

On Observing Prayer

First Sermon

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. He made the prayers a source of comfort for the believers and a beacon of light for the pious. I bear witness that there is no deity save Allah, having no associates. I also bear witness that our Master Muhammad is the servant of Allah and His Messenger. He is the Imam of the virtuous believers and the best amongst those who establish prayers. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, his pure family, companions, and all those who follow them in righteousness till the Day of Judgment.

As to what follows,

O servants of Allah, I urge you and myself to be aware that you are asked to obey Him, the Almighty, in line with His orders: **“and to establish prayer and fear Him. And it is He to whom you will be gathered.”** (Al Anaam: ٧٢).

Dear Muslims,

Prayer is one of the five pillars of Islam and the backbone of the religion. It is also the epitome of righteousness, the symbol of Islam and the strongest act of worshipping. Prayer motivates good deeds and brings the servant closer to his Creator. Allah the Almighty enjoined prayers upon us in the Holy Quran when He says, **“and establish prayer and give Zakah and bow with those who bow [in worship and obedience].”** (Al Baqara: ٤٣). Prayer was amongst the last commands that the Prophet pbuh gave. Ali bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the last of the Prophet’s pbuh words were “prayer, prayer!” That is: be diligent on observing your prayers.

Indeed, the Messenger of Allah set the example in observing prayers. Guided by him, the righteous people always longed for prayers whenever its timing was due. And once they performed their prayers they felt relieved and their faces glowed with the light of faith. Indeed, prayer is the best act of worships as the Prophet pbuh said, “now that the best of your deeds is Salat (prayer) and that no one maintains his ablution except a believer.”

O Worshipers,

Please know that amongst the abundant virtues and benefits of prayer is that it is one of the acts that elevates the rank of a Muslim and effaces one’s sins. The Exalted is He says, **“and establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at the approach of the night. Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds. That is a reminder for those who remember.”** (Hud: ١١٤). In the same regard, the Prophet pbuh said, “shall I tell you that by which Allah wipes out the sins and raise the ranks (of a man). They (the hearers) said, “yes, Messenger of Allah.” He said, “performing Wudu (ablution) well despite difficulty, and taking more paces to the mosque, and waiting for the next prayer after observing a prayer, and that is the Ribat (mindfulness).”

By being diligent in observing prayers, a Muslim shall obtain the highest status in Paradise. The Prophet pbuh said, “Allah will prepare for him who goes to the mosque (every) morning and in the afternoon (for the congregational prayer) an honourable place in Paradise with good hospitality for (what he has done) every morning and afternoon goings.” Glad tidings for those who perform prayers in the mosque and are keen on maintaining Nawafil (supererogatory Rakaas) prayers as well as obligatory

prayers. Truly, reciting Quran during Al Fajr prayer is ever witnessed, for the Most Gracious says, **“Indeed, the recitation of dawn is ever witnessed.”** (Al Israa: ٧٨).

Likewise, observing Al Fajr Nawafil is better than all that is in the world. And whoever performs them at mosque would attain the rewards given for praying the whole night. Furthermore, those who pray Isha in congregation, it would be as if they had prayed up to midnight. On this account, our Guide Muhammad pbuh said, “he who observed the 'Isha' prayer in congregation, it was as if he prayed up to midnight, and he who prayed the morning prayer in congregation, it was as if he prayed the whole night.”

As for Asr prayers, please know that keeping them is amongst the acts that lead to Paradise. The Prophet pbuh said, “whoever prays the two cool prayers will go to Paradise.” The two cool prayers are Fajr and Asr.

O Worshipers,

Please also know that maintaining prayers is a duty incumbent on every conscious Muslim and it cannot be dispensed with for whatever reason. If the person is ill yet conscious, he must perform it as much as he can. In this regard, the Prophet pbuh said, “pray standing up; if you cannot, then pray sitting down; and if you cannot, then pray lying on your side.” If this is the rule for an ill person, then those who are well and healthy are expected to also show sound commitment to observing prayers without delay lest they lose their rewards and fall in sin.

In this respect, Allah the Most High defined prayer times and prohibited Muslims from delaying them, for He says, **“indeed, prayer has been decreed upon the believers a decree of specified times.”** (Al Nisaa: ١٠٣). That is prayer has been enjoined to be performed at specific times. On this account, the Messenger of Allah pbuh said, “you should say prayer at its prescribed time.” Thus, performing prayer at its specified time is amongst the best deeds that are dearest to Allah. The Prophet pbuh said, “the best of deeds is to perform the (daily compulsory) prayers at their (early) stated fixed times.”

Furthermore, please be aware that amongst the best blessings bestowed by Allah is granting the ability for people to perform the five prayers in congregation. By praying in mosques Muslims gather to worship Allah and obey Him, hence they will see their rewards increased, for Allah the Almighty says, **“[Such niches are] in mosques which Allah has ordered to be raised and that His name be mentioned therein; exalting Him within them in the morning and the evenings [Are] men whom neither commerce nor sale distracts from the remembrance of Allah and performance of prayer and giving of Zakah. They fear a Day in which the hearts and eyes will [fearfully] turn about That Allah may reward them [according to] the best of what they did and increase them from His bounty. And Allah gives provision to whom He wills without account.”** (An-Nur: ٣٦-٣٧-٣٨).

On the same matter, it was narrated that Abdullah bin Masood, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “whoever would like to meet Allah tomorrow (i.e. on the Day of Judgment) as a Muslim, let him preserve these five (daily) prayers when the call for them is given, for they are part of the ways of guidance, and Allah prescribed the ways of guidance to our Prophet pbuh.”

Dear Worshipers,

Islam urges us to be good performers of prayer and know its conditions and the recommended acts relative to it. Allah, the Exalted is He, says, “**and establish prayer and give Zakah and obey the Messenger - that you may receive mercy.**” (An-Noor: ٥٦). According to interpretations, this means to establish prayer as per the limits, conditions and acts defined for it. Indeed, one great factor for prayer to be accepted and the worshiper to obtain its bounties is the amount of his humility while praying.

Our Prophet pbuh said, “whoever performs ablution like my present ablution and then offers two Rakaas in which he does not think of worldly things, all his previous sins will be forgiven.” In view of this, those who understand the importance of prayer need to instruct their families and relatives to observe it. Allah, the Most High, says, “**and enjoin prayer upon your family [and people] and be steadfast therein.**” (Taha: ١٣٢). Truly, there is no act that could be greater than nurturing the love of prayer in our children’s hearts and raising them on observing it. Similarly, it is also great to teach them to respect mosques and maintain their assets, following the commands of the Messenger of Allah pbuh as he said, “command your children to perform Salat (prayer) when they are seven years old.” Thus, it is really nice to see a boy standing beside his father in communion with their Lord, free from concerns, devoutly addressing Allah with a tranquil heart and soul.

With this in mind, we pray to Allah, the Most Gracious to make us along with our kith and kin amongst those who establish prayer and its acts. May Allah make us amongst the dwellers of Paradise and guide us all to obey Him and obey His Messenger Muhammad pbuh and obey those He has commanded us to obey in line with His orders: “**O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you.**” (An-Nisaa: ٥٩).

May Allah direct us all to the blessings of the Glorious Quran and the Sunna of His Messenger pbuh.

I say this and ask Allah for forgiveness for me, you, so invoke Him for forgiveness, for He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

Second Sermon

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. I bear witness that there is no deity save Allah, having no associates. I also bear witness that I also bear witness that our Master Muhammad is Allah's servant and His Messenger. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon our Master Muhammad, his pure family, companions, and all those who follow them in righteousness till the Day of Judgment.

O Servants of Allah,

Please know that the first thing we should advise each other about is obeying Allah, the Glorious, and establishing prayer. So glad tidings to he who has prayer the spring of his heart and the banisher of his sadness. Glad tidings also to he who, through prayer, seeks refuge with Allah, the Most Glorious, at all times of hardship. In this respect, it was reported that Hudhaifa, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “when anything that distressed the Prophet pbuh, he prayed.” Indeed, in the prayer, there is tranquility of the heart and relief of the mind. The Prophet pbuh said, “my comfort has been provided in prayer.” He also said, “O Bilal, call for prayer: give us comfort

by it.” On the same matter, some righteous scholars said, “there is no pleasure in this world that is greater than praying in congregation.”

In light of the great positive impact of prayer in establishing and strengthening one’s belief in Allah, the Almighty, He made it the first of believers’ merits and the last of them in the first eleven Ayas of Surat Al Mouminin. The Most Sublime begins this Sura by saying, “**certainly will the believers have succeeded: They who are during their prayer humbly submissive.**” (Al Mouminun: ١-٢). And ends with saying, “**and they who carefully maintain their prayers. Those are the inheritors. Who will inherit al-Firdaus. They will abide therein eternally.**” (Al Mouminun: ٩-١١). Therefore, whoever maintains prayer, Allah shall, by His Grace, protect him and grant him eternal dwelling in Paradise.

As a sign of due respect to the glorious rank of prayer and the holiness of mosques, the UAE wise leadership devoted enormous care to building mosques across the country in order to provide worshipers with the appropriate environment to perform such a great obligatory worship.

That is said, please bear in mind that you are commanded to invoke peace and blessings on the Prophet pbuh for the Almighty says, “**indeed, Allah and His angels sends blessing upon the Prophet. O you who have believed, ask [Allah to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allah to grant him] peace.**” (Al Ahzab: ٥٦).

O Allah, please confer Your blessings and grant peace upon our Prophet Muhammad pbuh, his family and all his companions.

O Allah, may we ask You to guide us to be among those who maintain prayer and perform it humbly. We supplicate to You, the Almighty, to grant us the pleasure of supplicating to You, O the Lord of the Worlds.

May Allah have mercy on the honourable martyrs of our country and those of the coalition and gather them with the righteous. May Allah make their dwelling with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed favour of the prophets and the steadfast affirmers of truth, O the Most Gracious the Most Forgiving.

O Allah, please grant the best reward for the families of the martyrs and offer them patience and solace. May Allah grant victory to the soldiers of the Arab Coalition who gathered to restore the rights to their owners. O Lord, please be by their side and guide the Yemeni people to everything that is good. O Allah, make them rally for the word of truth and legitimacy, and bless them with welfare and stability, O the Most Generous.

O Lord of the Worlds, please forgive us all our sins for no one forgives sins but You. Please guide us to the best of manners for none can guide to the best of them but You. O Allah, please protect us from bad manners for none can protect against them but You.

May Allah be pleased with the Rightly Guided Caliphs: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali, and all of the Companions.

O Lord, may we ask You to help us with what gets us closer to Paradise and furthers us from Hell. O Allah, we seek Your grace to admit us, our parents, whoever has done a favour to us and all Muslims to Your Paradise.

May Allah grant success and continued health and care to the UAE President HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan. May Allah also ensure success to his Vice-President, trustworthy Crown Prince and his brothers, Their Highnesses the Rulers of the Emirates.

O Allah, please forgive all of the Muslims, men and women, living and dead. May Allah have mercy on Sheikh Zayed, Sheikh Maktoum and the Late UAE Sheikhs. O Lord, forgive and show mercy on our parents, relatives and whoever has done a favour to us.

O Allah, we pray to You to grant Your forgiveness and reward to who built this mosque and to his or her parents as well as to anyone who gave to this mosque. O Allah, we also supplicate to You to forgive whoever built a mosque where Your name is remembered.

O Allah, make this gathering one of compassion, and our dispersion after it one that is infallible. O Allah, do not let anyone amongst us be deprived or desperate.

We pray to Allah, the Most Gracious, to protect the UAE against any of temptations, both apparent and hidden, and continue blessing the UAE with safety and security.

O Allah, we implore you to send upon us wealthy rain and make us not amongst those who are desperate. O Allah, relieve us! O Allah, relieve us! O Allah, relieve us! O Lord, provide us from the blessings of the sky a beneficial rain and make our crops grow.

Our Lord, give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire.

O Servants of Allah "indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded." (An-Nahl: ٩٠).

Remember Allah and He will remember you. Be grateful of His benevolence and He will increase His blessings to you. Allah says, **"and establish prayer. Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows that which you do."** (Al Ankaboot: ٤٥).

Translation:

Edited and revised by Mostapha El Mouloudi

Note: The English translation of the Quran and Hadith is an interpretation of their meanings and does not have the status of their original Arabic texts.