

The prayer, a Great Worship

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Abstract

Since Adam and Eve were created, the Iblis (Satan), by rebelliousness from command of the Lord, has sought to mislead Adam in any way. He uses every opportunity to achieve his filthy purposes. In the meantime, there is a question that if Satan is to deceive man, then how can man achieve salvation and excellence?

1. Introduction

The Holy Qur'an expresses a beautiful answer to this question; it states that the solution is summarized in God and prayer. If a person praytruely, it means that God, I am on your way and away from deviated paths. At this time, the tricks of devil do not affect man. It is possible to describe Iblis and its existence in another way; we call it Divine Testament.

Although Satan is a deceiver, he cannotstrap true servant of the Lord. In description of dignity of man, it is enough to say that the Lord breathed from his soul in the body of Adam and commanded the angels to prostrate to him. In the following, the philosophy and importance of prayer in education, perfection, and excellence of mankind in this world are discussed. However, the man may reach absolute perfection through prayer.

The prayer, a great worship

Imam Ali (pbuh) says:

"I order you to pray. The prayer is the foundation of religion and strength of Islam. So, do not neglect it" (Baharalanavar, vol. 82, p. 232).

2. Why worship

Recognizing the god and creator makes love of Him in heart. This love and affection make man to worship and express humility against his majesty. The prayer is a manifestation of servitude of mankind in presence of God and the manifestation of worship. The men who feel, know, and believe in their servitude, obey him, fall down in front of him, bend their stature, and speak with him secretly. There are some good news. On the highway of Islam, there is opened a school:

(A boarding school for girls and boys to pray under the supervision of God, the Prophet, and Imams).

The registration conditions include:

1. Age for girls from 9 years old and above
2. Age for boys from 15 years old and above.

(Note: These two groups are required to participate).

3. For people under these ages, the training classes are established and they may participate in them.
4. The people who are registered must commit to obey the instructions of founder of this school, the God. The people who cope well with plans of these classes will be encouraged and the lazy people will be punished.
5. The registration is conducted every day in all hours and every corner of the world.
6. The tuition of this school is optional for participants. Anyone can help deprived people and orphans as tuition. These tuition fees are recorded in payee's account and will be paid to their owners plus a bonus, in the case of need.
7. This class does not make exceptions for anyone: healthy or sick, standing or sleeping, traveling or living in a city, in the sea or in the desert, on the ground or in space.

Hours of work and performing duty:

1. In the morning from Azan to sunrise.
2. Noon and afternoon from Azan in noon until sunset.
3. Maghrib and Isha from first half of sunset to midnight.

Note:

- 1- From midnight to Azan in morning, there are private class programs for enthusiasts who may take part individually and privately.
- 2- On Fridays, instead of noon curriculum, a special program is set up and invites all individuals to participate in this congress and discuss their problems.
- 3- There are super-curriculum in special days like Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Ghorban. There are also other extraordinary programs which will be announced.
- 4- The people who are absent, if they will be without excuse, will be punished. Those who have a justified excuse will have other hours to compensate their absence.

This school plights that if the participants do their job properly, they will be welcomed by insurance company of faith and with best things in paradise palaces.

3. The prayer, the program of life

The prayer is a wake-up call and a warning at different hours of day. It programs people life, gives meaning to day and night, and takes account of moments. The times when people are busy and unaware of time and end of life, the prayer calls them and make them to realize that one day ended and one day begins.

You have to work, take on bigger responsibilities, and do more work. Since a part of life and action opportunity has ended, you must work harder and go ahead. However, the goal is great and you should achieve it and do not loss the opportunity.

All countries oblige people to repeat their national anthem (a summary of accepted life form and its ideals and objectives) to sustain principles and ideals in minds of people; the repetition make people stay on this mindset and know that they follow the country and seek to achieve its goals.

The neglecting of principles and goals of country means changing direction and not following it. This repetition prepares them for work and service on this front, teaches maps and roads, determines the responsibilities and duties, maintains the principles in their minds, identifies the duties, gives them courage and daring, and makes them ready to act.

The prayer is a summary of principles of school of Islam, illuminates the way of Muslims, and expresses the duties, responsibilities, ways, tasks, and outcomes.

The prayer is the greatest Islamic worship that brings the individual and society towards perfection, virtue, purity, and faith and empowers faithful people against disbelievers, polytheists, and hypocrites.

In Shari'a of Islam, the Friday prayer and Jamaat prayer are strictly ordered; in these congregations, the Muslims preserve their unity and integrity in front of enemies and destroy the conspiracy of disbeliefs and unfaithfulness. According to Holy Quran in surah of Ankaboot, Verse 45:

Recite, [O Muhammad], what has been revealed to you of the Book and establish prayer. Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows that which you do. There are a lot of statements about prayer; however, it is better to cite the statements of infallible Imams (PBUH) in this regard.

Prophet (pbuh) said:

(Do not miss your prayer. Anyone who misses the prayers will be gathered with Qaron and Aaron and deserves Allah take him/her to hell. People must say prayer and follow the tradition of truth or tradition of prophet (Vasa'al'shie, V. 3, p. 19).

Imam Ali (PBUH) said to Kamil:

Kumayl! It does not matter whether you say pray, fast, and spend on the way of God. It is important that your prayer and other acts have been performed in a good heart in the court of God.

The real aspects of actions and quality of actions determine their true value, not their appearance and amount. As Ali (PBUH) emphasizes Kumayl that consider the spirit of action instead of paying attention to appearance, quantity, and amount.

However, the ultimate goal of these acts is cultivation and development of mankind; this depends on purity of action, not amount of action.

Imam Reza (PBUH) has narrated from Amir Mu'minān (PBUH):

I order you to say prayer and try to continue it. The prayer is the best action and it is the foundation of your religion (Baharalanavar, vol. 82, p. 209).

Worship along with thought

Prophet (pbuh) says:

Oh, Abazar! Two Rak'ats of prayer with thinking is better than praying for night until morning and not understanding it with heart (Al-Hayat).

The prayer is worthless without its spirit. It is worthless to bend and get straight without attention. The worship is valuable with its soul. There are people who do not state correctly the words in prayer, but they have a pure spirit and their hearts attend in court of God; if they read Surah al-Hamd to a sick person, he/she will heal. And, also, there are people who state correctly the words in prayer, but their prayer is spiritless. However, the spirituality is important.

The prayer, the order of Prophets

The prayer is the greatest worship and the most important order of all the prophets. The prayer is a duty which reminds God; it is the God's treaty with people.

The prayer is a manifestation of Islamic school. The prayer heals proud. The prayer is a means of gratitude and appreciation for divine and perilous blessings and the foundation of religion. It is the key of paradise. It is the means of measuring and recognizing people, eliminating sins, and cleansing human heart and soul.

The prayer is the first question on the Day of Judgment. If it will not be accepted, the other acts will be unacceptable, too. The prayer sustain religion and monotheism of Abraham (PBUH) and it is the tradition of the Messenger of Allah and the school of Hussein ibn Ali (PBUH).

The prayer is a worship act that is sweet for lovers of God and bitter and difficult for hypocrites. It destroys devil and disappoints it. It is presence in court of Creator and harmony with all particles of universe. The saying of prayer is companionship with all creatures and angels in worship of Lord.

The following is reported from Abu Hurayradiallahuanh: While the Messenger of Allah was passing by a grave, he asked, "Whose grave is it?" The Companions said, "It is the grave of such and such person." The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, "For this person in the grave, to perform a prayer of two-rak'ahs is better than all of your worldly goods." (Tabarani, Majma'uzZawaid).

Yes, to perform a prayer of two-rak'ahs is better than all of the money and the property of the world. It will be understood better in the grave. What is important is to understand it in the world.

H. Abu Dharradiyallahuanh says, Once, the Prophet (pbuh) went out in winter. A lot of leaves were falling off the trees. When he held a branch of a tree, more leaves started to fall off. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said "O Abu Dharr!" I said, "Yes, o Messenger of Allah!" The Prophet (pbuh) said, "If a Muslim performs prayers in order to please Allah, his sins will be shed like the leaves of this tree are shed" (Musnad Ahmad).

The following is reported from H. Aisha radiyallahuanha: The Prophet stated the following for the two-rak'ahsunah of the morning prayer: "This two-rak'ah prayer is definitely better than the world for me" (Muslim).

The following is reported from Abu Hurayra: The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, "When man prostrates upon reciting a verse of prostration, Satan moves away from that place by crying and says, 'I was destroyed. Man was ordered to prostrate and he did; thus, he deserved Paradise. I was also ordered to prostrate but I avoided prostrating. I deserve hellfire'" (from Sahih Muslim: 81).

O he who is ordered to perform five daily prayers! Do not forget that Satan was damned because he avoided prostrating once and was expelled from Paradise. What will happen to us if we abandon prayers five times a day?

The following is reported from Hz. Fatima radiyallahuanha: the Prophet (pbuh) said to me, “O Fatima! If you want to meet me in the hereafter, increase your prostrations (that is, perform prayers more)”(Musnad Ahmad).

O he who does not perform prayers! Listen to the advice the Prophet gives to his daughter. Even the daughter of the Prophet has to increase her prostrations, that is, perform more prayers, in order to be together with him in Paradise; see what kind of an end is waiting for us if we abandon performing prayers; and come to your senses.

The Prophet (pbuh) said:A hungry person will be full after eating and a thirsty person will be full after drinking, but I will not be full of prayer.

4. Prayer in Quran

In greatest sura of Qur'an, Surah al-Baqare, there is a speech about prayer:

Establish prayer.

In the smallest sura of the Qur'an, also, the prayer is mentioned:

So pray to your Lord, and sacrifice.

The prayer has been cited for more than eighty times in Quran. The examples include:

Be ever mindful of prayers, and of praying in the most excellent way; and stand before God in devout obedience (Qur'an, 2:238).

Truly, to a happy state shall attain the believers: those who humble themselves in their prayer, and who turn away from all that is frivolous, and who are intent on inner purity (Qur'an, 23:1-4).

Extol, then, God's limitless glory when you enter upon the evening hours, and when you rise at morn; and seeing that unto Him is due all praise in the heavens and earth, glorify Him in the afternoon as well, and when you enter upon the hour of noon (Qur'an, 30:17-18).

And before God prostrate themselves, willingly or unwillingly, all things and beings that are in the heavens and the earth, as do their shadows in the mornings and the evenings (Qur'an, 13:15).

Our Lord (glorified and exalted be He) descends each night to the earth's sky when there remains the final third of the night, and He says: "Who is saying a prayer to me that I may answer it? Who is asking something of me that I may give it him? Who is asking forgiveness of me that I may forgive him?" (Hadith Qudsi, 35).

In the Qur'an, the prayer is considered to be associated with all worship acts such as fasting, zakat, jihad, recitation of the Quran, social justice, consultation, and lending.

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