Noble Qur'an, and prayer must be performed as the Prophet (ﷺ) used to pray, as Mālik ibn al-Huwayrith (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"وَصَلُّوا كَمَا رَأَيْتُمُونِي أَصَلِّي"

"Pray as you have seen me pray."¹ Prayer, too, must be performed facing the Ka'bah, the Sacred House.

﴿قُولِ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ﴾

{Turn your face towards the Sacred Mosque [in Makkah].} [Surat al-Baqarah: 144] Whoever performs the prayer is guided; guidance in life is in proportion to establishing the prayer. So the more one establishes the prayer, the more guided he is in his life. Therefore, the daily repetition of Al-Fātihah in the prayer is to seek guidance to the straight path.

﴿إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ 6 صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ 7﴾

{Guide us to the straight path,

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/128).

the path of those whom You have blessed; not of those who incurred Your Wrath, or of those who went astray.} [Surat al-Fātihah: 6-7] Thus, the guidance in Al-Fātihah recited in the prayer is the guidance of clarification and the guidance of granting success; meaning that the believer asks Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, to clarify the truth for him, to make him desirous of it and act upon it, and to make him steadfast upon it.

For this reason, prayer is linked to granting success. Whoever desires success, let him examine how he establishes the prayer; for the more diligently one establishes the prayer, the more success he will be granted in his life.

The types of guidance that Man seeks are numerous; the scholars (may Allah have mercy on them) have mentioned the types of guidance that Man needs in his life¹:

The first type: Guidance of knowledge.

The second type: Guidance of the will.

The third type: Guidance of action.

The fourth type: Guidance to steadfastness.

The first type: Guidance of knowledge

Meaning that there are matters a person does not know, and the true aspect and right course in them are not apparent to him. He wishes to discern the truth regarding them and have knowledge of

¹ Look: Asrār As-Salāh (p. 51).

them. He thus knows that the One Who will guide him to that is Allah Almighty. So he resorts to Him, Blessed and Exalted, in his prayer, in his prostration and before the Taslīm, at the occasions of supplication, asking that Allah, Blessed and Exalted, teach him the truth, inspire it to him, and guide him to what is correct with respect to knowledge and understanding.

The second type: Guidance of the will.

A person may possess knowledge concerning a matter, yet he lacks the desire, will, and resolve to act. He knows that his heart—which is the place of will—is in the Hand of his Lord, Blessed and Exalted, before Whom he stands in intimate supplication, and to Whom he bows and prostrates, invoking Him. Thus, he seeks refuge with his Lord, Blessed and Exalted, asking that, just as He taught him this truth, He make him will it and grant him the guidance of desire and resolve to act upon it.

The third type: Guidance of action.

Guidance of action means that one is guided to act upon the truth he intends, for some people may know the truth and desire it, yet they are not guided to act upon it.

Guidance of action: that Allah Almighty makes you act, aids you, and grants you the ability to undertake this matter; thus, you supplicate Allah Almighty in your prayer.

The fourth type: Guidance for steadfastness.

Thabāt (steadfastness) upon the truth; steadfastness upon goodness; steadfastness upon righteous deeds; steadfastness upon the truth that Allah has taught you and has made you desirous of and able to act upon—you ask Allah Almighty to keep you steadfast upon it. In sum, this guidance is guidance to the straight path; for whoever is guided to the straight path, Allah has made the truth clear to him, made him desirous of it, aided him in acting upon it, and then kept him steadfast upon it.

The Concept of the Chief Concern and the Center of Life

Al-hamm (Anxiety) linguistically: It is the verbal noun of “hamamtu bi-sh-shay’ hamman.” Al-hamm: It is also that which one resolves upon within himself. One says: “This matter concerned me.” Al-hamm also means sorrow, and its plural is Humoom.¹

A person lives with different and multiple concerns, some of which form the center of their life. This becomes the chief concern, which has a significant impact on their lives, shaping their motivation and influencing how they spend their time, form their relationships, and manage their expenditures. This is called the chief concern and

¹ "Al-‘Ayn" (3/357); "Lisān al-‘Arab" (12/619); "Maqāyīs al-Lughah" (6/13).

the center of life, meaning that a person is centered around this great concern they are living with.

We find that people vary in their concerns and in what lies at the center of their lives: for some, the center of their lives is money—their greatest concern is money; for others, it is the job; for others, the wife and children; and for others, relationships, social status, and forming friendships.

Of course, there is no doubt that all of these are concerns that have their significance and place. However, what we mean is that the flaw arises when they alone become the chief concern, and a person's life revolves around them. What should a believer have as his chief concern, and around what should his life be centered? In this, we do not rely on our own judgment; rather, we recall what the noble Prophet (ﷺ) said about the chief concern. What did he say about concern? What is the concern that the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned that a believer ought to have, and to which he (ﷺ) directed the nation?

In this regard, we find his statement (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) in a Hadith reported by Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"من كانت الآخرة همه جعل الله غناه في قلبه وجمع له شمله، وأنته الدنيا وهي راغمة، ومن كانت الدنيا همه جعل الله فقره بين عينيه، وفرق عليه شمله، ولم يأتيه من الدنيا إلا ما قدر له "

“Whoever makes the Hereafter his main concern, Allah will make his heart content and gather his affairs for him, and the world will come to him unwillingly. But, whoever makes the worldly life his main concern, Allah will place his poverty right before his eyes, and will scatter his affairs for him, and he will not get anything from the worldly life except what has been decreed for him.”¹ This Hadith suggests that the primary concern of a believer should be the Hereafter. Allah Almighty says regarding the Hereafter:

{وَأِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهِيَ الْحَيَوَانُ}

{The Abode of the Hereafter is indeed the real life.} [Surat al-‘Ankabūt: 64] And the meaning of al-hayawān is the perfect life: the life the believer lives is the life of the Hereafter; as for the life of this world, Allah Almighty has mentioned:

{وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ 185}

{For the life of this world is nothing but an illusory pleasure.} [Surat Āl ‘Imrān: 185] And that it is a little and transient time.

What does it mean that Al-hamm (Concern) is the Hereafter?

Everyone who reads this Hadīth and learns of it wishes to make the Hereafter his foremost concern, because he wants Allah, Blessed and Exalted, to

¹ Narrated by At-Tirmidhi (4/642); classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albāni.

enrich him, gather his scattered affairs for him, and make the worldly life come to him subdued. So what does it mean for the Hereafter to be one's concern?

The meaning of having the Hereafter as one's chief concern is the dominant presence of the Hereafter in the believer's mind. He remembers the Hereafter at all times and turns his life into a reminder of it. So when he beholds a beautiful scene or enjoys a happy life, his mind immediately connects to Paradise, the Hereafter, and everlasting bliss, and he asks Allah of His bounty. And when he sees a fire or touches something hot, he remembers the Hereafter and asks Allah, Blessed and Exalted, to save him from the punishment of Hellfire therein. He is attached to the Hereafter. He doesn't need to keep saying, "the Hereafter... the Hereafter" with his tongue; rather, the Hereafter predominates as his chief concern, and he remembers the Hereafter persistently and continually.

Whoever has a certain matter and remembers it once or twice a year, that matter is not considered important to him. So when is this matter actually considered a concern? If it is frequently remembered and present in his mind. Thus, the concern for the Hereafter is the presence of the Hereafter in the mind.

Is the Hereafter a concern?

The Hereafter is a concern because in our lives there are stages connected to the Hereafter awaiting us...

Firstly: the End — the farewell moments with which we will bid farewell to life. We do not know how they will be, nor with whom they will be, nor in what state they will be. We ask Allah Almighty for a good end. Our hope in Him is good; a believer should think well of Allah Almighty. And Allah Almighty said in a divine Hadith:

"أَنَا عِنْدَ ظَنِّ عَبْدِي بِي"،

"I am as My servant thinks of Me."¹ The believer should have good expectations of Allah; yet, at the same time, he does not know how his ending will be. Then, when he realizes that his ending will be either after a prayer or in a prayer—for everyone who dies among those who pray will either die in a prayer or after a prayer he has performed: he may die in the forenoon after the Fajr prayer, or at the end of the night after the 'Isha' prayer, or in the afternoon after the 'Asr prayer—he knows that there must certainly be a prayer that is the last prayer for each one of us, though we do not know which prayer it is. Therefore, the Prophetic instruction is to pray as if it is the farewell prayer. The Prophet (ﷺ) said in the Hadīth of Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari (may Allah be pleased with him):

¹ Agreed upon, narrated by Al-Bukhāri (9/121) and Muslim (4/2061).

"إذا قمت في صلاتك فصل صلاة مودع"،

"When you stand to pray, pray the prayer of one bidding farewell."¹ We have been directed to remember death in our prayer, for every prayer might be his last. It is only fitting that whoever prays as if it is the farewell prayer should perfect his prayer. It is reported in the Hadīth on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"اذكر الموت في صلاتك، فإن الرجل إذا ذكر الموت في صلاته لحري أن يحسن صلاته، وصل صلاة رجل لا يظن أن يصلي صلاة غيرها "

"Remember death in your prayer, for when a man remembers death in his prayer, he is most likely to perform his prayer well; and perform the prayer of a man who does not think he will pray any other prayer."²

As for this end, we do not know when it will occur. Then comes the long Barzakh life that we will live, and we do not know what it will be like. The Prophet (ﷺ) has informed us that the grave is a garden from the gardens of Paradise or a pit from the pits of the Fire, yet we do not know how it will be. So we ask Allah that our graves be gardens from the gardens of Paradise.

¹ Narrated by Ibn Mājah (2/1396); classified as Hasan (sound) by Al-Albāni.

² Narrated by Ad-Daylami in Al-Firdaws bimā'thūr Al-Khitāb (1/431); Al-Albāni classified it as Hasan (sound).

Secondly: the Day of Judgment—the great Day whose length is fifty thousand years—on which the sun will draw near to the heads of the creatures until they are submerged in sweat. We do not know what our condition will be on that Day. We know that there are those whom Allah will shade under the shade of His Throne on a day when there is no shade except His shade; we ask Allah, Blessed and Exalted, to make us among them. Yet, at the same time, we do not know what our condition will be.

Thirdly: Passing over the Bridge on the Day of Judgment. People will differ in the manner of their passage: some like lightning, some like the wind, some like the finest horses, some will crawl, and some will be snatched by the hooks and cast into the Hellfire. We do not know the true reality of these matters. Salvation from the Hellfire—or being punished therein and deprived of Paradise—are all frightening matters and concerns. All of these matters lie before us; therefore, a person must make the Hereafter his foremost concern and give it due care.

What is the relevance of prayer to the subject?

Its connection is that prayer came to remind us of the Hereafter. In our lives, in our amusement, in our work, and in our desires between prayers, we become heedless. So when the muezzin calls to prayer, we remember Allah, and we go to the mosque and stand for prayer, which is standing

before Him. Thus, we remember Him, the Blessed and Exalted, and we remember that just as we stand before Him now in this world, we will stand before Him in the Hereafter. Then when we recite Al-Fatiha, we recite

(مُلْكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ 4)

{Master of the Day of Judgment.} The Day of Recompense is the Day of Resurrection; our awareness of the matter of the Hereafter increased. Then, when we conclude the prayer, we seek refuge in Allah from the torment of Hell, and from the torment of the grave, all of which are in the Hereafter. So, increasing awareness of these matters brings the matter of the Hereafter to a person's mind. This is if the Hereafter is mentioned once or twice, so how would it be if it were continuous, that the believer in every prayer—the Fajr and Dhuhr prayer,

and Asr, Maghrib, 'Isha', and the supererogatory prayers—these matters are present in the mind. And there is no doubt that for one who magnifies the value of prayer, establishes it, and strives for Khushū' (humility and focus) in it and consciousness of what he says in it, the importance of the Hereafter undoubtedly increases for him, and his remembrance of what will be in the Hereafter increases, and his attachment to the bliss of the Hereafter becomes greater, and his eagerness for

salvation from the punishment of Allah in the Hereafter will be the greatest.

﴿فَمَنْ رُحِّزَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ﴾
{185}

{Whoever is spared from the Fire and admitted into Paradise has truly won, for the life of this world is nothing but an illusory pleasure.} [Surat Āl ‘Imrān: 185]

Then (if the concern for the Hereafter increases), the life of this world takes its natural position, and he lives in it as Allah Almighty said:

﴿وَاتَّبِعْ فِيمَا ءَاتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ ۖ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا﴾

{Rather, seek with what Allah has given you the abode of the Hereafter, without forgetting your share of this world.} [Surat al-Qasas: 77] He works for the Hereafter and does not forget the worldly life, but the worldly life takes its proper place, as the Prophet (ﷺ) informed us in the Hadīth narrated by Sahl ibn Sa‘d (may Allah be pleased with him):

"لو كانت الدنيا تعدل عند الله جناح بعوضة ما سقى كافراً منها شربة ماء "

"Were the worldly life worth a wing of a mosquito in the sight of Allah, He would not have given a disbeliever a sip of its water."¹ Thus, prayer connects us with the Hereafter.

¹ Narrated by At-Tirmidhi (4/560); Al-Albānī classified it as Sahīh (authentic).

The Concept of Comprehensive Reformation

"Islāh" linguistically: Rectification; it is the verbal noun of "aslaha". It is said: he rectified the thing after its corruption—i.e., he set it aright; and he rectified the beast—i.e., he treated it well so it became sound.¹

When we talk about comprehensive reform, and the comprehensiveness of reform in a person's life, prayer stands out to us because the Prophet (ﷺ) informed us in the Hadith of Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him): "The first thing a servant will be held accountable for is his prayer. If it is sound, the rest of his deeds will be sound, and if his prayer is corrupt, the rest of his deeds will be corrupt."²

There is no doubt that man seeks to reform his deeds and his life, and prayer contains this comprehensiveness for the reformation of deeds. When we contemplate the requisites for reformation, we find that its opposite is corruption. And it is agreed that the causes of corruption are religious violations and evil deeds. And that which specifically forbids evil deeds and religious

¹ "Al-'Ayn" (3/117), "Lisān al-'Arab" (2/516), "Maqāyīs al-Lughah" (3/303).

² Narrated by At-Tabarāni in "Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat" (2/240); classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albāni.

violations is prayer, as Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, says:

﴿أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ 45﴾

{Recite [O Prophet] what is revealed to you of the Book, and establish prayer, for indeed prayer restrains one from immoral acts and wickedness. Indeed, the remembrance of Allah is of greater merit. And Allah knows all what you do.} [Surat al-‘Ankabūt: 45] Thus, prayer in particular prohibits immorality and wrongdoing.

Thus, when a Muslim establishes the prayer, his reverence for Allah increases in his heart; and an increase of such reverence in the heart gives rise to two matters:

The first matter: It brings about an increase in love for Allah, the Blessed and Exalted.

The second matter: It increases the fear of Allah’s punishment.

So if this veneration increases in the heart, love for Allah Almighty increases, so the Muslim turns to everything that Allah Almighty loves and is pleased with. His fear of Allah, Exalted and Glorified, also increases, so the Muslim keeps away from everything that Allah Almighty does not love and is not pleased with. But if the observance of prayer is weak, and humility within it is weak, and the

commitment to maintaining it is weak, then it does not bear fruit.

The relationship between increasing the glorification of Allah Almighty in the heart and the establishment of prayer is that a person refrains from immorality and wrongdoing, and draws closer to righteous deeds. Prayer, from its beginning to its end, manifests the glorification of Allah, may He be glorified and exalted.

The repeated Takbirs and the successive Dhikrs are all for the glorification of Allah, the Majestic and Exalted. So when a Muslim says the Dhikrs and sayings of the prayer, while being conscious of the meanings of what he says, there is no doubt that it will bring about an increase in his glorification of Allah, the Majestic and Exalted. These obligatory prayers, which we perform as seventeen Rak'ahs, contain ninety-four Takbirs. This means that every day, at least a praying Muslim says "Allahu Akbar" ninety-four times. So if this Takbir and this daily repetition of the phrase "Allahu Akbar" do not bring about in the heart a glorification of Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, and an increase in love for Him, turning towards Him, and fear of His punishment, then what other matter could possibly increase a person's glorification of God?

Prayer, therefore, is the greatest thing that instills awe, fear, veneration, and glorification for Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, which results in

distancing from religious violations and forbidden acts, and drawing closer to the love of Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, and His obedience.

So, we understand from this that prayer brings about personal, familial, and societal reform. Therefore, if a Muslim individual wants to know the extent of their righteousness, they should look at their prayer. Because the more they establish the prayer, the more their righteousness increases and their corruption decreases, and their personal religious violations and wrongdoings diminish. So when they establish prayer, they stay away from wrongdoings. Similarly, if a Muslim family is observant of prayers, this prayer will prevent its members from religious violations and wrongdoings. Thus, their righteousness increases, and they become a righteous family due to their observance of prayer. Likewise, if the command to pray and establish it becomes widespread in a society, there is no doubt that the righteousness of this society will be greater than that of other societies where the command to pray is less prevalent.

What is the relationship between prayer and the prohibition of immorality and wrongdoing?

A person performs deeds only after willing them with a will of the heart, and from that his action or conduct arises. Thus, a person intends and wills before he begins to act—whether good or evil

deeds—and he resolves upon it. The heart, therefore, is fundamental in generating the deeds or behaviors a person undertakes. The Prophet (ﷺ) pointed this out in the Hadīth of al-Nu‘mān ibn Bashīr (may Allah be pleased with him):

"وَإِنَّ فِي الْجَسَدِ مُضَغَةً: إِذَا صَلَحَتْ صَلَحَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ، وَإِذَا فَسَدَتْ فَسَدَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ، أَلَا وَهِيَ الْقَلْبُ".

"Indeed, there is a piece of flesh in the body: if it is sound, the whole body is sound; and if it is corrupt, the whole body is corrupt; indeed, it is the heart."¹

When this heart is filled with love of Allah Almighty, with His remembrance and glorification, the intentions and motivations stemming from it regarding deeds and conduct are directed toward doing good, obedience, and acts of drawing near to Allah. But this heart—we ask Allah Almighty for safety and well-being—when it becomes corrupt, the impulses stemming from it are toward evil and evil deeds.

The nourishment of the heart is greatest through prayer, as stated in His words:

{وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي 14}

{and establish prayer to remember Me.} [Surat Taha: 14] The greatest purpose of establishing prayer is the remembrance of Allah Almighty. The heart becomes attached to the remembrance of

¹ Agreed upon, narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/20) and Muslim (3/1219).

Allah, Blessed and Exalted, and to exalting Him, which in turn enjoins the limbs to perform good actions and righteous deeds. Hence, we find a very strong interconnection between the acts of the limbs and the acts of the hearts: when a person practices good outward deeds, they nourish his heart; likewise, when he enlivens his heart with the remembrance of Allah, Blessed and Exalted, exalting Him, loving Him, turning to Him in repentance, relying upon Him, and being sincere to Him, these heart-based acts of worship affect his actions and his limbs. Thus, you find that whoever maintains the prayer, Allah, Blessed and Exalted, aids him in all his actions and grants him success, for he is connected and attached to his Lord, Allah Almighty. And Allah, Blessed and Exalted, is the One Who helps a person set his state aright. Hence, it is no wonder that we witness these meanings that are linked to the rectification of all of a person's affairs as he turns wholeheartedly to his prayer, for the Prophet (ﷺ) informed us in the Hadith.

"أول ما يحاسب به العبد صلاته فإن صلحت صلح سائر عمله وإن فسدت صلاته فسد سائر عمله"

"The first thing a servant will be held accountable for is his prayer. If it is good, the rest of his deeds

will be good; and if his prayer is corrupt, the rest of his deeds will be corrupt."¹

Likewise, this reform extends to society. In a society where the command to pray and establish it is widespread, we find many social values such as brotherhood, familiarity, love, harmony, cooperation, and mutual support among Muslims who realize the greatness of prayer, especially the congregational prayer, which holds this high social value. For the believer, with his brothers in the congregational prayer, sees them, talks with them, and supplicates for them. He greets them, smiles cheerfully in their faces, and rejoices in meeting them, and through this brotherhood, he is reminded of his brotherhood in Paradise with the righteous servants.

Concept of Purification and Beauty

Tahārah linguistically: It is the verbal noun of Tahura; tuhr is the opposite of filth; and Tatahhur is keeping oneself free from blame and every reprehensible thing².

Al-jamāl linguistically: the verbal noun of "Al-Jameel"; its verb is jamala-yajmulu. Allah Almighty says: {And for you in them is beauty when you bring

¹ Narrated by At-Tabarāni in "Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat" (2/240); classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albāni.

² "Lisān al-'Arab" (4/504); "Maqāyīs al-Lughah" (3/428).

them in to rest and when you send them out (to pasture),} meaning: splendor and beauty¹.

Ritual purity and beauty in prayer

Part of the greatness of prayer is that it requires the most complete state a servant can be in—in his purity, adornment, cleanliness, and preparation. Why? Because in prayer, one privately converses with Allah Almighty, so it is necessary and obligatory to be in this most complete state, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said in the Hadith of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him):

"إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ إِذَا كَانَ فِي الصَّلَاةِ، فَإِنَّمَا يُنَاجِي رَبَّهُ "

"When the believer is in prayer, he is in private conversation with his Lord."² And Allah Almighty says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا آدَمُ خُذْ زِينَتَكَ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ﴾

{O children of Adam, dress well for every prayer.} [Surat al-A'rāf: 31] In the state of prostration, which is the state of prayer in general, the believer must be accompanied by the sense of purity, adornment, and beauty.

Prayer encompasses all types of purity: physical, spiritual, and of the heart. Indeed, a Muslim derives beauty and adornment from his prayer, and his soul's beauty increases every time he prays and privately communicates with his Lord, increasing

¹ "Al-'Ayn" (6/142) and "Maqāyīs al-Lughah" (1/481).

² Agreed upon, Al-Bukhārī (1/90) and Muslim (1/390).

in glorification, praise, laudation, magnification, supplication, and invocation of Him. For this is nourishment for the soul, and when the soul is nourished, its beauty and strength increase.

Prayer entails forms of physical Tahārah (ritual purity). It is a condition for the validity of prayer that one be physically pure in his body and clothes and that he pray in a clean place; thus, the prayer is not valid except with complete Tahārah. This repeated daily Wudū' (ablution) imparts to the Muslim a sense of purity, clarity, and perfect adornment.

Also: spiritual purification from sins, meaning sins and evil acts of disobedience. Between our prayers, we err frequently, we forget, and we fall into sin, and these prayers come as a purification. If ablution itself removes sins—as reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) in the narration of 'Abdullah al-Sunabihi (may Allah be pleased with him)—the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"إِذَا تَوَضَّأَ الْعَبْدُ الْمُؤْمِنُ فَتَمَضَّمَصْ خَرَجَتْ الْخَطَايَا مِنْ فِيهِ، فَإِذَا اسْتَنْشَرِ خَرَجَتْ الْخَطَايَا مِنْ أَنْفِهِ، فَإِذَا غَسَلَ وَجْهَهُ خَرَجَتْ الْخَطَايَا مِنْ وَجْهِهِ حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ مِنْ تَحْتِ أَشْفَارِ عَيْنَيْهِ، فَإِذَا غَسَلَ يَدَيْهِ خَرَجَتْ الْخَطَايَا مِنْ يَدَيْهِ حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ مِنْ تَحْتِ أَظْفَارِ يَدَيْهِ، فَإِذَا مَسَحَ بِرَأْسِهِ خَرَجَتْ الْخَطَايَا مِنْ رَأْسِهِ حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ مِنْ أُذُنَيْهِ، فَإِذَا غَسَلَ رِجْلَيْهِ خَرَجَتْ الْخَطَايَا مِنْ رِجْلَيْهِ حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ مِنْ تَحْتِ أَظْفَارِ رِجْلَيْهِ، ثُمَّ كَانَ مَشْيُهُ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ وَصَلَاتُهُ نَافِلَةً لَهُ"،

"When the believing servant performs ablution and rinses his mouth, the sins come out from his mouth; when he expels water from his nose, the

sins come out from his nose; when he washes his face, the sins come out from his face until they come out from beneath the eyelashes of his eyes; when he washes his hands, the sins come out from his hands until they come out from beneath the fingernails of his hands; when he wipes his head, the sins come out from his head until they come out from his ears; and when he washes his feet, the sins come out from his feet until they come out from beneath the toenails of his feet. Then his walking to the mosque and his prayer are a supererogatory [merit] for him."¹ So these sins are removed by ablution, so what about the prayer itself?! Prayer is a great expiation for sins and a purifier for them. Therefore, it is mentioned in the Hadith that the Prophet (ﷺ) said in the Hadith of Abdullah ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him):

"تَحْتَرِفُونَ، تَحْتَرِفُونَ، فَإِذَا صَلَّيْتُمُ الْفَجْرَ غَسَلْتُمُهَا، ثُمَّ تَحْتَرِفُونَ تَحْتَرِفُونَ، فَإِذَا صَلَّيْتُمُ الْعَصْرَ غَسَلْتُمُهَا، ثُمَّ تَحْتَرِفُونَ تَحْتَرِفُونَ، ثُمَّ تَحْتَرِفُونَ تَحْتَرِفُونَ، فَإِذَا صَلَّيْتُمُ الْمَغْرِبَ غَسَلْتُمُهَا، ثُمَّ تَحْتَرِفُونَ تَحْتَرِفُونَ، فَإِذَا صَلَّيْتُمُ الْعِشَاءَ غَسَلْتُمُهَا، ثُمَّ تَنَامُونَ فَلَا يُكْتَبُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَيْءٌ حَتَّى تَسْتَيْقِظُوا "

"You get burned, you get burned, and when you perform the Fajr prayer, it washes it away. Then you get burned, you get burned, and when you perform the Dhuhr prayer, it washes it away. Then you get burned, you get burned, and when you perform the 'Asr prayer, it washes it away. Then

¹ Narrated by An-Nasā'i (1/74); classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albānī.

you get burned, you get burned, and when you perform the Maghrib prayer, it washes it away. Then you get burned, you get burned, and when you perform the 'Isha' prayer, it washes it away. Then you sleep, and nothing is recorded against you until you awaken."¹

This purity by which the Muslim is cleansed of sins, offenses, and misdeeds is spiritual purity. Alongside physical purification, it is attained by the Muslim who is steadfast in his prayer.

Prayer also gives purity of the heart—purity from the diseases of the heart, such as envy, pride, conceit, and showing off. Shaykh al-Islam (may Allah have mercy on him) mentioned that “You alone we worship” is a remedy for the disease of showing off, because the Muslim says:

﴿وَإِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ 5﴾

{You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help.} He renews his Tawhīd, and renews his intention to devote worship to Allah alone; and when the servant says:

﴿وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ 5﴾

{And You alone we ask for help.} He remembers that he seeks help from Allah Almighty to worship

¹ Narrated by At-Tabarāni in "Al-Mu'jam As-Saghīr" (1/91); classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albāni.

Him and in all his affairs, so he does not get conceited¹.

Also, when a Muslim daily repeats and reiterates his praise for Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, and that Allah is the Lord of the worlds, and knows that these blessings Allah has given are from the Lord of the worlds, then he does not envy anyone for anything. For prayer gives purity of the heart to the Muslim who maintains it and knows these matters, as he is purified from showing off, so he does not show off with his deeds; his heart is purified from conceit, for he knows that it is Allah who helps; and he is purified from envy, so he does not envy anyone, for he knows that all these deeds are from the Lord of the worlds. So when he knows that, the prayer becomes purity, clarity, and serenity, and he increases in beauty every time he prays, and the effect of this prayer is found as an adornment, comfort, and an expansion in his chest. In addition to the aesthetic values that the Muslim takes from the postures of prayer, he takes the beautiful order. For order is putting everything in its place, and the Muslim, when he prays, puts everything in its place. It is as if the prayer came to teach us order and train us in it, and we carry the effect of the prayer's beautiful order into the rest of our lives, so the

¹ Majmū' Al-Fatāwa by Ibn Taymiyyah (6/263).

Muslim puts everything in its place outside of prayer, deriving this from this great act of worship.

Also, the believer remembers the beauty of congregational prayer, the beauty of the row, and the beauty of leadership in prayer.

"إِنَّمَا جُعِلَ الْإِمَامُ لِيُؤْتَمَّ بِهِ"

"The Imam is appointed to be followed."¹ So all the congregants are commanded to straighten the rows; they stand in this beautiful position, and are led by the Imam, who guides them in this beautiful act of worship. If we establish the prayer and realize these beautiful meanings in it, we would increase in purity, serenity, adornment, and clarity in all matters of our lives, and we would derive these aesthetic values from our acts of worship. How, when we remember that Allah Almighty has commanded us to take adornment at every prayer.

﴿يَبْنَئِيْ ءَادَمُ خُذُوْا زِيْنَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ﴾

{O children of Adam, dress well for every prayer.} [Surat al-A'rāf: 31] It is befitting for one who reveres prayer to be conscious of this meaning when he comes to it. He should remember to adorn himself, and when he comes to prayer, he should come in his most beautiful adornment and finest attire, with respect to the purity of his body, his garment, and the place in which he prays. He should

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/85) and Muslim (1/308) from the Hadīth of Anas (May Allah be pleased with him).

also be keen to take the beauty of the prayer into his heart as a purification from ostentation, conceit, and envy.

The concept of 'Uluww al-himmah (willpower/high aspiration)

Linguistically, Al-himmah (resolve/aspiration) is what one resolves upon of a matter to carry it out. It is said: He is of great ambition¹. High aspiration is a goal for all people, and Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, "loves the noblest of matters," as it came from the Prophet (ﷺ) in the Hadith of Sahl al-Sa'idi (may Allah be pleased with him).

"إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يُحِبُّ مَعَالِيَ الْأُمُورِ، وَيَكْرَهُ سُفْسَافَهَا."

"Indeed, Allah loves lofty matters and hates low ones."²

Successful people in life always strive to have high aspirations and strive to reach their utmost potential. This high aspiration is the spiritual strength that a Muslim derives from his worship and his connection with his Lord, Blessed and Exalted is He. So if a person feels weak, he remembers the All-Powerful, Glorified and Exalted is He, and thus increases in strength through Him. If he becomes needy, he remembers the All-Sufficient and stands before Him. If he is ignorant,

¹ "Al-'Ayn" (3/357), "Lisān al-'Arab" (12/621).

² Narrated by At-Tabarāni in "Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat" (3/210); Al-Albāni classified it as Sahīh (authentic).

he remembers the All-Knowing, the Knower of the unseen, and asks Him for knowledge.

Prayer gives the Muslim immense psychological strength, so no weakness or lethargy affects him. If the believer understands that he draws his strength and motivation from prayer whenever he becomes weak or listless in any aspect (the aspect of knowledge - the aspect of Da'wah - the aspect of life), he remembers that he will soon pray, so he regains his motivation and his activity increases. How could it not, when within prayer itself, there is that which gives this meaning.

Among the practical means to achieve and increase high aspiration is the presence of models or role models. Because if a concept is merely theoretical knowledge or information and no one has acted upon it, a person might find it difficult. But if a model or role model is found who has done this and acted upon it, it makes it easier for a person to act on this concept, no matter how great it is.

In prayer, we ask Allah Almighty to guide us to the straight path, so the Muslim says in his prayer:

﴿أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ 6 صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ 7﴾،

{Guide us to the straight path,
the path of those whom You have blessed; not of those who incurred Your Wrath, or of those who went astray.} This is the straight path that the

Muslim wants to live by and wants to be upon—this is not an ordinary path, nor a way for just anyone, and not a methodology for any person—rather, it is the path of the greatest role models and examples that have passed through human history from among the successful ones with high aspirations: they are the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs, and the righteous. These are the four categories whose path the Muslim wants to be on in every prayer, and these are the four upon whom Allah has bestowed His favor.

﴿وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا 69 ذَٰلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ عَلِيمًا 70﴾

{Those who obey Allah and the Messenger will be with those whom Allah has blessed: the prophets, the people of Truth, the martyrs, and the righteous. What excellent companions they are!

That grace is from Allah, and sufficient is Allah as Knower.} [Surat an-Nisā': 69-70]

When the believer remembers in his prayer these role models—he remembers the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs, and the righteous—and knows that in every prayer he wants to be on their path, and asks Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, to be on the straight path that they followed, and begins to review his life. Those upon whom Allah has bestowed His favor, what was their life like? What

were their aspirations like? How did they spend their time? What was their worship like? What were their morals like? What were their dealings like? What was their life like in general? So he is enlightened by these meanings on his path in life, his determination increases, and he takes from them this emulation.

So imitate them if you are not like them; indeed, imitation of the noble ones is success.¹

Indeed, prayer elevates the believer's spirit to the highest possible degree. When he prays, he remembers the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), the greatest role model. He remembers him and sends peace upon him when he says in the sitting of the Tashahhud, “as-salāmu ‘alayka ayyuhā an-nabī wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh.” (Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the mercy of Allah and His blessings.) So he remembers the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and remembers that he is his role model.

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ
اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا﴾ 21

{Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example for those who look forward to Allah and the Last Day, and remember Allah much.} [Surat al-Ahzāb: 21] The Muslim seeks through prayer elevation to those high degrees, to inherit

¹ Dīwān al-Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl, (p. 14).

Paradise. When the worshiper is among the humble,

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ 1 الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ 2﴾

{The believers have attained true success:
those who humble themselves in their prayers,}

[Surat al-Mu'minūn: 1-2] He seeks by this prayer to reach the highest attainable rank in the Hereafter, and to enjoy the bliss of seeing Allah, Blessed and Exalted, when he maintains his prayers and is among the humble therein.

Prayer gives the believer high aspiration through the strength of his connection with Allah, by which he is strengthened in his life. It gives him high aspiration in the path of the prophets, the truthful, and the martyrs, so he emulates them. It gives him high aspiration by reminding him of the Prophet (ﷺ), the greatest role model. So whenever the time for prayer comes, he generally remembers that this prayer of his is a reason for elevating his aspiration to the degree he desires. And if he remembers in it the eternal abode and the gardens where he wants to be with the prophets, the truthful, and the martyrs, there is no doubt that his aspiration increases.

My advice to the Muslims: We should always link high ambition with establishing the prayer, and if a person becomes listless and weak in the aspect of knowledge, or the aspect of da'wah, or the social

aspect, or any other aspect, he should remember that he will soon pray, and through it, he will regain his energy and his ambition.

The concept of Rāhah (comfort) and the delight of the eyes

Comfort linguistically: 'rāḥa yarāḥu rawḥan,' i.e., it became cool and pleasant, and comfort is the opposite of fatigue. It is said, 'I found comfort in that matter,' meaning ease. And in the Hadith: The Prophet (ﷺ) said to his muezzin Bilal: 'Give us comfort with it,' i.e., call to prayer so we may find rest by performing it from our hearts' preoccupation with it.

Al-Qurrah, linguistically: qarra yaqirru—Qurrah, Qurūran, and Qurrah. Al-Qurr: coolness. It is said: so-and-so is qārr, i.e., settled. Al-Qarār: the place of settlement on the earth. Qurratu Al-'Ayn: that which brings tranquility, i.e., coolness—namely, that by which a person encounters joy, so the eye does not aspire to anything else. And among that is His saying, Exalted be He:

﴿قُرْتُ عَيْنِي وَلَكَ﴾

{He is a source of joy for me and you.} [Surat al-Qasas: 9] And the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"وجعلت قرة عيني في الصلاة."

¹ "Al-'Ayn" (3/293); "Lisān al-'Arab" by Ibn Manzhūr (2/461).

"My comfort has been provided in prayer."¹.

How does prayer bring comfort?

What are the aspects of comfort, bliss, and gaining delight through prayer?

When we recall prayer and the comfort it brings, we remember the statement of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), as he used to say, as narrated by Salmān ibn Khālīd (may Allah be pleased with him):

"يَا بِلَالُ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ أَرْحُنَا"

"O Bilāl, call the Iqāmah for the prayer; give us comfort with it."².

O reader, as soon as you read this Hadith, you find that the connection between comfort and prayer is very evident, for the Prophet (ﷺ) says to Bilāl:

"أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ أَرْحُنَا بِهَا"

"Call the Iqāmah for the prayer; give us comfort with it."³ This Hadīth indicates that prayer is comforting and that it brings comfort, and that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to get comfort by prayer. Hence, it remains upon the Muslim to strive against his soul until he attains comfort in prayer, for he knows with certainty that prayer is a comfort; the proof of

¹ "Al-'Ayn" (5/21), "Lisān al-'Arab" (5/82), "Mu'jam al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah al-Mu'aṣirah" (3/1796).

² Narrated by At-Tabarānī (6/277); classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albānī.

³ Narrated by Abu Dāwūd (4/296); Al-Albānī classified it as Sahīh (authentic).

that is this Hadīth in which the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned that prayer is a comfort, and he used to say to Bilāl:

"أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ أَرْحَنًا بِهَا."

"Call the Iqāmah for the prayer; give us comfort with it."

When the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned what was made beloved to him of this world, he said, according to a Hadith narrated by Anas (may Allah be pleased with him):

"حُبِّبَ إِلَيَّ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا النِّسَاءُ وَالطِّيبُ، وَجُعِلَ قُرَّةُ عَيْنِي فِي الصَّلَاةِ."

"Love for women and perfume has been made dear to me from this world, and the coolness of my eyes has been placed in prayer."¹

Coolness of the eye (qurrat al-‘ayn): that which brings coolness to the eye. The eye is always in motion, ever aspiring toward what is higher and better, and it keeps aspiring until it reaches something beyond which there is nothing higher. In this life, in terms of bliss, nothing is higher than prayer. Therefore, the Prophet (ﷺ) found the delight of his eye in prayer.

The aspects of enjoying prayer and finding comfort in it become apparent when we know that prayer expiates misdeeds, sins, and evil deeds. Misdeeds, evil deeds, and sins weigh a person

¹ Narrated by An-Nasā'i (7/61); classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albānī.

down. So when a Muslim performs a prayer with humility, his mistakes, sins, and misdeeds fall away, and he becomes light after this prayer. Thus, he finds rest through prayer, and prayer relieves him of these misdeeds, sins, and evil deeds.

Also, we find that in prayer there is delight in conversing with Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, for just as the greatest bliss the people of Paradise will enjoy is seeing Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, and attaining His pleasure, as mentioned in the Hadith narrated by Suhayb ibn Sinān (may Allah be pleased with him) from the Prophet (ﷺ) who said:

" إِذَا دَخَلَ أَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ الْجَنَّةَ، قَالَ: يَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى: تُرِيدُونَ شَيْئًا أَزِيدُكُمْ؟ فَيَقُولُونَ: أَلَمْ تُبَيِّضْ وُجُوهَنَا؟ أَلَمْ تُدْخِلْنَا الْجَنَّةَ، وَتُنَجِّنَا مِنَ النَّارِ؟ قَالَ: فَيَكْشِفُ الْحِجَابَ، فَمَا أُعْطُوا شَيْئًا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّظَرِ إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ، "

"When the dwellers of Paradise enter Paradise, he said: Allah Almighty will say: 'Do you want Me to give you anything more?' They will say: 'Have You not brightened our faces? Have You not made us enter Paradise and saved us from Hellfire?' He said: He will then lift the veil, and of all the things they were given, nothing will be dearer to them than looking at their Lord, the Mighty and Exalted."¹ They are not granted any bliss greater than that bliss, nor any delight greater than that delight; this is the greatest thing the believers delight in—

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/163) from the Hadith of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him).

namely, the increase, which is looking at the Honorable Countenance of Allah.

(الَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا لِحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٍ)

{For those who do good, there will be the best reward and more.} [Surat Yūnus: 26] In this world, there is no way to see Allah Almighty nor to enjoy the delight of seeing Him; however, there is a way to converse privately with Him and to stand before Him. This is what happens to the one who prays in his prayer: when he rises to pray, he is having an intimate conversation only with his Lord. The Prophet (ﷺ) said in the authentic Hadith:

"إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ إِذَا كَانَ فِي الصَّلَاةِ، فَإِنَّمَا يُنَاجِي رَبَّهُ."

"When the believer is in prayer, he is in private conversation with his Lord."¹

And if we recall that when he recites Surat al-Fātihah, he says:

(الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ 2)، يقول الله تعالى: حمدني عبدي، وإذا قال: (الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ 3)، يقول الله تعالى: أثنى علي عبدي، وإذا قال: (مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ 4)، يقول الله تعالى: مجدني عبدي، فإذا قال: (إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ 5) قال: هذا بيني وبين عبدي، ولعبي ما سأل، فإذا قال: (أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ 6 صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ 7) قال: هذا لعبدي ولعبي ما سأل "

When the slave says: (All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds). [Al-Fatiha: 2], Allah Almighty says: "My slave has praised Me." And when he says:

¹ Agreed upon; narrated by Al-Bukhārī (1/90) and Muslim (1/390) from the Hadīth of Anas ibn Mālik (May Allah be pleased with him).

(the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful) [Al-Fatiha: 3], Allah Almighty says: “My slave has extolled Me.” And when he says: (Master of the Day of Judgment) [Al-Fatiha: 4], Allah Almighty says: “My slave has glorified Me.” Then, when he says: (You alone we worship and You alone we ask for help) [Al-Fatiha: 5], He says: “This is between Me and My slave, and My slave shall have what he is asking for.” And when he says: (Guide us to the Straight Path, the Path of those whom You have blessed—not of those You are displeased with, or those who went astray) [Al-Fatiha: 7], He says: “This is for My slave, and My slave shall have what he has asked for.”¹

Thus, the believer delights in this intimate supplication in prayer, as he remembers and links it to the abiding bliss in the Abode of Eternity—seeing Allah and attaining His pleasure.

Moreover, among what the believer enjoys in prayer is remembering and glorifying Allah Almighty; for the dwellers of Paradise will enjoy glorifying Him in Paradise. Allah Almighty says about the dwellers of Paradise:

﴿دَعَوْنَهُمْ فِيهَا سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَنَحْمِيدُكَ فِيهَا سَلَامٌ وَأَخِرُ دَعْوَاهُمْ أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ
الْعَالَمِينَ ۝۱۰﴾

{Their prayer will be, “Glorify be to You, O Allah,” and their greeting will be, “Peace,” and the

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/296).

closing of their prayer will be, “All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.”} [Surat Yūnus: 10] The believer glorifies Allah Almighty in his prayer; at times he begins his prayer with Tasbeeh (glorification), and he glorifies Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, in his bowing, saying: “Subhāna rabbi al-‘Azheem” (Glorified is my Lord, the Most Magnificent) three times; and he glorifies Allah in his prostration, saying: “Subhāna rabbi al-A‘la” (Glorified is my Lord, the Most High) three times. When the worshiper knows that the dwellers of Paradise enjoy and take delight in Tasbeeh, he strives against his soul so that whenever he glorifies in his prayer, he recalls that bliss and thus experiences it while in his prayer.

Also, the greeting of peace (as-salām) is frequent in prayer; and in the Hereafter, in Paradise, the believer will be graced with peace from the Most Merciful Lord.

﴿سَلَامٌ قَوْلًا مِّن رَّبِّ رَحِيمٍ 58﴾

{“Peace”: a word from a Most Merciful Lord.} [Surat Yāsīn: 58]

﴿تَحِيَّاتُهُمْ يَوْمَ يَلْقَوْنَهُ سَلَامٌ﴾

{Their greeting on the Day they meet Him will be, “Peace,”} [Surat al-Ahzāb: 44]

﴿دَعَاؤُهُمْ فِيهَا سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَتَحِيَّاتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَامٌ﴾

{Their prayer will be, "Glory be to You, O Allah," and their greeting will be, "Peace."} [Surat Yūnus: 10]

﴿وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا أَنْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ﴾

{“All praise be to Allah, Who has guided us to this, for We would not have been guided to this if Allah had not guided us.”} [Surat al-A’rāf: 43] By this guidance in the Hereafter, the people of Paradise enjoy peace. When the worshiper sits before his Lord, Blessed and Exalted, in the sitting of Tashahhud (the At-Tahiyyāt), he remembers peace and says: "At-tahiyyātu lillāhi wa as-salawātu wa at-tayyibāt" (All compliments, prayers, and pure words are for Allah), thus magnifying Allah, Blessed and Exalted. Then he greets the Messenger of Allah, saying: "As-salāmu ‘alayka ayyuha an-nabiyyu wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh" (Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the mercy of Allah and His blessings). Then he sends peace upon himself: "As-salāmu ‘alayna" (peace be upon us), and he remembers that As-Salām is Allah; so he knows that Allah is with him, and he finds tranquility, delight, and calm. His state is that he senses this ease and this tranquility when he says: "As-salāmu ‘alayna" (peace be upon us). Then he sends peace upon all the servants of Allah: "wa ‘alā ‘ibādillāhi as-sālihīn" (and upon the righteous servants of Allah).

Also, he concludes his prayer with peace, for how abundant is the peace within the prayer, the peace that gives the meaning of security, tranquility, happiness, and comfort. And the believer in his day frequently offers peace, hoping to enter the Abode of Peace.

(لَهُمْ دَارُ السَّلَامِ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمْ)

{They will have the Home of Peace with their Lord, and He will be their Protector.} [Surat al-An'ām: 127]

Conditions, Pillars, Obligatory Acts, and Sunnah Acts of Prayer and Their Relation to Enhancing the Status of Prayer

The conditions of prayer are nine:

This reflection, in truth, grants the Muslim greater attentiveness to the significance of prayer and to its immense value with Allah Almighty; and Allah, Blessed and Exalted, has stipulated for it these numerous conditions—more than for other acts of worship—to demonstrate the great significance of prayer.

The first condition among the conditions of prayer: Islam

Being a Muslim is a requirement for the validity of any act of worship. Islam is the first condition of prayer, as stated about the pillars of Islam in the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ):

"بُني الإسلام على خمس: شهادة أن لا إله إلا الله وأن محمداً رسول الله، وإقام الصلاة، وإيتاء الزكاة، والحج، وصوم رمضان"،

"Islam was built on five: testifying that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing prayer, giving Zakah, Hajj, and fasting in Ramadan."¹ Also, it is reported that when the Prophet (ﷺ) dispatched Mu'adh ibn Jabal to Yemen, he said to him:

"إِنَّكَ سَتَأْتِي قَوْمًا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ، فَإِذَا جِئْتَهُمْ فَادْعُهُمْ إِلَى أَنْ يَشْهَدُوا أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، فَإِنْ هُمْ طَاعُوا لَكَ بِذَلِكَ، فَأَخْبِرْهُمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ فَرَضَ عَلَيْهِمْ خَمْسَ صَلَوَاتٍ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ وَلَيْلَةٍ."

"You will come to a people from the People of the Book, so when you reach them, invite them to testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. If they obey you in that, then inform them that Allah has made obligatory upon them five prayers every day and night."²

This indicates that Islam is the first and most important condition of prayer.

The second condition: Sanity.

Among the greatness of prayer is that the insane person is not permitted to pray, because he does

¹ Agreed upon; narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/11) and Muslim (1/45) from the Hadith of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father).

² Agreed upon; narrated by Al-Bukhāri (2/104) and Muslim (1/50) from the Hadith of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him and his father).

not know what he is saying. The act of prayer is a great act that requires a person to be of sound mind, and the Prophet (ﷺ) says

"رُفِعَ الْقَلَمُ عَنْ ثَلَاثَةٍ: عَنِ النَّائِمِ حَتَّى يَسْتَيْقِظَ، وَعَنِ الصَّبِيِّ حَتَّى يَحْتَلِمَ، وَعَنِ الْمَجْنُونِ حَتَّى يَعْقِلَ"

"The Pen has been lifted from three (people): the sleeper until he awakes; the child until he reaches puberty; and the insane until he regains his sanity."¹ Hence, the common factor among them is the presence of sanity.

The third condition: Discernment.

Thus, a little child who has not reached the age of discernment is not permitted to pray, for among the conditions of the prayer is that the child be at the age of discernment. The Prophet (ﷺ) specified the age at which the child is commanded to pray, saying:

"مُرُوا الصَّبِيَّ بِالصَّلَاةِ إِذَا بَلَغَ سَبْعَ سِنِينَ، وَإِذَا بَلَغَ عَشَرَ سِنِينَ فَاضْرِبُوهُ عَلَيْهَا"

"Order the child to pray when he reaches seven years old, and when he reaches ten years, hit (discipline) him for it."² This is the age at which the child begins to discern matters in his life; at that time, he is ordered to perform the prayer and taught the prayer.

¹ Narrated by Abu Dāwūd, (4/141), from the Hadīth of ‘Alī ibn Abi Tālib (may Allah be pleased with him); Al-Albānī classified it as Sahīh (authentic).

² Narrated by Abu Dāwūd, (1/133), from the Hadīth of Sabrah Al-Juhani (may Allah be pleased with him); classified as Hasan (sound) by Al-Albānī.

The fourth condition: Purification from ritual impurity.

The status of prayer is great, a stance of intimate conversation with the Lord of the worlds, Glorified and Exalted. This great sanctity of prayer necessitates purity from ritual impurity. So if a person becomes ritually impure, it is not valid for him to pray or to stand for prayer; rather, he must purify himself and perform ablution, because the Prophet (ﷺ) says:

" لَا تُقْبَلُ صَلَاةٌ بِغَيْرِ طَهْوَرٍ "

"No prayer is accepted without purification."¹

Therefore, among the greatness of prayer is that the one who cannot find water must purify himself, even if with Tayammum (dry ablution). This is from the greatness of prayer in the sight of the Lord of the worlds, Glorified and Exalted.

The fifth condition: Avoiding Najāsah (material impurity).

It does not befit the state of prayer that there be any impurity on his clothing, nor in the place where he prays; therefore, he must avoid such impurities. Allah Almighty says:

{وَتَيَّابَكُمْ فَطَهِّرْ 4}

{and purify your garments,} [Surat al-Muddaththir: 4] So it includes full purification from

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/204) from the Hadīth of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father).

any impurity that does not befit the prayer, given its greatness and the majesty of the servant's intimate discourse therein with Allah Almighty.

The sixth condition: Facing the Qiblah (prayer direction)

It is obligatory upon the believer to face the Qiblah in his prayer, which is the honorable Ka'bah. Allah Almighty says:

﴿إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِلْعَالَمِينَ 96 فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا﴾

{The first House [of worship] established for mankind was the one at Bakkah [i.e., Makkah], full of blessings and guidance for the worlds.

In it are clear signs [such as] the standing place of Abraham; whoever enters it will be safe.} [Surat Āl 'Imrān: 96-97] The qiblah is the Ka'bah, and Allah Almighty says to His Prophet (ﷺ):

﴿فَقَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ فَلْنُوَلِّينَاكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ﴾

{We see the turning of your face [O Prophet] towards heaven; We will surely make you turn towards a prayer direction that will please you. So turn your face towards the Sacred Mosque [in Makkah], and wherever you are, turn your faces towards it.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 144] Thus, this command is to turn one's face toward the Sacred Mosque, in the direction of the Ka'bah. If a person is close to the Ka'bah, he faces the Ka'bah itself; if he

is in Makkah, he faces the Haram; and if he is outside Makkah, he faces Makkah, where the honorable Ka'bah is.

The point regarding the condition of facing the Ka'bah in prayer is clear; for the Ka'bah is the House of Allah, and Allah Almighty says:

﴿وَطَهِّرْ بَيْتِي﴾

{and purify My House} [Surat al-Hajj: 26] When the believer turns towards the Qiblah, the first thing he remembers is that this Ka'bah is the Sacred House of Allah, Blessed and Exalted. He faces it with his body (toward the direction of the Ka'bah) and turns his heart to supplicate to Allah, Blessed and Exalted, which is more conducive to the presence of the heart during the prayer. This, by Allah, is among the manifestations of the greatness of the prayer and the loftiness of its status with the Lord of the worlds, Glorified and Exalted.

The seventh condition: Covering the 'Awrah (must-cover body parts)

The status of prayer is a majestic and awe-inspiring status; it is not befitting that a person comes to it haphazardly or in whatever attire he wishes. And Allah, Blessed and Exalted, says:

﴿يَا بَنِي آدَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ﴾
(المسرفين 31)

{O children of Adam, dress well for every prayer. Eat and drink, but do not waste, for He does not like

the wasteful.} [Surat al-A'rāf: 31] Thus, this is a command to take adornment, and the Prophet clarified that the adornment intended for those who pray is the concealing of the 'Awrah (the must-cover body parts).

The eighth condition: Intention.

The intention of worship... the intention of prayer... the intention of drawing closer to Allah, Blessed and Exalted, through this act of worship with its words and actions. Thus, a person differentiates between their habit of standing and sitting or even reciting remembrances, and being in prayer with this intention. For he intends to draw closer to Allah, Blessed and Exalted, and intends to worship Him with these words and actions. And the Prophet (ﷺ) says:

"إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَىٰ"

"Verily, the reward of deeds depends on the intentions, and each person will be rewarded according to what he intended."¹ The worshiper intends, specifying his prayer as obligatory or supererogatory, and intends to worship Allah Almighty with all that he utters in the prayer.

The ninth condition: Commencement of the time of prayer.

Allah Almighty says:

¹ Agreed upon, narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/6) and Muslim (3/1515) from the Hadīth of 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb (may Allah be pleased with him).

{إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا 103}

{Indeed, prayer is prescribed for the believers at specific times.} [Surat an-Nisā': 103] And the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"أَمَّنِي جِبْرِيلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ عِنْدَ النَّبْتِ مَرَّتَيْنِ، فَصَلَّى بِي الظُّهْرَ حِينَ زَالَتْ الشَّمْسُ وَكَانَتْ قَدْرُ الشِّرَاكِ، وَصَلَّى بِي الْعَصْرَ حِينَ كَانَ ظِلُّهُ مِثْلَهُ، وَصَلَّى بِي يَغْنِي الْمَغْرِبَ حِينَ أَفْطَرَ الصَّائِمُ، وَصَلَّى بِي الْعِشَاءَ حِينَ غَابَ الشَّقَقُ، وَصَلَّى بِي الْفَجْرَ حِينَ كَانَ ظِلُّهُ مِثْلَهُ، وَصَلَّى بِي الْغَدَاةَ حِينَ كَانَ الظُّهْرُ حِينَ كَانَ ظِلُّهُ مِثْلَهُ، وَصَلَّى بِي الْعَصْرَ حِينَ كَانَ ظِلُّهُ مِثْلِيهِ، وَصَلَّى بِي الْمَغْرِبَ حِينَ أَفْطَرَ الصَّائِمُ، وَصَلَّى بِي الْعِشَاءَ إِلَى ثُلْثِ اللَّيْلِ، وَصَلَّى بِي الْفَجْرَ فَأَسْفَرَ" ثُمَّ انْقَضَتْ إِلَيَّ فَقَالَ: "يَا مُحَمَّدُ، هَذَا وَقْتُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ، وَالْوَقْتُ مَا بَيْنَ هَذَيْنِ الْوَقْتَيْنِ"

Gabriel (peace be upon him) led me twice in prayer at the House (i.e., the Ka'bah). He prayed Zhuhr with me when the sun had passed the zenith to the extent of the strap of a sandal; he prayed 'Asr with me when his shadow was the same as his height; he prayed Maghrib with me at the time when one who has been fasting breaks his fast; he prayed 'Ishā' with me when the twilight disappeared; and he prayed Fajr with me at the time when food and drink become prohibited for one who intends to fast. On the next day, he prayed Zhuhr with me when his shadow was the same as his height; he prayed 'Asr with me when his shadow was twice as his height; he prayed Maghrib with me when the fasting one broke his fast; he prayed 'Ishā' with me when one-third of the night had passed; and he prayed Fajr with me when there was clear

daylight.” Then, turning to me, he said: “O Muhammad, this is the time observed by the prophets before you, and the time is anywhere between these two times.”¹ This indicates that these prayers and their times were held in great reverence by all prophets (peace be upon them) before our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). These are the conditions of the prayer, and we have observed a very strong connection between magnifying the status of the prayer and the stipulation of these conditions. This is not the place to mention their jurisprudential details.

When we address the pillars, obligatory acts, and Sunnah acts of prayer, we are addressing the very components of the prayer itself. These terms, which the jurists (may Allah have mercy on them) have agreed to designate as pillars, obligatory acts, and Sunnah acts, are those commonly employed among the jurists and have been transmitted by the scholars from one to another. There may be differences regarding some of them among the schools of Fiqh, and the scholars have clarified those rulings; we will not delve into them. Rather, we will mention what is established in the

¹ Narrated by Abu Dāwūd (1/107), from the Hadīth of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him and his father); Al-Albānī classified it as Hasan (sound).

madhhab¹ that we are studying in the rulings of prayer.

"Rukn" (pl. arkān) (pillar): It is that without which the very existence of a thing does not stand; it is the strongest part of a thing. Thus, when we speak of the "arkān," we are speaking of the essential and important parts of the prayer.

The scholars have stated that the pillars of prayer are fourteen:

- Standing: The scholars specified it as "standing when capable," meaning that standing is a pillar when one is able, and it is waived when one lacks the ability. Thus, standing when capable is the first of the prayer's pillars.

- The Opening Takbīr at the beginning of the prayer: by saying: "Allāhu Akbar" (Allah is the Greatest). This first Takbīr, which is Takbīrat al-Ihrām, is a pillar of the prayer.

- Reciting Surat al-Fātihah in the prayer: Surat al-Fātihah is the prayer itself, as mentioned in the Hadīth Qudsī, in the words of Allah, the Almighty, reported by Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) from the Prophet (ﷺ) who said:

"قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: قَسَمْتُ الصَّلَاةَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ عَبْدِي نِصْفَيْنِ، وَلِعَبْدِي مَا سَأَلَ، فَإِذَا قَالَ الْعَبْدُ: (الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ 2)، قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: حَمَدَنِي عَبْدِي، وَإِذَا قَالَ: (الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ 3)، قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: أَتَنَّى عَلَيَّ عَبْدِي "وَإِذَا قَالَ: (مَلِكِ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ 4)، قَالَ: مَجَدَّنِي عَبْدِي -وَقَالَ مَرَّةً فَوَضَّ إِلَيَّ عَبْدِي- فَأِذَا

¹ The School of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (may Allah have mercy upon him).

قَالَ: ﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ﴾ 5 قَالَ: هَذَا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ عَبْدِي، وَلِعَبْدِي مَا سَأَلَ، فَإِذَا قَالَ: ﴿أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ﴾ 6 صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ 7 قَالَ: هَذَا لِعَبْدِي وَلِعَبْدِي مَا سَأَلَ

Allah Almighty said: "I have divided prayer between Myself and My servant into two halves, and My servant shall have what he has asked for. When the servant says: {All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds}, Allah Almighty says: 'My servant has praised Me.' And when he says: {The Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful}, Allah Almighty says: 'My servant has extolled Me.' And when he says: {Master of the Day of Judgment}, He says: 'My servant has glorified Me' — and on one occasion He said: 'My servant entrusted his affairs to Me.' And when he says: {You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help}, He says: "This is between Me and My servant, and My servant shall have what he has asked for." And when he says: {Guide us to the straight path, the path of those whom You have blessed; not of those who incurred Your Wrath, or of those who went astray}, He says: "This is for My servant, and My servant shall have what he has asked for."¹ Reciting Al-Fātihah is one of the pillars of the prayer, without which the prayer is invalid.

- Rukū' (bowing): therein is the magnification of Allah, Exalted be He.

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/296)

- Rising from bowing: a reminder of Allah's response to whoever praises Him.

- Standing up straight after rising from Rukū', to praise Allah and extol Him.

- Prostration with the seven organs; nearness to Allah, Most High, and humility before Him.

- Rising from Sujūd: a reminder to magnify Allah by His Takbīr—"Allāhu Akbar" (Allah is the Greatest).

- Sitting between the two prostrations, for seeking forgiveness.

- Maintaining tranquility in all the pillars.

- Observing the prescribed order—the prescribed order of these pillars.

- The last Tashahhud and sitting for it, during which there are several inward acts of worship.

- Invoking peace and blessings upon the Prophet (ﷺ) in the last Tashahhud is a mindful recollection of love for the Prophet (ﷺ).

- The Taslīm from the prayer: It signifies concluding the prayer and a greeting of peace to the worshippers.

These, in summary, are the pillars of prayer without which the prayer is not valid; and if any of these pillars is omitted, it must be performed.

The obligatory acts of prayer, as mentioned by the jurists, are eight:

All the Takbīrs other than the Takbīrat al-Ihrām. As mentioned earlier, Takbīrat al-Ihrām is a pillar

of the prayer; therefore, all the other Takbīrs are among the obligations of the prayer.

The statements that are within the pillars.

Such as saying in Rukū': "Subhāna Rabbi al-'Azhīm" (Glory be to my Lord, the Most Magnificent).

And saying: "Sami'allāhu liman hamidah" (Allah hears whoever praises Him) upon rising from Rukū'.

And saying "Rabbana wa lak al-hamd" (Our Lord, and to You is all praise).

And saying: "Subhāna Rabbi al-A'la" (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High) in prostration.

Saying "Rabbi ighfirli," (O my Lord, forgive me), the first Tashahhud, and the sitting for it.

The Pillars and the Obligatory Acts share that they must be performed, and the difference between them is:

If someone forgets a pillar of the prayer, he must perform it. But if he forgets an obligatory element of it, he should make up for it by offering the prostration of forgetfulness, and is not required to perform it. Apart from the pillars and the obligatory elements, whatever is said in prayer is from the Sunnahs of the prayer.

The Sunnah (Recommended) Acts of Prayer are divided into two types: Verbal Sunnahs and Action-related Sunnahs.

The verbal Sunnah: It is everything reported in the Hadith that is neither a pillar nor an obligation, such as seeking refuge in the prayer, the Basmalah, saying "Amin," reciting a Surah after Al-Fatihah, saying the Tasbih in bowing and prostration more than once, and the like of what has been established by the verbal Sunnah from the Prophet (ﷺ). Such matters do not rise to the level of an obligation and are not among the pillars of the prayer.

The Practical Sunnah: It is the postures of the actions of prayer, i.e., the manner of raising the hands during the opening Takbir, the manner of placing the right hand over the left on the chest, the manner of grasping the fingers on the knees during bowing, and so on. The description of the posture in prayer constitutes the Practical Sunnahs, and their mention and specification are found in the well-known chapters of Fiqh.

The connection of the Pillars, Obligatory Acts, and Sunnah Acts of Prayer to the meaning, value, and enhancing the status of prayer is immense, for the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed and said in the Hadīth of Mālik ibn al-Huwayrith (may Allah be pleased with him):

"وَصَلُّوا كَمَا رَأَيْتُمُونِي أَصَلِّي"

"Pray as you have seen me pray."¹ Therefore, the prayer has a specific, well-known, and clear

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/128).

manner, which the Prophet (ﷺ) explained to his noble Companions (may Allah be pleased with them). The Companions taught it to the Successors, and the Successors taught it to those after them, until these pillars, obligations, and Sunnahs reached us. These classifications are for studying the prayer; however, when a person comes to perform it, he should not deliberately leave a Sunnah from among the Sunnahs of the Prophet (ﷺ) on the grounds that it is merely a Sunnah. Rather, he must adhere to the practice of the Prophet (ﷺ), for when the Companions came to him and prayed in his presence, he taught them the prayer and said: “Pray as you have seen me pray.” It is thus fitting for everyone who learns the prayer to learn it in full—with its pillars, obligations, and Sunnahs—and to be most diligent in maintaining it, so that he may attain the great reward with Allah, the Most Generous, Glorified and Exalted.

Introduction to the Heart-Related Acts of Worship in Prayer

The Muslim ought to keep the heart's acts of worship present in prayer and to acquaint himself with them, so that he may live the life and spirit of prayer. It is therefore necessary, first, to know the importance of the worship of the heart. A person may have become accustomed to and learned the

acts of worship in their outward form, but when he knows that worship has two parts:

1. The outward component: It consists of the actions of the limbs—what is performed by the tongue and the limbs.

2. A heart-related component: It pertains to the worship of the heart. One should know that every act of worship necessarily has two forms: an outward form—the form of the limbs, and an inward form—the form of the heart. This knowledge must be kept present in every act of worship—in Dhikr, prayer, fasting, zakah, hajj, and in all other acts of worship. A Muslim must be aware of this information and be guided by it, so that he may truly live this worship through which he draws closer to Allah, performs it with excellence, and receives its full reward.

We Muslims have been commanded to observe *Ihsān* (excellence) in acts of worship. *Ihsān* is to worship Allah as if you see Him; and if you do not see Him, He surely sees you. This *Ihsān* in acts of worship, being in this manner and of such a high degree, must be preceded by this knowledge: maintaining the worship of the heart alongside the worship of the limbs.

Thus, it will become clear later on that, in the prayer, the worshiper's tongue moves with the Takbir, remembrance, glorification, seeking forgiveness, praise, commendation, and

supplication. Their hands move for the Takbir, and their entire body submits to Allah Almighty in their bowing. They bow to Allah Almighty and prostrate, drawing near to the ground in submission and humility to Allah Almighty. Thus, just as these limbs perform these acts of worship, the heart must also have acts of worship that accompany the actions of the limbs. This is why some scholars differentiate in terminology between 'Ibadah' (worship) and "Ubudiyyah' (servitude). 'Ibadah' is the actions of the limbs, while "Ubudiyyah' is the actions of the heart.

If we want worship to have an effect, it must be accompanied by servitude. If we want worship to have an impact and yield good deeds and a reward, the Muslim must maintain a state of devotion in the heart while performing the act of worship. That is why intention is one of the greatest conditions of prayer, because the place of intention is the heart, and the purpose of intention in prayer is the intention of worship and devotion to Allah Almighty. Therefore, some scholars define prayer as: devotion to Allah Almighty with specific words and actions that begin with the Takbir and end with the Taslim. The phrase "devotion to Allah" addresses the aspect of the heart. Let it be one of the concerns of the worshipper, when he enters his prayer, how to engage his heart during it, and what acts of worship the heart will undertake while the

limbs are performing their actions. For this reason, prayer includes some heart-based acts of worship: glorification and reverence for Allah, complete love for Him, complete humility before Him, hope for His reward, awe and fear of Him, thinking well of Him in answering supplications, modesty and a sense of shortcoming in fulfilling His rights, and the greatness of Allah's rights over His servants. Thus, while the servant is in his worship and drawing near to Him, the Muslim's heart accompanies these acts of the heart alongside the outward acts of worship performed by the limbs.

The meanings of the sayings and actions of the prayer, and their relationship to the servitude of the heart, will be addressed independently and separately. However, we focus on the importance of the worshipper's presence of mind; just as he strives to say the words and perform the actions, he must prepare his heart to enter into a private communion with Allah Almighty, and for His glorification, love, hope, modesty, and fear of Him—making these meanings part of his conscious knowledge.

So the worshipper must train himself in this matter and maintain the intention of worshipping Allah Almighty in everything he says and does. The Prophet (ﷺ) says:

"إنما الأعمال بالنيات"

"Verily, the reward of deeds depends on the intentions."¹ Prayer, from beginning to end, is composed entirely of acts. Thus, worship and servitude to Allah are inseparable in all acts of worship generally, and in the case of prayer in particular.

The Words and Actions of Prayer and Their Relationship with the Heart-related Meanings

The first thing the worshiper does is to stand for Allah Almighty,

{وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ (238)}

{Stand before Allah in complete devotion.} [Surat al-Baqarah: 238] Standing when capable is a pillar of the prayer. The Muslim stands for Allah Almighty, preparing to converse with Him, to magnify, exalt, and seek His forgiveness, and to enter into the prayer. It is fitting with standing that the Muslim prepares and feels the greatness of this position before Allah Almighty, while facing the Ka'bah—the Sacred House of Allah—as He Almighty said:

{وَطَهِّرْ بَيْتِي لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ (26)}

{And purify My House for those who circumambulate it, and those who stand up in

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/6).

prayer, and those who bow and prostrate.} [Surat al-Hajj: 26] As he said:

{إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ 96}

{The first House [of worship] established for mankind was the one at Bakkah [i.e., Makkah], full of blessings and guidance for the worlds.} [Surat Āl ‘Imrān: 96] The worshiper turns his body towards the Ka‘bah and his heart to supplicate to Allah Almighty.

The worshiper begins with the verbal utterances, and the first statement the worshiper makes after standing and facing the Ka‘bah is “Allāhu Akbar” (Allah is the Greatest). This is the Takbīrat al-Ihrām, meaning that with this Takbīr, he enters into the sanctity of the prayer, rendering what was permissible before it now forbidden within it. Thus, during this time he spends standing before Allah, he becomes occupied with all that Allah has commanded in the prayer and what the Prophet (ﷺ) has instructed in terms of words and actions, so he neither does nor says anything except what is appropriate for this great occasion. This statement—which is the Takbīrat al-Ihrām—“Allāhu Akbar”—is understood to mean that when one says it, he is magnifying Allah Almighty, and acknowledging that He is greater than anything that comes to mind, and even what does not come

to mind. He believes that Allah Almighty is al-Kabīr (the Great); indeed, al-Kabīr is among His names.

﴿وَهُوَ أَعْلَى الْكَبِيرِ 23﴾

{And He is the Most High, Most Great.} [Surat Saba': 23]

﴿عَلَّمَ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ الْكَبِيرِ الْمُتَعَالِ 9﴾

{He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen, the All-Great, the Most Exalted.} [Surat ar-Ra'd: 9] When the worshiper says "Allāhu Akbar" (Allah is the Greatest) with his tongue, he should feel the greatness of Allah Almighty along with this utterance. As he says "Allāhu Akbar" with his tongue, he begins an act of the prayer: raising his hands. He raises his hands to the level of his ears or shoulders, remembering that when he raises his hands, he is glorifying Allah Almighty because raising the hands signifies glorification and reverence. Raising the hands is a gesture of honoring the One before you, and Allah Almighty is most deserving of glorification, so you raise your hands for Him. Raising the hands in prayer is an adornment for the posture of prayer and an act of worship for the hands, just as the other limbs engage in worship during prayer, all this in adherence to the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Then, he places his right hand over his left hand on his chest, and he looks towards the place of his prostration or in the direction of the Qiblah. Then,

he begins the prayer with one of the opening supplications that have been reported from the Prophet (ﷺ). Numerous formulations have been reported, and he may choose any of them, such as saying:

"اللَّهُمَّ بَاعِدْ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ خَطَايَايَ، كَمَا بَاعَدْتَ بَيْنَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ، اللَّهُمَّ نَقِّنِي مِنَ الْخَطَايَا كَمَا يُنْقَى الثَّوْبُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الدَّنَسِ، اللَّهُمَّ اغْسِلْ خَطَايَايَ بِالْمَاءِ وَالتَّلَجِّ وَالْبَرَدِ "

"Allāhumma bā'id baynī wa bayna khatāyāy kamā bā'adta bayna al-mashriqi wa al-maghrib, Allāhumma naqqinī mina al-khatāyā kamā yunaqqa ath-thawbu al-abyadu mina ad-danas, Allāhumma ighsil khatāyāy bil-mā'i wa ath-thalji wa al-barad." (O Allah, distance me from my sins as You have distanced the east from the west. O Allah, purify me from sins as the white garment is purified from dirt. O Allah, wash out my sins with water, snow, and hail.)¹ This Dhikr and this opening supplication include: the essence of repentance, seeking forgiveness, and recalling one's sins.

When the worshiper recites this supplication and begins his prayer with this opening supplication, the heartfelt devotion that should reside in the heart is the feeling of seeking forgiveness and repentance. Undoubtedly, before the prayer, the worshiper might have committed a

¹ Agreed upon; narrated by Al-Bukhārī (1/149) and Muslim (1/419) from the Hadith of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him).

mistake by casting a glance, speaking words, or the like of sins and misdeeds. Thus, when he comes to the prayer and begins with this supplication, he should recognize that this is an act of repentance, and that he is now repenting and asking Allah Almighty to accept his repentance when he starts with this opening supplication. He can also begin with another form that does not involve seeking repentance and forgiveness, such as:

"سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ وَتَعَالَى جَدُّكَ، وَلَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُكَ "

"Subhanak allahumma wabihamdika watabarak asmuka, wata'ala jadduka, wala 'ilaha ghayraka" (Glory is to You, O Allah, and praise; blessed is Your Name, and exalted is Your Majesty, and there is no deity besides You.)¹ This opening supplication differs from the first one—its meaning involves the glorification of Allah Almighty and the affirmation of Allah's transcendence above any deficiency. He says:

"سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ "

"Subhānak Allāhumma wa bihamdika" (Glory be to You, O Allah, and all praise is due to You). i.e., he exalts Allah Almighty and declares Him far above deficiency, while accompanying that with praising Him.

¹ Narrated by Abu Dāwūd (1/206); Al-Albānī classified it as Sahīh (authentic).

"وَتَبَارَكَ اسْمُكَ "

“watabarak asmuka” (and blessed is Your Name)
So he makes mention of the blessing of Allah Almighty's name

"وَتَعَالَى جَدُّكَ "

“wata‘ala jadduka” (and High is Your majesty) And
'al jadd' means greatness.

"وَلَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُكَ "

“wala ‘ilaha ghayraka” (And there is none worthy of worship but You). The proclamation of Tawhīd. These meanings differ from those in the previous opening supplication. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the worshiper, when choosing any of the opening supplications, to understand the intended meaning behind it, as this will allow his heart to be present when he comprehends the meaning of what he says. He may also begin with several other opening supplications that have been reported from the Prophet (ﷺ).

After reciting the opening supplication, he says:

"أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ "

“A‘ūdhu billāhi min ash-shaytān ar-rajīm” (I seek refuge with Allah from the accursed devil.)¹ The meaning here is to seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Satan. The essence of seeking refuge here

¹ Acting upon the general purport of Allah’s saying: {Whenever you recite the Qur’an, seek refuge with Allah from the accursed devil.} [Surat nl-Nahl: 98].

is to resort to and seek protection in Allah Almighty. The worshiper seeks Allah's protection and turns to Him from Satan. Here, Satan includes all types of devils, including the one that whispers to corrupt his prayer. Before beginning to invoke Allah Almighty with Al-Fātihah, the worshiper remembers this meaning and seeks refuge in Allah Almighty, saying: "I seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Satan." After seeking refuge, one begins with the Basmalah, saying: "Bismillāh ar-Rahmān ar-Rahīm (in the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful)," contemplating the meaning of the Basmalah, acknowledging that he begins with the assistance of "Bismillāh ar-Rahmān ar-Rahīm" in his recitation of this magnificent surah, which is Surat al-Fātihah.

Then he begins reciting Surat Al-Fātihah, for Al-Fātihah is the prayer itself, as mentioned in the Hadīth where the Prophet (ﷺ) says:

" قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: قَسَمْتُ الصَّلَاةَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ عَبْدِي نِصْفَيْنِ، وَلِعَبْدِي مَا سَأَلَ، فَإِذَا قَالَ الْعَبْدُ: ﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ [2] [الفاتحة: 2]، قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: حَمِدَنِي عَبْدِي، وَإِذَا قَالَ: ﴿الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ﴾ [3] [الفاتحة: 3]، قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: أَثْنَيْتَ عَلَيَّ عَبْدِي، وَإِذَا قَالَ: ﴿مَلِكُ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ﴾ [4] [الفاتحة: 4]، قَالَ: مَجَّدَنِي عَبْدِي - وَقَالَ مَرَّةً قَوْضَ إِلَيَّ عَبْدِي - فَإِذَا قَالَ: ﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ﴾ [5] [الفاتحة: 5] قَالَ: هَذَا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ عَبْدِي، وَلِعَبْدِي مَا سَأَلَ، فَإِذَا قَالَ: ﴿اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ﴾ [6] صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ [7] [الفاتحة: 7].

Allah Almighty says: "I have divided the prayer between Myself and My slave into two halves, and My slave shall have what he asks for. When the

slave says: (All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds) [Al-Fatiha: 2], Allah Almighty says: 'My slave has praised Me.' And when he says: (the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful) [Al-Fatiha: 3], Allah Almighty says: 'My slave has extolled Me.' And when he says: (Master of the Day of Judgment) [Al-Fatiha: 4], Allah says: 'My slave has glorified Me' - and on one occasion He said: 'My slave has referred the affairs to Me.' And when he says: (You alone we worship and You alone we ask for help) [Al-Fatiha: 5], He says: 'This is between Me and My slave, and My slave shall have what he is asking for.' And when he says: (Guide us to the Straight Path, the Path of those whom You have blessed—not of those You are displeased with, or those who went astray) [Al-Fatiha: 7], He says: 'This is for My slave, and My slave shall have what he has asked for.'"¹

Al-Fātiḥah: It is the private invocation, and the worshiper should know that he is conversing privately with Allah, and that Allah Almighty responds to him, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said in the authentic hadith:

"إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ إِذَا كَانَ فِي الصَّلَاةِ، فَإِنَّمَا يُنَاجِي رَبَّهُ"،

"When the believer is in prayer, he is in private conversation with his Lord."² **Al-Monājāh:** It is a

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/296) from the Hadīth of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him).

² Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (1/90).

secret conversation between two, so when the worshiper says:

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ 2﴾

{All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.}
[Surat al-Fātihah: 2] Let it be known that Allah Almighty says:

"حَمَدَنِي عَبْدِي"،

My servant has praised Me, The Sunnah has established the practice of pausing at the end of each verse so that the worshiper may feel that Allah Almighty responds to him and acknowledges his praise and glorification. Thus, when the worshiper says:

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ 2﴾

{All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.}
[Surat al-Fātihah: 2] He affirms that all praise is due to Allah, so he praises Allah Almighty with all forms of praise. To Him belongs praise in the beginning and the end. Allah has praised Himself, Glorified and Exalted be He, and this praise accompanies the Muslim throughout his entire life. Indeed, praise is the first act of worship by which Allah was worshipped since Adam, as mentioned in the Hadīth:

"لَمَّا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ آدَمَ وَنَفَخَ فِيهِ الرُّوحَ عَطَسَ فَقَالَ: الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، فَحَمِدَ اللَّهُ بِإِذْنِهِ، فَقَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ: رَجَمَكَ اللَّهُ يَا آدَمَ"

"When Allah created Adam and breathed into him from His spirit, he sneezed and said: 'Praise be to

Allah.' He praised Allah by His permission, whereupon his Lord said to him: 'May Allah have mercy on you, O Adam.'" ¹ Here, the believer senses the "Hamd" (praise), acknowledging that it is due to Allah. "Hamd" is the description of the Praised One with attributes of perfection, majesty, and beauty, along with a feeling of love and veneration. The worshiper declares this "Hamd," and thus, one of the names of Surah Al-Fatiha is Surah Al-Hamd, because it begins with praise. When the worshiper starts his prayer with "Al-hamdulillah" (Praise be to Allah), he should be mindful that he has been honored to the degree where he is in intimate discourse with Allah Almighty, and thus praises Him, Glorified be He.

Allah Almighty says when His servant says to Him:

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ 2﴾

{All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.}
[Surat al-Fātiḥah: 2] He should say:

"حَمِدَنِي عَبْدِي"

"My servant has praised Me." This is Allah's gratitude to the servant for this act of servitude, which is praise. Allah acknowledges this by granting him the title of servitude, saying:

"حَمِدَنِي عَبْدِي"

¹ Narrated by At-Tirmidhi (5/453); classified as Hasan (sound) by Al-Albāni.

"My servant has praised Me." This is repeated seven times in Al-Fatiha, granting the believer the honor of servitude from Allah Almighty, as Allah Almighty says to him: "My servant." Then he says:

﴿الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ 3﴾

{the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful,}
[Surat al-Fātihah: 3] Standing in awareness of Allah's response to him.

"أَنْتَ عَلَى عَبْدِي"،

"My slave has commended Me," Therein, the believer recalls the attribute of mercy, recognizing that Allah is Most Compassionate in His essence and Most Merciful to His creation.

﴿الرَّحْمَنُ 1 عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ 2﴾

{The Most Compassionate,
has taught the Qur'an} [Surat ar-Rahmān:1-2]

﴿الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى 5﴾

{The Most Compassionate rose over the Throne.} [Surat Tāha: 5] He is the Most Compassionate in His essence and the Most Merciful to His creation. The worshiper remembers that among Allah's mercies upon him is that He granted him this prayer, for prayer is a mercy from Allah bestowed upon this nation of Muhammad. Allah Almighty says, when His slave says to Him:

﴿الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ 3﴾

{the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful,}
[Surat al-Fātihah: 3]

"أَتْنَىٰ عَلَيَّ عَبْدِي "

"My slave has commended Me." For this is commendation following praise. First comes the praise, and then he commends Allah by affirming the attribute of mercy in His essence and mercy towards His creation. Then after that, he says:

{مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ 4}

{Master of the Day of Judgment.} [Surat al-Fātihah: 4] The Master: He is the One Who possesses the Day of Judgment, for on the Day of Resurrection, no one will possess anything except Allah, Blessed and Exalted.

{لَمَنَ الْمُلْكُ الْيَوْمَ لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ 16}

{To whom does the dominion belong this Day? To Allah, the One, the Subjugator!} [Surat Ghāfir: 16]

The worshiper, in his standing before his Lord, Blessed and Exalted, glorifies Him, acknowledging that He is the One Who possesses sovereignty on the Day of Resurrection, and he says:

{مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ 4}

{Master of the Day of Judgment.} [Surat al-Fātihah: 4] The worshiper here remembers the Day of Judgment and the Day of Resurrection, increasing in fear, for just as he stands before Him

in this worldly standing, he will stand before Him in the Hereafter—on the Day of Judgment. For this reason, some of the scholars have mentioned that the “Hamd” (praise) therein is acknowledgment and love; that the mention of Allah’s mercy therein is hope for what is with Allah; that Allah is the Owner of the Day of Judgment, and therein is a declaration of fear of Him. Thus, these verses encompass:

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ 2 الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ 3 مَلِكُ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ 4﴾

{All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds,
The Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful,
Master of the Day of Judgment.} [Surat al-Fātihah: 2-4] It involves the three pillars of worship: love derived from praise, hope from the remembrance of mercy, and fear from the remembrance of the Day of Judgment, whereupon the worshiper says:

﴿مَلِكُ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ 4﴾

{Master of the Day of Judgment.} [Surat al-Fātihah: 4] Allah Almighty answers him, saying:

"مَجْدَنِي عَبْدِي"

"My slave has glorified Me." The acknowledgment of Allah's sovereignty over the Day of Judgment is a glorification of Allah, for to Him belongs the complete majesty and dominion on the Day of Resurrection. Allah, Blessed and Exalted, says:

"مَجْدَنِي عَبْدِي"

"My slave has glorified Me." Thus, the praying Muslim attains this honor and this badge—the badge of servitude and the honor of servitude—from his Lord, Blessed and Exalted, for the third time in this Surah.

Then, thereafter begins the proclamation: the proclamation of Tawhīd, the proclamation of sincerity, the proclamation of complete love, and total submission in the declaration of servitude to Allah, the Only One, when the worshiper says:

﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ 5﴾

{You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help.} [Surat al-Fātihah: 5] Worship and devotion: It is the complete submission and the highest degree of love and affection. When the worshiper praises, extols, and glorifies, he directly declares that he worships none but Allah and seeks help from none but Allah. This involves all forms of worship performed by the worshiper; he fasts only for Allah, gives zakah only for Allah, performs Hajj only for Allah, gives charity only for Allah, and performs all righteous deeds seeking their reward from Allah alone, the One and Only. This includes the prayer he is engaged in; he is now in a state of servitude, reaching the highest rank of the religion, which is the rank of Ihsān (excellence).

He addresses Allah, Blessed and Exalted, speaking to Him in the manner of discourse:

﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ 5﴾

{You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help.} [Surat al-Fātihah: 5] The placement of "You alone" before the verb here indicates exclusivity, signifying that this worship and this seeking help are solely for Allah and through Allah. So the slave says:

﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ 5﴾

{You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help.} [Surat al-Fātihah: 5] Here, too, the Muslim is reminded to dedicate his worship sincerely to Allah, Blessed and Exalted, and that the prayer imparts this meaning—the meaning that he dedicates this act of worship in which he is engaged sincerely to Allah, and likewise all his acts of worship. Therefore, among what aids a person achieve sincerity outside the prayer is the establishment of the prayer itself, as he repeats it more than seventeen times each day.

﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ 5﴾

{You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help.} [Surat al-Fātihah: 5] He remembers his sincerity to the Worshipped One, Blessed and Exalted.

When he says:

﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ 5﴾

{You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help.} [Surat al-Fātihah: 5] Allah Almighty answers him, saying:

"هَذَا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ عَبْدِي، وَلِعَبْدِي مَا سَأَلَ"

"This is between Me and My slave, and My slave shall have what he has asked for." And the meaning of His words:

"هَذَا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ عَبْدِي"

"This is between Me and My servant." It means that this Fātihah is divided into two parts:

First section: Exaltation and praise of Allah, Blessed and Exalted, and the declaration of servitude to Him.

Second section: For the servant, it is to ask Allah for guidance in what follows from the verses after this verse, and from the meanings within the meaning of

(إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ 5)

{You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help.} [Surat al-Fātihah: 5]

"هَذَا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ عَبْدِي"

"This is between Me and My servant" That this—which is worship and seeking help—is between the worshiper and his Lord. Worship is a matter of the heart, unknown to people, for it is between the worshiper and his Lord. When the servant performs any act of worship, no one knows that he

is worshipping except Allah Almighty, for he may perform this deed as a display for people. The One Who knows whether he is truly worshipping or not is Allah, Glorified and Exalted. Thus, worship is between you and Allah; no one knows it, and this is why this meaning is mentioned here

"هَذَا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ عَبْدِي "

"This is between Me and My servant," When the worshiper says:

{إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ 5}

{You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help.} [Surat al-Fātihah: 5] So Allah Almighty says:

"هَذَا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ عَبْدِي "

"This is between Me and My servant" Then Allah Almighty says:

"وَلِعَبْدِي مَا سَأَلَ "

"And My servant shall have what he has asked for" Then the question arises:

{أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ 6}

{Guide us to the straight path,} [Surat al-Fātihah: 6] This is the greatest supplication a person makes throughout his day and night—repeatedly: that Allah, Blessed and Exalted, guide him to the straight path. The guidance intended here to explain the straight path encompasses clarification, indication, direction, and the guidance

of granting success. Thus, the worshiper asks Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, to clarify the straight path for him so that he may recognize it; this is the guidance of clarification, knowledge, and indication. Then he asks the Blessed and Exalted to guide him to the straight path, meaning the guidance of success.

As-Sirāt al-Mustaqīm (the straight path) is the clear and evident way that leads to the pleasure of Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He. It includes the entirety of Islam, including commands and prohibitions, and all that Allah, Blessed and Exalted be He, loves and is pleased with, from both outward and inward words and actions. This is the true success in life.

Asking for guidance to the straight path includes: seeking success in one's words, actions, intentions, thoughts, and perceptions throughout one's entire life. He begins the Fajr prayer by asking Allah, Blessed and Exalted, to grant him success on that day to the straight path. In every prayer, he asks his Lord, Blessed and Exalted, for success in the deeds that follow. Man is in need at every moment to be on the straight path, and Allah, Glorified and Exalted, is the One Who guides, for there is no guide except Allah.

﴿وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهَادِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ 54﴾

{Allah surely guides those who believe to the straight path.} [Surat al-Hajj: 54] The worshiper asks his Lord for guidance to the straight path in every prayer, saying:

﴿أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ 6﴾

{Guide us to the straight path,} [Surat al-Fātihah: 6] Then this path is made known:

﴿صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ﴾

{the path of those whom You have blessed} [Surat al-Fātihah: 7] Those upon whom Allah has bestowed His Grace are the prophets, the people of Truth, the martyrs, and the righteous, as Allah Almighty has said in Sūrat An-Nisā'.

﴿وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا 69 ذَلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ عَلِيمًا 70﴾

{Those who obey Allah and the Messenger will be with those whom Allah has blessed: the prophets, the affirmers of Truth, the martyrs, and the righteous. What excellent companions they are!

That grace is from Allah, and sufficient is Allah as Knower.} [Surat an-Nisā': 69-70] The praying believer desires this straight path, wishing to be with the prophets, the affirmers of Truth, the martyrs, and the righteous, and he repeats this meaning.

Do not question the high aspiration a Muslim attains when he seeks to be upon that Straight Path,

and do not question his immense mental strength in knowledge, preaching, education, and life in general, when he remembers that he desires to be on that straight path.

﴿أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ 6 صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ﴾

{Guide us to the straight path,
the path of those whom You have blessed;}
Those whom Allah has blessed with knowledge and action,

﴿غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ 7﴾

{not of those who incurred Your Wrath, or of those who went astray.} [Surat al-Fātihah: 7], There is another group besides those whom Allah has blessed: a group upon whom Allah's wrath has descended, and a group who have strayed from the straight path.

The category upon whom Allah is displeased: they are those who possess knowledge but fail to act upon it, like the Jews.

And the category that has strayed from the path: they are those who have no knowledge and worship Allah upon ignorance; they are astray, like the Christians. Therefore, a Muslim, throughout his life, does not wish to be like the Jews nor the Christians.

When the servant says:

﴿صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ 7﴾

{the path of those whom You have blessed; not of those who incurred Your Wrath, or of those who

went astray.} [Surat al-Fātihah: 7] Allah Almighty says:

"هَذَا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ عَبْدِي، وَلِعَبْدِي مَا سَأَلَ"

"This is between Me and My slave, and My slave shall have what he has asked for." Allah is the Greatest—what is this? Guidance is granted to this servant who asked Allah Almighty for it.

Therefore, the act of worship of the heart that the worshiper should accompany here is the worship of "rajā'" (hope). "Rajā'" is the assumption of obtaining what brings joy to the servant, meaning: to assume that the matter he seeks is as if he has already attained it. So when the worshiper says:

{صِرْطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ (7)}

{the path of those whom You have blessed; not of those who incurred Your Wrath, or of those who went astray.} [Surat al-Fātihah: 7] He asks Allah Almighty for guidance, knowing that Allah is Generous and does not turn him away, and that He is the Responsive Who will answer him, and that He is the All-Hearing Who hears his supplication, and that Allah is near to him, Blessed and Exalted, instilling in his heart the certainty that Allah will grant him this guidance. How, then, will the recitation of Al-Fātihah be? And how will this Rak'ah be? When the worshiper feels that they are guided and on the straight path, and that Allah,

Blessed and Exalted, will undoubtedly guide them because they hope for the Generous One, and the Generous One said:

"هَذَا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ عَبْدِي، وَلِعَبْدِي مَا سَأَلَ"

"This is between Me and My slave, and My slave shall have what he has asked for." Then, he says: "Āmīn", which is not a verse of Al-Fātihah, and it means: O Allah, answer the supplication. They say it, knowing that this is a supplication and that they are saying amen to it.

After Al-Fātihah, the worshiper recites a Surah or whatever is easy from the Qur'an, and the Qur'an is the Speech of Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He.

(وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّى يَسْمَعَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ)

{If any of the polytheists asks you for protection, give it to him, so that he may hear the Word of Allah} [Surat at-Tawbah: 6] When the worshiper recites, he knows that Allah, Blessed and Exalted, is before him, that He hears his recitation, and that He, Blessed and Exalted, grants him, responds to him, and honors him. This must be accompanied by reflection upon what he recites and awareness of this state; the state of prayer, that he is now close to Allah, Blessed and Exalted. For the worshiper, as mentioned in the Hadīth reported by Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ إِذَا كَانَ فِي الصَّلَاةِ، فَإِنَّمَا يُنَاجِي رَبَّهُ."

“When the believer is in prayer, he is in private conversation with his Lord.”¹

Reciting in prayer is different from reciting outside of it, for he is now close to his Lord, Blessed and Exalted, as mentioned in the Hadīth reported by Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“وَمَا تَقَرَّبَ إِلَيَّ عَبْدِي بِشَيْءٍ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا افْتَرَضْتُ عَلَيْهِ ”

“My slave does not draw near to Me with anything more beloved to Me than what I have made obligatory upon him.”² These prayers are states of closeness to Allah, for the Qur’an inside prayer holds a distinct significance. The worshiper is in intimate discourse with Allah, Blessed and Exalted, and when he recites His words, he contemplates their meanings and reflects upon what he recites and reads.

Then he makes Takbīr to move to the pillar of bowing, raising his hands in magnification and reverence, saying: “Allāhu Akbar” (Allah is the Greatest), and begins to bow.

Bowing: It is a posture that manifests the magnification of Allah, Blessed and Exalted, and thus the invocation therein is: “Subhāna rabbi al-‘azhīm” (Glory be to my Lord, the Most

¹ Agreed upon, narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/90) and Muslim (1/390).

² Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (8/105).

Magnificent)¹. Tasbīh is declaring transcendence, and declaring transcendence is negating deficiency from Allah, Glorified and Exalted. So when the servant says "Subhāna rabbi al-‘azhīm," he knows that he is now exalting Allah, Blessed and Exalted, above all deficiencies and affirming for Him perfect praise; thus he says: "Subhān rabbi al-‘azhīm"². He may also say, as mentioned in the Dhikrs of bowing—among them: "Subhāna rabbi al-‘azhīm wa bihamdih" (Glory be to my Lord, the Most Magnificent, and with His praise)³—meaning he accompanies praise with glorification. He may likewise say other Dhikrs that have been mentioned, such as: "Subhānak Allāhumma rabbana wa bihamdik, Allāhumma ighfir lī" (Glory be to You, O Allah, our Lord, and with Your praise; O Allah, forgive me)⁴, and such as: "Subbūhun Quddūs, Rabb al-malā’ikati wa r-rūh" (Most Glorious, Most Holy, Lord of the angels and the Spirit)⁵. All of these are among the Dhikrs in bowing that convey this meaning—the meaning of

¹ Narrated by Ibn Mājah (1/287) from the Hadīth of Hudhayfah al-Yamān (may Allah be pleased with him).

² Narrated by Muslim (1/536) from the Hadīth of ‘Ā’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her).

³ Narrated by Abu Dāwūd (1/230); Al-Albāni classified it as Sahīh (authentic).

⁴ Agreed upon and narrated by Al-Bukhārī (1/163) and Muslim (1/350) from the Hadīth of ‘Ā’ishah (May Allah be pleased with her).

⁵ Narrated by Muslim (1/353) from the Hadīth of ‘Ā’ishah (May Allah be pleased with her).

magnification—through this posture, the posture of bowing.

Then he rises saying: “Allah hears he who praises Him,” meaning: Allah responds to whoever praises Him. Hence, the praise said after rising from Rukū’ is a praise that is accepted. Accordingly, after he rises and stands upright, he says: “allahuma rabbana lak al-hamd” (O Allah, our Lord, praise be to You) or “rabbana wa laka al-hamd” (Our Lord, and praise be to You) or “rabbana lak al-hamd” (Our Lord, praise be to You). He may also lengthen this praise and extolling by saying: “O Allah, to You belongs the praise—an abundant, good, and blessed praise—as much as fills the heavens, the earth, and what is between them, and as much as fills whatever You will thereafter. You are worthy of praise and glory; the most rightful of what the servant says, and all of us are Your servants. There is no preventer of what You give, nor any giver of what You withhold, and the fortune of one endowed with fortune avails nothing against You.” This state—the state of standing upright—is a pillar of prayer. Just as Rukū’ is a pillar, and rising from it is a pillar, so the state of standing upright is a pillar of prayer. Complete tranquility is required in it, and it is obligatory to praise and extol Allah, Blessed and Exalted, while standing once again. For the worshiper bows to Allah and glorifies Him, then rises to extol Him, Blessed and Exalted, with this

praise. It is essential to say the words of praise and extolment with a profound feeling in the heart. Therefore, this pillar must be prolonged, as indicated in the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Then, after standing upright from bowing, he moves to the greatest pillar, which is the pillar of prostration, transitioning with the Takbīr by saying: "Allāhu Akbar" (Allah is the Greatest). He then prostrates on the seven body parts, as described in the prayer of the Prophet (ﷺ). The state of prostration is a state of nearness to Allah, wherein the worshiper is in utmost humility to the One and Only Lord. He places the noblest part of himself—his nose and forehead—on the ground, the lowest point, for the Most High, glorified and exalted be He. This is why he says in his prostration: "Subhān rabbi al-a'la" (Glory be to Allah, My Lord, the Most High).

In the state of prostration, the servant glorifies Allah, Blessed and Exalted, negating any deficiency from Him and affirming His perfect praise, saying: "Subhāna Rabbi al-A'la wa bi-hamdih" (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High, and praise be to Him). He remembers that Allah, Blessed and Exalted, is the Most High, while the worshiper is at the lowest point, and Allah, Glorified and Exalted, is the Most High, thus recalling the exaltedness of Allah, Glorified and Exalted.

﴿سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى 1 الَّذِي خَلَقَ فَسَوَّى 2﴾

{Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High,
Who created and fashioned in due proportion,
[Surat al-A'la: 1-2]}

In this state, the worshiper remembers the exaltedness of Allah, Glorified and Exalted. When he recalls this and understands the glorification he utters, he remembers that he is close to Allah. The state of prostration is the greatest closeness to Allah. The Messenger (ﷺ) said — as narrated by Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him):

"أَقْرَبُ مَا يَكُونُ الْعَبْدُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ، وَهُوَ سَاجِدٌ، فَأَكْثِرُوا الدُّعَاءَ "

"The nearest a slave to his Lord is when he is prostrating, so increase supplication."¹ The Prophet (ﷺ) also said, according to a Hadith narrated by 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās (may Allah be pleased with both of them):

"وَأَمَّا السُّجُودُ فَلَا تَجْتَهُدُوا فِي الدُّعَاءِ، فَقَمِنْ أَنْ يُسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ "

"As for prostration, strive in supplication, for it is likely that you will be answered."² When the worshiper is close to Allah, Blessed and Exalted, he feels near to the Generous, the Self-Sufficient, the Bountiful, and the Bestower, Glorified and Exalted. Thus, he remembers to ask Allah, Majestic and High; he asks Him for all his needs—what he desires in this world and the Hereafter—and he

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/350).

² Narrated by Muslim (1/348).

may also ask with the supplications that have come from the Prophet (ﷺ), such as saying:

"اللهم إني ظلمت نفسي ظلمًا كثيرًا، وإنه لا يَغفر الذنوب إلا أنت، فاغفر لي مغفرة من عندك وارحمني إنك أنت الغفور الرحيم"

"O Allah, I have wronged myself too much, and indeed none forgives sins but You. So, forgive me with forgiveness from You, and have mercy on me. Indeed, You are the Oft-Forgiving, The Most Merciful."¹ And he can say:

"اللهم اغفر لي ذنبي كله دقه وجله وعلايته وسره"

"O Allah, forgive me all my sins, small and great, public and secret."² He may ask for his needs, for he is in a state of nearness.

Then, he rises from his prostration to the sitting position between the two prostrations, saying: "Allāhu Akbar" (Allah is the Greatest). He rises with Takbīr, for Takbīr reinstates the greatness of Allah in the heart of the worshiper. Thus, he says "Allāhu Akbar" while rising from prostration, and then sits in the position between the two prostrations, which is a pillar of the prayer requiring complete tranquility. The heart must be present, for it is a momentous sitting before Allah, Blessed and Exalted, kneeling upon his knees and placing his hands on his thighs, and he asks his Lord, Blessed

¹ Narrated by Al-Bukhāri (1/166).

² Narrated by Muslim (1/350).

and Exalted, Who is near to him—He sees him, hears him, grants him his request, and honors him.

The servant begins to ask for forgiveness, saying: "Rabbi ighfirli, Rabbi ighfirli, Rabbi ighfirli" (O Lord, forgive me. O Lord, forgive me. O Lord, forgive me).

"Maghfirah" means: covering, concealing sins and faults, pardoning them, not holding them accountable, and not being disgraced by them in the Hereafter.

Outside of prayer, a person commits many sins and mistakes that Allah, Blessed and Exalted, sees and knows, and which the angels record against him. When he comes to his prayer and sits between the two prostrations, he remembers those sins and his need for forgiveness, so he asks Allah, Glorified and Exalted, to forgive him. Therefore, the Prophet (ﷺ) would often say while sitting between the two prostrations: "My Lord, forgive me; my Lord, forgive me,"¹ repeating this. In this great sitting, he may also ask—along with forgiveness—for mercy, sustenance, well-being, guidance, elevation, and the mending of deficiencies. This has been reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) in the supplications for sitting between the two prostrations:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي، وَارْحَمْنِي، وَاهْدِنِي وَعَافِنِي وَاجْبُرْنِي، وَارْزُقْنِي وَارْقُئْنِي

"O Lord, forgive me, have mercy on me, guide me, grant me wellness, console me, provide for me, and

¹ [Narrated by Ibn Mājah (1/289); Al-Albāni classified it as Sahīh (authentic)]

elevate me.”¹ This supplication, with its seven requests, elaborates on the comprehensive desires a Muslim seeks from their Lord, Blessed and Exalted. Forgiveness, mercy, guidance, well-being, provision, mending deficiencies, and elevation encompass all that a person desires in this world and the Hereafter. Therefore, if Allah forgives you, has mercy on you, guides you, grants you well-being, provides for you, mends your deficiencies, and elevates you, He has bestowed upon you the happiness of both this worldly life and the Hereafter. This sitting is of great significance: that you sit before Allah, Blessed and Exalted, as a supplicant, and that you follow the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ), asking Allah with what has been reported from the Prophet (ﷺ). Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said about the Prophet (ﷺ) when he sat between the two prostrations: he would say:

”وَيَقْعُدُ بَيْنَ السَّجْدَتَيْنِ حَتَّى نَقُولَ قَدْ أَوْهَمَ“،

“He would sit between the two prostrations for so long until we thought that he had forgotten.”² Due to the length and tranquility he maintained in it, even the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) thought that he had erred, meaning he had

¹ Narrated by Ahmad (31/ 479); Abu Dāwūd (1/ 224); and Ibn Mājah (1/ 290), from ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him and his father); Al-Albāni considered its chain to be good.

² Narrated by Muslim (1/344) from the Hadīth of Anas (May Allah be pleased with him).

forgotten, while he (ﷺ) did not forget. Rather, in this great pillar, he was teaching the Ummah and teaching us to seize these precious moments in our prayer.

The worshiper then makes Takbīr once again, prostrates while glorifying his Lord, the Most High, then rises and stands for the second Rak'ah, performing it in the same manner as the first Rak'ah, being mindful and conscious of all that he says and does, so that his heart is present and he experiences the sweetness of prayer.

Then, one sits for the Tashahhud or the Tahiyāt, which is a sitting of greeting and reverence. The worshiper says: "At-tahiyātu lillāhi wa as-salawātu wa at-tayyibāt," which includes the magnification and reverence of Allah, Glorified and Exalted. At-tahiyāt: the plural of "tahiyah," meaning magnification, and the worshiper acknowledges that all forms of magnification are due to Allah. The definite article (al-) in "at-tahiyāt" signifies comprehensiveness, encompassing all types of greetings. Thus, every act of declaring Allah's greatness, praise, bowing, and prostration is for Allah. All forms of magnification that a Muslim contemplates are indeed for Allah, Blessed and Exalted.

The worshiper says: "At-tahiyātu lillāhi wa as-salawātu wa at-tayyibātu": All prayers, every type of prayer, both obligatory and supererogatory, in

all its aspects, are an exaltation of Allah, Blessed and Exalted.

The worshiper acknowledges this by saying: "All prayers are for Allah," and the prayers performed by all creatures are indeed for Allah, Blessed and Exalted. Here, in "as-salawāt," the definite article (al-) signifies comprehensiveness, encompassing all types of prayers.

"The servant says: 'At-Tahiyyātu lillāhi was-salawātu wat-tayyibāt' (Greetings, prayers, and good things are due to Allah); and all good things are due to Allah."

﴿إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَالْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ يَرْفَعُهُ﴾

{To Him ascend good words, and righteous deeds raise them.} [Surat Fātir: 10] In this, the worshiper magnifies Allah, Blessed and Exalted, by acknowledging that all good things belong to Him, then he says thereafter:

"السلام عليك أيها النبي ورحمة الله وبركاته"

"Assalamu 'alayka ayyuha annabiyyu warahmat Allahi wabarakatuh" (Peace, mercy of Allah, and blessings be upon you, O Prophet). This is a greeting for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and there is no doubt that the greatest love is for Allah, and following the love of Allah, Glorified and Exalted, comes the love for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and his household. This love is renewed in every prayer a Muslim performs, as his love for Allah Almighty

and his love for the Messenger of Allah is constantly renewed.

﴿قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾
{31}

{Say, "If you love Allah then follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you your sins: for Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful."} [Surat Āl 'Imrān: 31] Love for the Prophet (ﷺ) manifests in the prayer and is renewed with each prayer through the feeling of invoking Allah's peace upon him (ﷺ). The worshiper greets the Messenger of Allah by saying: "As-salāmu 'alayka ayyuha an-nabiyyu wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh" (Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the mercy and blessings of Allah). The meaning is that he should be mindful that he is greeting the Messenger (ﷺ), in the sense of supplicating for him. As-Salām is one of Allah's Names; thus, when the worshiper says: "As-salāmu 'alayka ayyuha an-nabiyyu," this is an invocation for the Prophet (ﷺ), an invocation for his mission, an invocation for his Ummah, and an invocation for Allah to grant him peace. When he says: "... wa rahmatullāh," it is likewise a supplication for mercy—that Allah's mercy be with the Prophet (ﷺ) and that He have mercy upon his mission. And "... wa barakātuh"—barakah, which is the abundance of good—the worshiper implores Allah, Blessed and Exalted, Who is As-Salām, to place barakah

upon His Prophet (ﷺ), upon his Ummah, and upon his mission, so that his Ummah is blessed and his mission is blessed. Undoubtedly, through this, the Muslim, by the feeling of invoking peace upon him, experiences increased love for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and he is mindful that in every prayer he offers, he greets his Messenger (ﷺ) in the first Tashahhud and greets his Messenger (ﷺ) in the second Tashahhud. What then is the state of the worshiper who frequently invokes peace upon his Prophet (ﷺ) after the prayer?! Undoubtedly, this profound effect, which is the increased love for the Prophet (ﷺ), leads the worshiper to follow the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), his guidance, and his Sunnah, as he has frequently declared his love through the greeting of peace. Therefore, he should strive to adhere to the Prophet's guidance (ﷺ) after the prayer.

Then, he says: "Assalāmu 'alaynā" (Peace be upon us). As-Salām is Allah, so when the worshiper says "peace be upon us," it means the worshiper himself and those with him. By saying "peace be upon us," he means that Allah, Blessed and Exalted, who is As-Salām, is with him, granting him safety, guiding him, supporting him, and granting him success. He feels the meaning of security and tranquility by saying: "peace be upon us." Undoubtedly, when a Muslim feels in his prayer that Allah, Blessed and Exalted, is with him, he

experiences immense tranquility and great internal peace and security, because he senses that As-Salām, Blessed and Exalted, is with him.

Then, after magnifying Allah with "At-tahiyyātu lillāh wa as-salawātu wa at-tayyibāt" and sending peace upon the Messenger (ﷺ), a person sends peace upon themselves. A Muslim is not selfish, desiring Allah to be with them and with all the righteous servants. When they say this invocation, it benefits every righteous servant in the heavens and the earth, from the angels and the believers among the jinn and mankind. Thus, the believer increases in love for spreading goodness and spreading peace, and he brings to mind his love for everyone who shares with him the attribute of righteousness.

Then, after these greetings, exaltations, and prayers for peace for oneself and others, comes the declaration of monotheism and the testimony, whereupon he says: "Ashhadu an la ilaha illallahu wa ashhadu anna muhammadan abduhu warasūluh" (I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger). This testimony is a firm acknowledgment and belief that there is no deity truly worthy of worship but Allah. The phrase "I bear witness" indicates that the worshiper, through this act of worship, has reached the level of excellence (Ihsān), as he testifies and acknowledges

with certainty that there is no deity for this universe and no Lord except the One, the Unique, Glorified and Exalted. Thus, he brings to mind the pure monotheism for Allah Almighty and the firm belief that there is no god but Allah.

Then the worshiper says: "wa ashhadu anna muhammadan abduhu warasūluh" (And I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger,) and here he remembers the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) affirming the testimony that he is a Messenger from Allah, sent to the people with guidance and the religion of truth to make it prevail over all religion, even if the disbelievers detest it.

Thus, it is understood that in every prayer, the worshiper renews his Tawhīd (monotheism) to Allah, Glorified and Exalted. The first pillar of the religion of Islam is to say: I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger. In every prayer, when the worshiper sits for the Tashahhud and recites the Testimony, he proclaims this Tawhīd and this testimony. A Muslim should observe in his prayer that his Islam is renewed, and he renews the covenant of Tawhīd with Allah, Blessed and Exalted.

Then the worshiper begins the last Tashahhud by invoking peace and blessings upon the Prophet (ﷺ). This reflects the increased love for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) that the worshipers invoke

blessings upon him. Invoking blessings upon the Prophet (ﷺ) is to praise him in the Higher Assembly. The worshiper says: "Allahumma salli 'ala Muhammad wa 'ala āli Muhammad kama sallayta 'ala Ibrāhīm wa 'ala āli Ibrāhīm innaka Hamīdun Majīd" (O Allah, send prayers upon Muhammad and upon the family of Muhammad, as You sent prayers upon Ibrahim and upon the family of Ibrahim. Indeed, You are Praiseworthy and Glorious.) Here, the worshiper asks Allah, Blessed and Exalted, to bestow His praise and mercy upon him and his family in the Higher Assembly. The believer recalls Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him), acknowledging that just as Allah conferred blessings upon Ibrāhīm and his family, the believer supplicates: As You conferred blessings upon Ibrāhīm and his family, confer blessings upon Muhammad and his family. "Wa bārik 'ala Muhammad wa 'ala āli Muhammad kama bārakta 'ala Ibrāhīm wa 'ala āli Ibrāhīm innaka Hamīdun Majīd" (And bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as You blessed Ibrāhīm and the family of Ibrāhīm; indeed, You are Praiseworthy, Glorious). Barakah means an abundance of good; thus, the worshiper asks Allah, the Most Generous, Glorified and Exalted, to bless His Prophet (ﷺ), his Ummah, and his call, and to bless his family so that the good for this ummah increases in abundance. It is also an acknowledgment that Allah, Blessed and

Exalted, is Hamīd—Praiseworthy—and that He praises His servants; to Him belongs all praise; and that He is Majīd—Glorious—and that majesty (al-majd) is greatness and perfect sovereignty.

Then, the worshiper begins invoking Allah, Blessed and Exalted, for whatever he wishes. The Prophet (ﷺ) said in the Hadīth of ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd (may Allah be pleased with him):

”ثم ليتخير من الدعاء ما شاء ”

“Then, let him choose whatever supplication he wishes.”¹ Or

”يتخير من الدعاء أعجبه إليه ”

“Then he may choose whatever supplication he likes most.”² He would then recite the reported supplication from him and make Isti‘ādhah (seeking refuge with Allah).

”اللهم إني أعوذ بك من عذاب جهنم، ومن عذاب القبر، ومن فتنة المحيا والممات، ومن شر فتنة المسيح الدجال”

”Allāhumma inni a‘ūdhu bika min ‘adhābi jahannam, wa min ‘adhāb al-qabr, wa min fitnat al-mahya wa al-mamāt, wa min sharri fitnat al-masīh ad-dajjāl” (O Allah, I seek refuge with You from the punishment of Hellfire and from the punishment of the grave, from the trials of life and death, and from the evil of the trial of the Anti-Christ).³ This

¹ Narrated by Muslim (1/301)

² Narrated by Al-Bukhārī (1/167).

³ Narrated by Muslim (1/412).

supplication encompasses the major trials: Hell—may Allah protect us and you from it—the grave and its torment, the trial of life—what a person faces during his lifetime—and what befalls him at death, and the trial of the Antichrist. Thus, this seeking of refuge should be accompanied by a state of hope, for when a person seeks refuge with Allah, he should overwhelmingly believe that Allah, Blessed and Exalted, will grant him protection from these things. And how great is the state and felicity of the worshiper when, in every prayer, he feels that he will be saved from the Fire, and be secure from the trials of this world, from the trial of the grave, and from the trial of the Antichrist—so he lives his life holding fast to Allah, Blessed and Exalted, firmly assured of Allah’s power, Blessed and Exalted, and of His firm rope. He may also supplicate with other supplications that have been reported, such as:

"ربنا آتنا في الدنيا حسنة وفي الآخرة حسنة وقنا عذاب النار"

"Our Lord, give us in this world what is good and in the Hereafter what is good and protect us from the punishment of the Fire."¹ This encompasses the good things in the worldly life and the Hereafter.

He may also supplicate with the advice of the Prophet (ﷺ) to Mu’ādh ibn Jabal (may Allah be

¹ Agreed upon, narrated by Al-Bukhāri (6/28) and Muslim (4/2071).

pleased with him), who said: "O Mu'ādh, by Allah, I love you, so never fail to say after every prayer:

"اللهم أعني على ذكرك وشكرك وحسن عبادتك"

"O Allah, help me remember You, give thanks to You, and worship You properly."¹ This supplication holds profound meaning, keeping the Muslim constantly connected to his prayers, supplications, and acts of worship. He seeks from Allah, Who enabled him to perform this prayer and is at its conclusion, to return him once more to his prayer, to assist him in remembrance, to aid him in gratitude, and to support him in perfecting his worship. For Allah, Blessed and Exalted, is the One Who assists.

The worshiper concludes his prayer with Taslīm by saying:

"السلام عليكم ورحمة الله، السلام عليكم ورحمة الله"

"As-salāmu 'alaykum wa rahmatullāh" (May Allah's peace and mercy be upon you), "As-salāmu 'alaykum wa rahmatullāh" (May Allah's peace and mercy be upon you). Among the meanings of "Salām" is the intention to conclude the prayer with peace, as well as the intention to greet those praying nearby, and the intention to greet the angels with him and the angels who attend during his prayer.

¹ Narrated by Abu Dāwūd (2/86); classified as Sahīh (authentic) by Al-Albāni.

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