# Spiritual Prayer

By Khawaja Shamsuddin Azeemi

This book is dedicated to those women who, before the end of the last decade of the twentieth century, will govern the whole world at a most dignified and superior level, driving forward and bringing great progression in the mission of the holy prophet Muhammad (pbuh), the first *Noor*, cause of creation of the universe, and benefactor of humanity.



# رَبِّ اجُعَلُنِي مُقِينَمَ الصَّلواةِ وَمِنُ ذُرِّيَّتِي

Oh Lord! Make me one who establishes regular Prayer, and also (raise such) among my offspring

# اَلصَّلُوةُمِعُرَاجُ الْمُؤمِنِينَ ط

--%-%-- Prayer is a Believer's Ascension ( $Mehr\bar{a}j$ ) --%-%--

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Mehrāj means to enter the world of the unseen. When a believer attains Mehrāj through prayer, Angels appear in front of him. He travels through the Heavens, and through the blessings of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) he comes to know his Lord.

Prayer is the name of that special worship in which man can directly communicate and establish a relationship with his Creator. When a person stands to perform Prayer the doors of Heaven open up to him and between the worshipper and Allah all veils are lifted.

The beloved Prophet (pbuh) has determined a method in the form of Prayer in order to form a link with Allah. It is the declaration of the Holy Prophet that 'Prayer is the *Mehrāj* (Ascension to the Heavens) of the Believer.' *Mehrāj* was the *Mehrāj* of the Holy Prophet. For his descendants the Holy prophet has declared **Prayer** as *Mehrāj*. Such a believer attains the honour to sight the High Throne, and Allah Himself. His ears hear the voice of Allah and his heart becomes acquainted with Allah's closeness.

*Spiritual Prayer*, after manifesting the hidden treasures in the sea of knowledge and awareness, presents to us the wisdom of Prayer from a scientific point of view. It also presents solutions to many issues, including cures for incurable illnesses.



*Khawaja Shamsuddin Azeemi* is the present head of the Azeemia Sufi Order, and a world famous spiritual master.

His mission and his invitation to the whole of mankind is that they should learn the inner knowledge, realise their latent potential so that they may get to know the Lord Creator of the universe, and hence enjoy a blissful life here and in the hereafter.

#### **Disclosure**

This era is an era of developed minds. Fifty years ago, something from a scientific point of view that a fifty-year old man did not know, today a ten-year old child knows. The availability of knowledge at this point is at its peak where man claims to have walked in space. The idea of transmitting thoughts a thousand miles away has now become a manifested reality, made possible by increasing and decreasing the wavelength of sound. Distances have thinned. A journey that used to take days and years to complete can now be accomplished within minutes and hours. Research has revealed to us that in a human brain there are millions of cells operating, and every cell with its full strength holds a creative ability within a human. Yes indeed! This era is an era of knowledge, scientific advancements and self-awareness. In this day and age a concept can only become accepted when it is demonstrated with an explanation in accordance with scientific formulae and the laws of nature.

The language and approach should be easy to understand and should touch the heart.

**Spiritual Prayer** has been written taking the above principle into account. I have tried to present this book by referring to the scientific meanings and the laws of nature to explain *Asalātu Mehrāj-ul-Mumineen* (Prayer is the Ascension of the Believer) so that the current generation caught up in western education can also take advantage of this book.

**Spiritual Prayer**, after manifesting the hidden treasures in the sea of knowledge and awareness, presents solutions to many issues, problems and cures for incurable illnesses. Prayer opens the doors to the unseen world for us. By performing Prayer correctly, conversing with angels can become an easy practice.

For people who are suffering from fear, insecurity and are inflicted with problems and grief, Prayer is an unbeatable cure. It is such a practice that if put into action correctly, we can regain our lost power and dignity once again and achieve an honoured rank within the category of flourishing nations. Regarding Prayer, it is important to mention here that a Prayer without the presence of heart becomes a source of deprivation on an individual basis and a source of downfall on a collective basis.

Chapter 30, Sūrah Ma'un states:

'Ah, woe unto worshipers who are unaware of the reality and meanings of their Prayers.'

May Allah bestow upon the entire Muslim nation, divine guidance to correctly establish Prayer. And according to the words of the Holy Prophet (pbuh), (Asalātu Mehrāj-ul-Mumineen), grant us intimate knowledge of Allah through Prayer.

(Ameen)

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## Prayer - Ascension (Mehrāj) of the Believer

Prayer (Namāz) is the name of that special worship in which man can directly communicate and establish a relationship with his Creator. Prayer is such a pillar (of the five pillars of Islam) that no Muslim in their conscious senses can deny or abandon in any state. The establishment of Prayer has been stated in the Holy Qur'ān approximately one hundred times. From this we can appreciate the importance, excellence and greatness of this important pillar of Islam. In worship, Prayer holds a central position. It acquaints a person with such a spiritual state in which one negates himself and all else existing in his surroundings to witness Allah. Prayer provides a great guard and protection to the hidden and innermost senses of man and also forms a social network amongst people. Prayer brings many benefits, morally, physically, spiritually, to the way of life and on a civil basis. Collective prayer creates strength and solidarity in social relationships.

*Salāt* (Prayer) is an Arabic word. Its meanings include glorification of Allah, asking for forgiveness, blessings, complimenting Allah, and desire for blessings or grace. Prayer also means to obey, honour and respect Allah. In other words, *Salāt* is the name of the worship in which it is necessary to declare the greatness of Allah. To perform Prayer in its proper manner is a fundamental pillar of Islam. A Prayer that has been accepted can enable man to achieve all heights in religious and worldly affairs.

Allah clarifies in the Holy Qur'ān:

'This is the Scripture whereof there is no doubt, a guidance unto those who ward off evil. Who believe in the unseen, and establish Prayer, and spend of that We have bestowed upon them'

(Sūrah Bagara, 2)

According to Allah's statement, Prayer prevents you from sinning. Regarding Prayer, the Creator of the universe states:

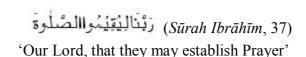
'Ah, woe unto worshippers who are heedless of their prayers' (Sūrah Ma'un, 3)

The Holy Prophet (pbuh) said:

"Allah states: 'I have made obligatory on the followers of this faith (Muslims) five Prayers and I have taken responsibility that if one performs these five Prayers at their appointed times, it becomes My duty to enter him into heaven'"

When a person stands to perform Prayer the doors of Heaven open up to him. Between the worshipper and Allah all veils are lifted. Prayer is the Light of the believer. In the state of prostration the worshipper's head is at the feet of Allah. Prayer is the Ascension of the believer.

In every religion that came to this world through revelation, Allah's remembrance has been ordered. Also existing are the laws and guidance for this remembrance. Just as there is praise and glorification of Allah for Muslims, there is *Mazmoor* for the Jews, supplication for Christians, *Zamzama* for the Persians, and *Bhujan* for the Hindus, and each has determined times to offer these obligatory Prayers. This is the reason why Prayer is an act which all religions agree upon. According to the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān, each messenger gave its followers instructions to establish Prayer and emphasised it. The followers of Hażrat Ibrahim give great importance to this. When Hażrat Ibrahim settled his son Hażrat Isma'il on the deserted grounds of Makkah he gave the following reasoning:-



Hazrat Ibrahim supplicated to Allah for himself and for his descendants, the following supplication:-

(Sūrah Ibrāhīm, 40)

'Oh my Lord! Make me one who establishes regular Prayer, and also (raise such) among my offspring'

About Hazrat Ismā'il, the Holy Qur'ān states:-

(Sūrah Maryam, 55)

'He used to enjoin on his people Prayer'

Regarding Hażrat Lut, Hażrat Is'haq, Hażrat Yaqoob and the messengers of their descendants the Qur'ān states:-

(Sūrah Anbiyā, 73)

'and We inspired in them the doing of good deeds and the establishment of Prayer'

Hażrat Luqman gave the following guidance to his son:-

(Sūrah Luqmān, 17)

'O my dear son! Establish Prayer'

Allah commanded to Hażrat Mūsa (Moses):-

(Sūrah Tā-Ha, 14)

'Establish Prayer for My remembrance'

It was commanded to Hażrat Mūsa, Haroon and Bani Israeel:-

(Sūrah Yūnus, 87)

'and establish Prayer'

Hażrat Isa (Jesus) used to say:-

(Sūrah Maryam, 31)

'And the Lord gave command of Prayer'

It is evident from the Qur'ān that even in the days of Islam certain Jews and Christians were establishing Prayer. It states:-

# مِنُ أَهُلِ الْكِتٰبِ أُمَّة "قَائِمَة "يَتُلُونَ ايْتِ اللَّهِ انْآءَ الَّيْلِ وَهُمُ يَسُجُدُونَ

(Sūrah Al-Imrān, 113)

'Of the People of the Scriptures there is a staunch community who recite the revelations of Allah all night long, and they prostrate themselves (before Him)'

'And as for those who hold fast by the Book and establish regular Prayer, — never shall We suffer the reward of the righteous to perish'

#### **Spiritual Intention and Purpose of Prayer**

It is narrated by Hażrat Ibn-e-Umar that one night when the Holy Prophet (pbuh) was sitting in seclusion in the mosque for continuous Prayer (*Itikaf*) he instructed:-

'People! When one is preoccupied in Prayer he has a secret conversation with his Lord, and he should know and be aware of what honour he is submitted'

#### **Faith**

If we analyse life we come to realise that in human life the existence of faith is essential in one way or another. Without faith human life remains incomplete. Just like belief in Allah and to be present before Him and behold Him is a faith, similarly infidelity and the rejection of Allah too is included within the circle of faith. It is a different thing altogether that the name given to this is disbelief. In another words, a person like this is established upon the belief of infidelity. In life when faith comes under discussion it becomes important to set some rules and regulations in order to stay firm and established upon this faith. By contemplating on the Holy Qur'ān it becomes clear that Allah persuades man to stay firm and constant upon this faith: that there is no entity except Allah who is worthy of worship and devotion. This is the same thinking approach that each and every one of the prophets enlightened mankind with. They all set rules and regulations relating to how life should be spent in order to keep this faith firm and established. If we look through the sight of reality it becomes evident that in every action and movement man is standing in need of Allah's favour and kindness. In every situation, whether it is birth, childhood, youth, old age or life after death, we are in need of Allah's kindness and blessings.

#### Reading Prayer and Establishing Prayer

It has been mentioned that one of the meanings of Prayer is blessings. In other words, Prayer is a source of attaining Allah's blessings. It is spectacular work of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) that he has devised for the followers of his faith (Muslims), and for other human beings, a method for attaining Allah's blessings that combines all the movements which occur in one's life. The purpose of it is so that in every situation and in every movement of life one stays connected with Allah's blessings. When we study and analyse the movements contained within Prayer it becomes apparent that there is no movement in human life that the Holy Prophet has not included in Prayer e.g. lifting the hands, raising them, moving them, touching the body with the hands, standing up, bending, lying, sitting, speaking, looking, hearing, moving the head around to determine directions. Thus, Prayer includes every state of life. The purpose of it is so that no matter what a person is doing, his mind stays established with Allah and this should become a

habit. When this becomes a trait encompassing every moment and breath of one's life one develops a strong connection with Allah.

When we make intention (*niyat*) we raise our hands up to the ears and touch them, and then saying *Allāhu Akbar* (Allah is the Greatest) we tie our hands. Before starting Prayer it is our intention that we are going to perform this act for Allah. Intention is related with the brain i.e. first we mentally present ourselves in front of Allah.

From the beginning of creation up until now all the inventions and developments that have came into existence are firstly related to the brain and then with the hands. When we lift ours hands for Prayer and declare Allah's greatness we are forming a relationship between Allah and all our mental abilities and all the developments produced by using these abilities. In other words, all the inventions that mankind has invented and the ones still to be invented in the future are all related to the abilities that Allah has granted us. When we recite *Subhāna kallāh humma* (O Allah, all glory is for you) we are declaring Allah's glory and confessing that the abilities present within us that enable us to speak, think and understand are actually the attributes of Allah and a favour bestowed upon us by Him. When reciting *Sūrah Fātiha* we are negating ourselves and declaring that all praise is for Allah only and that He is the one who grants us guidance, and only by earning His kindness and favour are we able to walk along the straight path.

After *Sūrah Fātiha* we recite any other *Sūrah* from the Holy Qur'ān e.g. *Sūrah Ikhlās*. When reciting this *Sūrah* we are confessing that Allah is One (Single) and His creation is not. Allah is not in need of anything, but all else is in need of Him. None is born of Him nor is He born. Allah is Unique, the One, Single, Eternal, Absolute, and there is none like Him. While declaring Allah's greatness we bow down and then stand up again. After standing up we go into such a position which is close to lying down (prostration). We then get up into a sitting position. Next, we prostrate again. We then stand up. In the last *rakat* we sit down in peace for quite a while and then looking in both directions we salute (say *Salām*).

It sure is a remarkable fact worth contemplating upon that the Holy Prophet has incorporated every single moment that exists in human life into Prayer. The purpose of it is so that whatever a person is doing, whichever state he is in, whether he is sitting, standing, bending, saying something, looking here or there, moving the hands and feet, thinking about something, in every situation there remains a mental link with Allah. Wherever Prayer is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān Allah has ordered us to 'establish Prayer' or 'those who establish Prayer' etc. It is important to contemplate about the wording here. In the Holy Qur'ān we have been given guidance to establish Prayer, not to read Prayer.

#### **Prayer and Fire-Worshipping**

There is a big difference between *establishing* Prayer and *reading* Prayer. The Holy Qur'ān does contain the word *read* (recite) as well though:-

'O thou (Muhammad) folded in garments! Stand (to Prayer) by night, but not all night, Half of it, or a little less, or a little more; and recite the Quran in slow, measured rhythmic tones' (*Sūrah Muzzammil*, 1)

There is an expression in the Persian language 'Namāz Khwandan' which means 'to read Prayer'. This expression is used by fire-worshippers. They read their book Zandu'awsta and then bow down to fire; this is what they call Namaz Khwandan or to read Prayer. When this was translated from Arabic to Urdu there was a translation error: 'establish Salāt' was translated as 'read Namaz'. According to the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān Salāt should have been translated as Salāt, just as the translation of Kalimah Tayibah (first Creed) is Kalimah Tayibah, translation of Allah is Allah, translation of Rahmān (merciful) is Rahmān, translation of paighambar (messenger) is paighambar, translation of rasool (prophet) is rasool etc. According to the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān, 'establish Salāt' and the Urdu translation; 'read Namaz' has a very big difference in its meanings.

#### The Thinking Approach of the Holy Prophets

The universal law is that until our thoughts with all their abilities and concentration do not find a focal point, and do not stay still on that one point, we remain ignorant of the real meaning and understanding of that point. Whenever we do something with mental anxiety and the entering of foreign thoughts, the proper result is not achieved. As a matter of fact it is the attribute and the meaning of the attribute inside any thing that brings together the result. For example, water can quench thirst because the attribute of water is to irrigate dry veins. Fire can cook food because the attribute of fire is to use its heat and intensity to make food edible and digestible. Until the attribute and meaning of a thing does not enter our mind we cannot take advantage of that thing.

If we pay attention to the wisdom and meaning of *Salāt* (Prayer) we come to conclude that Prayer is a sure and true method of getting close to and to and getting to know Allah. But to get close to or to get to know something is not possible until one is fully focused and attentive towards that thing. Until one does not absorb himself within the meaning of something he cannot become familiar with the essence of that thing. To become absorbed within the meaning is only possible when every angle of the intellect, perception, and thinking is focused upon the one point. In another words, to get to know the reality of something one should establish a link with that thing, consciously and subconsciously. In life whatever movement or whatever thing one may be doing, mentally one's full attention should stay attentive towards finding the meaning of that thing. This is the same thinking approach with operates within the holy prophets. They wilfully and naturally turn their attention towards Allah in every action and deed. In their minds it is well established that their every action is for Allah. This is the thinking approach that the holy prophets have preached about and persuaded the whole of mankind to take on, and the same thinking approach that they themselves have spent their whole lives with.

#### A Programme for the Descendants (Umat)

It is evident from the Holy Qur'ān and the other three books which have come to us through revelation that man has no prestige or status of his own. Allah tells us:-

'You listen through My hearing, see through My sight, think through My thought. Your coming is from Us and to Us you will return. Allah encircles everything. He is the Beginning, and He is the End. He is the Manifested, and He is the Hidden. Where you are one, the second is Allah. Where you are two, the third is Allah. It is Allah who gives birth to you, and provides the sources for your upbringing after birth, and it is Allah who provides you with food without account'

Every prophet devised a programme for his descendants by the order of Allah. All these programmes have the same fundamental aim which is to establish a link between man and Allah. The prophets have told us that Allah has created us so that we get to know Allah and form a mental link with Him that stays firm and established. May we lay down our life for our beloved Prophet who has determined a method in the form of *Salāt* in order to form a link with Allah. As we have already emphasised previously, by contemplating upon Prayer it becomes very clear that Prayer contains all life's movements and actions. Even though these movements and actions are related to the physical body, the actual purpose of them is to witness Allah and attain intimate knowledge of Allah.

#### Adam and Eve

#### Allah ordered Adam:-

'O Adam! Reside here in Heaven with your wife, and eat and drink happily from whereof you like but do not come near this tree or you shall be amongst the transgressors'

Until Adam and Eve did not commit disobedience they enjoyed Allah's blessings in Heaven. When they committed disobedience the atmosphere of Heaven could not tolerate them anymore and refused them. They got thrown into the 'lowest of the low' (Earth):

'And We created man of the best stature and then We reduced him to the lowest of the low' ( $S\bar{u}rah\ T\bar{v}n$ , 4)

There are two minds operating within man. One is the heavenly mind; that status of Adam before he committed disobedience and the other mind is the one that came into existence after disobedience. Adam, who was given authority by Allah to exercise his free will, had only one mind operative in him whose characteristic was to spend life in obedience. When Adam using his choice of free will committed disobedience, a second mind came into existence which was based upon disobedience. Until Adam and Eve spent their life within the sphere of the heavenly mind they were free of time and space restrictions. When they acted against the order of Allah, time and space restrictions were imposed upon them and the free mind became imprisoned and confined within difficulties and hardship. To spend life after becoming restricted in time and space Adam had to devise new methods. For example, in order to fulfil the demand of hunger and thirst he had to set up a cultivation system and carry out hard labour. As well as this he had to undergo a lot of wait, whereas in Heaven there was no such thing as wait. Adam admitted his mistake to Allah and pleaded for forgiveness. Allah said to Adam:

'We will be sending our chosen people who will guide you to the straight path and those who act upon the guidance of those prophets will be permitted back in their home; Heaven once again'

When Adam disobeyed Allah the link between him and Allah was broken. Because this link was temporarily broken the heavenly mind refused them. There is an Arabic proverb that says, 'Everything yearns to return to its source'. Therefore, to achieve the mind that is free of time and space restrictions we will have to employ the same method that we used to lose it. Using our choice of free will we will have to reject this mind in which we are enclosed within, the mind that caused us to move away from our liberated mind and lose the link which we had with Allah in Heaven. To search for this connection and to retain this connection has been termed as 'Qiyām Salāt' (establishment of Prayer) in the language of the Qur'ān. Allah orders us to 'establish Prayer' in other words, to establish a link and relationship with Allah - such a relationship that stays firm and established in every state and situation in life.

When we want to achieve something we usually have to negate ourselves, in other words, give less importance to ourselves. We also have to sacrifice our time and our mental and physical health. Success in our mission will be in proportion to this sacrifice or negation. The more we sacrifice or negate the more success we will achieve.

#### **Conscious and Subconscious**

Man has two states of mind: the conscious and the subconscious. Conscious is the name given to the mind which operates during the state of wakefulness and subconscious is the name given to the mind that operates during the state of sleeping and dreaming. According to the teachings of Allah, the senses of the wakeful state and the senses of the dreaming state are the one. The only difference is that when we are in the wakeful state, time and space restrictions apply whereas in the state of dreaming there are no restrictions of time and space. To liberate ourselves from time and space restrictions we have no other way except to suppress the senses of wakefulness and to settle our life upon the senses of dreaming. The current situation is that the senses of wakefulness are predominant upon us and the senses of dreaming are suppressed. We are continuously changing between these two states of wakefulness and sleep. Sometimes we are in the state of wakefulness and at other times we are spending our life in the senses that are free

from time and space restrictions (dreaming). In the Holy Qur'ān these senses have been mentioned in the name of day and night. It explains:-

'We enter the night from the day and We enter the day from the night'

In another place it states:-

'We take out the day from the night and take out the night from the day'

In other words, the senses are the one. It is only a matter of which one is governing at the time. The senses of the day are bound within time and space whereas the senses of the night are not. It is the senses of the night that are the means of travelling in the unseen world. With these senses man can witness the realm of the souls (Burzukh), purgatory  $(Ar\bar{a}f)$  and the realm of the angels. Referring to Prophet Mūsa (Moses), Allah tells us:-

'And we promised Moses thirty nights and completed them with ten more and so were completed your Lord's forty nights'

Allah is saying here that in forty nights He granted the Torah to Mūsa (by revelation). This statement of Allah must be contemplated upon deeply as it is very important. Allah is not saying that He completed the promise in forty days, only the night has been mentioned. Obviously Mūsa stayed on *Koh-e-Tūr* (Mount Tūr) for forty days and forty nights, it means then that for forty days and forty nights the senses of the night were functioning within him.

Relating to the Holy Prophet's Ascension (Mehrāj), Allah's words are:-

'Pure is He who one night took His servant from Masjid-e-Hiram to Masjid-e-Aksa so that He could show him His signs'

When we are in the senses of the night (the state of sleep) we do not eat, nor do we talk and nor do we deliberately use our mind for worldly issues. This is the state that the programme of establishing Prayer (*Qiyām Salāt*) orders us to take on. During the state of Prayer nearly all those senses come upon us which we call night.



# Prayer and Mehrāj

It is the declaration of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) that 'Prayer is the *Mehrāj* (Ascension to the heavens) of the Believer'.

When we look for the definition and meaning of the word 'Mehrāj' we find that 'Mehrāj' is actually an alternative word used for 'the discovery of the unseen world'. When we study the details of the Holy Prophet's Mehrāj we get a taste through the conscious mind of the realms existing in the unseen world. The Holy Prophet, after being released from the grip of time and space, physically arrived at Masjid-e-Aqsa. All the prophets present there Prayed behind the leadership (Imāmat) of the Holy Prophet. He then made his presence at the Heavens, the first Heaven, second Heaven, third Heaven, fourth Heaven, fifth Heaven, sixth Heaven, seventh Heaven, and then at the throne of Allah Himself. He met with the people residing in the Heavens. He observed the state and condition of Heaven and Hell. He conversed with the

angels and then he was granted such a stage during his Ascension where there remained only the distance of two bows or even less between him and Allah. Allah conversed with His servant about whichever Secrets He wished, and also said that what the heart saw was not false.

From the study of this light-filled miraculous incidence we can deduce that the word *Mehrāj* means 'the discovery of the unseen world'. *Mehrāj* was the *Mehrāj* of the Holy Prophet. For his descendants the Holy prophet has declared Prayer as *Mehrāj*. When a believer stands for Prayer, in his mind that door opens up from which he can enter into the unseen world and become familiar with it. He witnesses the angels. After being enclosed in a circle of light (*Noor*) and liberated from time and space he reaches the height of the Heavens and then he arrives at the Throne of Allah where he bows down in subjection to Allah. A believer who attains the stage of *Mehrāj* in Prayer is showered with the light (*Noor*) of Allah's attributes.

It must be emphasised that every one of the Holy Prophet's descendants has the ability to spiritually go on *Mehrāj* up to the Throne of Allah. Through Prayer any one of his descendants can converse with the angels, visit Heaven and progress to achieve the utmost limit which is to become a devout servant and have intimate knowledge of Allah. Such a believer attains the honour to sight the High Throne, and Allah Himself. His ears hear the voice of Allah and his heart becomes acquainted with Allah's closeness. The Holy Prophet's *Mehrāj* was on a spiritual and physical basis and is such a rank which is unique and exclusive only to the Holy Prophet. Hażrat Ibrahim's access was up to *Bait-ul-Mahmood*. After *Bait-ul-Mahmood* come the stages of *Hijab-e-Azmat*, *Hijab-e-Kubrya*, and *Hijab-e-Mahmood*. After *Hijab-e-Mahmood* comes *Maqam-e-Mahmood* and this is the stage that the Holy prophet ascending to on *Mehrāj* where he conversed with Allah, and Allah said:-

'And We revealed unto our servant that which We revealed. The heart lied not (in seeing) what it saw'

(*Sūrah An-Najm*, 10-11)

#### Prayer of the Lover and the Beloved

To become acquainted with the reality of Prayer we have to have knowledge of our own soul. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) has explained that without the presence of the heart, Prayer is not Prayer. Nor is it Prayer if one is not free from evil suggestions and distracted thoughts. Such an act could only be called 'physical movement' and there would be no spiritual value in this act. When a person establishes Prayer with the depth of his soul he is released from the grasp of that mind which we call 'the disobedient mind'. When the grasp of the disobedient becomes weak the Heavenly mind, which is free from the limitations of time and space takes control. When we incline towards Allah with the Heavenly mind, Allah's light (*Noor*) starts descending upon us and in this state of Prayer we break our link with the fictional senses. This state when one gets so absorbed in Allah's light and magnificence is called *Istaghrāq*.

Hażrat Ayesha Siddiqa narrates to us that when it was time for Prayer the Holy Prophet would not even acknowledge the presence of those around him and it would seem as if they were all strangers to him.

The Holy Prophet would stand in Prayer for so long that his blessed feet would get swollen.

#### The Prayer of the Beloved Prophet (pbuh)

It is narrated in a *Hadith* that once the Holy Prophet (pbuh) arrived late for the *Fajr* Prayer. After Prayer he told the people to remain seated. He narrated to them that last night when he was establishing Prayer he went into a state of drowsiness. He saw Allah's splendour and beauty in front of him without any veils. Allah asked him 'Oh Muhammad! Do you know what subject these certain angels are conversing about?' He replied 'Yes, O Lord! They are conversing about those deeds which remove sins'. Allah asked 'What

are they?' He answered 'To lift a step towards the mosque for congregational Prayer, to stay in the mosque after the Prayer and to perform ablution despite intolerable conditions (such as very cold water). There is happiness and welfare in the life and death of the one who does this. He will be purified from his sins just like the day when his mother gave birth to him'. Allah then asked him 'Oh Muhammad! What are the stages?' He replied 'To feed people, to talk with a soft tone, to get up to establish Prayer when the world is asleep'. Allah then ordered 'Ask for anything from Me'. He answered 'O Lord! I want divine guidance to be able to do good deeds, refrain from evil deeds and to love the poor. Save me and have mercy on me. When you wish to test a nation, lift me without testing me. I am the aspirant of Your love and the love of the one who loves You and the love of every deed that takes me closer to Your love'.

Once the Holy Prophet was performing the *Kasoof* Prayer (the Prayer performed when there is a solar eclipse) and remained occupied for a long time reciting the Qur'ān, bowing down and prostrating. During this time his companions saw that he reached his hand forward. They then saw that he moved back a little. Later when the people questioned him regarding this incident he told them:-

'At that time those things were exposed in front of me of which you have been promised. Paradise and Hell were displayed just beside this wall. I saw bunches of grapes hanging in Paradise, I felt like breaking off a bunch. If I did break it you would have been able to finish it until the Day of Resurrection. I then saw Hell and have never before seen such a terrifying thing'

#### The Prayer of Hażrat Abu Bakr Siddiq

When Hażrat Abu Bakr Siddiq used to get up to perform Prayer he would get into a state of intense weeping and the non-Muslim women and children within the radius of this soft and gentle atmosphere would also start crying.

#### The Prayer of Hażrat Umar

Hażrat Umar used to cry with such force in Prayer that the sound of it would even reach the last row. Once Hażrat Umar was leading the *Fajr* Prayer and the other companions of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) were following behind him. Suddenly an unfortunate malicious person holding a dagger came forward and stabbed Hażrat Umar in his blessed belly. Hażrat Umar fainted and fell to the ground. Despite the occurrence of this horrific incident the Holy Prophet's companions praying behind Hażrat Umar remained unaware of this. Hażrat Abdul Rahman bin A'uf stepped ahead and completed the obligations of *Imāmat* (leadership in Prayer). Only after the completion of the *Nafl* Prayer did the companions of the Holy Prophet realise what had happened and went to assist Hażrat Umar.

#### The Prayer of Hażrat Ali

When Hażrat Ali would make intention to Pray, his whole body would start trembling and the colour of his face would change. He used to say:-

'The time has arrived to implement that trust which was offered to the Heavens and the Earth and which they did not have the courage to take on'

Once an arrow hit Hażrat Ali's thigh and went through to the other side of the thigh. When it was tried to pull out the arrow he felt an awful lot of pain. One of the other companions of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) suggested that the arrow be taken out when Hażrat Ali is Praying and so Hażrat Ali made intention and started to Pray. He got himself so focused and engrossed in prayer that he became totally unaware of his

surroundings. During this time the arrow was easily removed and the wound was bandaged. In the process Hażrat Ali did not even feel the slightest of pain.

#### The Prayer of Hażrat Hassan

Hażrat Hassan explained that there are three particular honours for the one who establishes Prayer:-

The first honour is that when a person stands up for Prayer, divine blessings form a cloud from his head up to the sky from which divine light pours down on him like rain.

The second honour is that angels gather on all four sides of the person and encircle him.

The third honour is that one angel says 'Oh, one who is praying, if you could see who is in front of you and who you are talking to, I swear on the Lord you would not salute (say *Salām* at end of Prayer) until the Day of Resurrection'.

#### The Prayer of Hażrat Anas

When Hażrat Anas prayed he used to get so engrossed in Prayer. Because of his engrossment the length of time between standing and prostration was so prolonged that people used to think that he had forgotten to prostrate.

#### The Prayer of Hażrat Abdullah-bin-Zubair

When Hażrat Abdullah Bin Zubair established Prayer he used to recite a large number of *Sūrahs* from the Holy Qur'ān. When standing in Prayer it would look as if he were a pillar. When he would prostrate he would stay in that position for so long that the pigeons of the Holy Kaba would come and sit on his back.

#### The Prayer of Awais Karni

Hażrat Awais Karni would not sleep all night. He would say that it is surprising that the angels, who worship Allah all the time never get tired, and us, being the best of creation get tired and have a peaceful sleep.

#### The Prayer of Zain-ul-Abideen

One day Zain-ul-Abideen was performing Prayer in the mosque when all of a sudden the thatched roof caught fire and set it all in flames. Despite this, Zain-ul-Abideen kept steadfast and focused in Prayer. Watching this incidence, all the people gathered and shouted out to him but he remained unaware of what was happening. Once he had finished his Prayer he came outside the mosque where the people asked him why he did not act in response to their shouting out so loudly. Zain-ul-Abideen told them that while they were trying to save him from this worldly fire, he was actually standing in the court of Allah.

#### The Prayer of Rabia Basri

Hazrat Rabia Basri used to spend a large portion of the night Praying. She used to say that her reason for performing Prayer was not to achieve reward but rather that on the Day of Resurrection in front of all the

prophets, the Holy Prophet (pbuh) would be able to proudly say that this Prayer is of a woman from amongst my descendants.

#### The Prayer of Hażrat Sufiyan Sawri

Once Hażrat Sufiyan Sawri was busy establishing Prayer near the Holy Kaba. While he was prostrating an enemy cut off the toes of his feet. After he head saluted (said *Salām*) in both directions he saw blood on the floor and felt pain in his feet, and only then did he realise that someone had cut off his toes.

#### The Prayer of Hażrat Muslim-bin-Bashar

Hażrat Muslim-bin-Bashar had a very domineering personality, so much so that when he would enter the house the people at home would go into complete silence due to fear of him. But when he prayed he would get so deeply engrossed in Prayer that no matter how much noise the children made, he would not have the slightest knowledge of it.

Once Hażrat-bin-Bashar was in his room making intention to pray when accidentally one of the corners of the room caught fire. Despite this, he remained preoccupied with Prayer. After he had saluted, his family informed him that all the people in the village had gathered to put out the fire and yet you did not leave Prayer even though in a time like this it is allowed to break the intention of Prayer. Hażrat-bin-Bashar replied that if he had known what was happening he certainly would have broken the intention.

#### The Prayer of a Woman

Hażrat Abdullah-bin-Mubarik relates to us an incidence which occurred in his childhood regarding a woman who spent a lot of time in worship:-

"During Prayer a poisonous spider stung her forty times but she offered no resistance. When she finished prayer I asked her why she did not move the spider away. She replied: 'Oh son! You are still a child. How was it possible, I was preoccupied in the work of my Lord, how could I have done my own work?"

#### The Prayer of a Saint

Hażrat Abu-Alkhair-Aqtah had a cyst in his foot. Doctors suggested that his foot be amputated but Hażrat Abu-Alkhaira-Aktah did not agree to this. His disciples advised the doctors to cut the foot off while he is Praying because at that time he has no awareness of himself at all. And so, while he was Praying, his foot was cut off. Only when he had finished his Prayer did he realise that his foot had been cut off.



# **Prayer - A Cure for Grief**

Prayer is a practice that takes a person closer to his soul. When a person is acquainted with the knowledge of his soul it becomes clear to him that it is Allah Himself who is guiding him. Just think what our life would be like if Allah Himself was guiding us and just how close we would be to Allah. Truly, with this course of conduct our every movement would become based upon Allah's movement.

If we contemplate on the psychological depths of this course of conduct we find that whenever we do a good deed for Allah's sake, we find great satisfaction and happiness in it. That happiness penetrates deep within and illuminates every part of the soul. With that happiness the soul becomes so light that it forgets about its physical body. If we look into the lives of saints we realise that they spent their lives in the same way as an ordinary person spends his life. The only difference is that they were acquainted with the pleasures of a good course of conduct whereas we are not. How is it not possible for every descendant of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) to achieve what was possible for the saints? Certainly it is possible for us all but we are careless and ignorant. The saints, after acquainting themselves with this pleasure and with the blessings of real Prayer managed to gather people to perform congregational Prayer. The congregational Prayer of those few people managed to change the condition and structure of the whole world. But when Muslims stopped performing Prayer in the way it should be performed and turned this sacred alchemic worship into a ritual, as a punishment nature took all kinds of leadership and authority away from us. There was no warmth left in our hearts. We became deprived of softness, passion, humility, modesty, tolerance, knowledge, intellect, understanding and a healthy mind. While Praying, if there is no presence of concentration and softness of the heart, and we do not get to know our soul and do not manage to befriend Allah then this Prayer is a similitude to a body without a soul. If we perform our Prayers in the manner prescribed by Allah and His Prophet then why would our Prayers not be Prayers? How could they not? Why are we bereft of the blessings and rewards that our forefathers were blessed with?

According to the declaration of Allah and His Holy Prophet, Prayer is the cure to all our sadness and grief, is an ointment to heal all the hurt inside us and is a remedy for our pain. But because we have changed Prayer to suit us according to the time and occasion, we have left no stone unturned in making this blessed deed lifeless.

All the prophets that have come to this world promoted the worshipping of Allah and good deeds. They are those holy and pure beings that Allah has favoured and those who have been chosen to favour others. But those who were disobedient and unfortunate did not take on board the teachings of these virtuous messengers sent down by Allah and instead overlooked them. Allah states in the Holy Qur'ān:-

'But after them came a later generation who were disobedient who lost the reality of Prayer and followed their carnal desires. But they will meet deception'

(Surāh Maryam, 59)

The meaning of this auspicious verse is that Prayer is the 'jewel' of worship, in other words, the essence. If we remain unaware of the reality of it then all our Prayers will go to waste.

If we contemplate upon the knowledge of ethics we come to realise that the most effective way to develop is through the character of oneself, and the complete picture of the character is made from the postures and movements of Prayer. According to the declaration of the Holy Prophet, the greatest nourishment for one's character is Prayer. Allah declares in the Holy Qur'ān:-

'Establish Prayer and pay the poor due. And whatever good ye send forth for your souls before you, ye shall find it with Allah: for Allah sees all that ye do'

(Sūrah Baqara, 110)

In another place Allah declares:-

'O ye who believe! Seek help with patient perseverance and Prayer: for Allah is with those who persevere' (Sūrah Baqara, 153)

These are the two forces through which we can free ourselves of our troubles, trials, pain, dishonour and disgrace. If Muslims gather these two forces within them, the crown of kingship of the world would be placed upon their heads. They would never become failures in any religious or worldly affair.

Prayer is the fountainhead of spiritualism. Prayer is a fort that protects us from an army of wrongdoing. Prayer keeps us away from sinning. To just complete the movements of Prayer is not called Prayer. It is necessary to possess the knowledge of the purpose of Prayer. The Qur'ān does not give us the order to perform the ritual Prayer, it gives us orders to fulfil all the fundamental pillars of Islam properly and completely. It clearly states that without mental concentration and the presence of the heart, Prayer is not Prayer:-

'Recite what is sent of the Book by inspiration to thee, and establish regular Prayer, for Prayer restrains from shameful and unjust deeds, and remembrance of Allah is the greatest (thing in life) without doubt. And Allah knows the deeds that ye do' (*Sūrah Ankabūt*, 45)

#### The Entering of Thoughts in Prayer

People often complain that they cannot concentrate in Prayer and as soon as they make intention to pray, thoughts start to enter their minds. Sometimes they cannot even remember which *Sūrahs* they have recited in Prayer and which ones they have yet to recite. After ending the Prayer they are left with the impression that Prayer was a burden on them until not recited and they have now got rid of this burden. There is no pleasure or peace gained from such a Prayer whereas Prayer is actually a great way of achieving a satisfied heart and being introduced to the unseen world. The main reason for this is that we perform Prayer so quickly that the actual purpose of Prayer is diminished. The whole Prayer is read in the time a single *rakat* performed with humility should be completed. The bowing and prostration are carried out with such speed that one cannot even recite

in that time. The body is bent a little to bow down while placing the hands on the knees, lifting the head, they have not even stood up straight again and already gone down to prostrate, lifting the head after prostration, they have not even sat up properly yet and already gone down into prostration again, and then got up to stand.

A Prayer performed as such is an act of dishonouring Prayer and rudeness in front of Allah. A Prayer or act as such can certainly not be termed as Prayer. Instead it is a defective act which will become a cause of shame and remorse for us on the Day of Judgement and from which we will gain no benefit at all.

It is the saying of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) that the one who performs the best act of stealing is the one who steals in Prayer. His companions asked:-

'O Prophet! How can one steal in Prayer?'

He replied:

'To not perform the bowing and prostration in Prayer properly is robbery in Prayer'

# Explanation of the Adhān (call to prayer)

*Adhān* has been in force since the days of Allah's friend prophet Ibrahim. When Prophet Ibrahim had completed the construction of Holy Kaba he said to Allah:-

'I have completed the construction'

Allah instructed him:-

'Announce Hajj amongst the people'

Hażrat Ibrahim replied:-

'O Cherisher! Where will my voice reach?'

Allah commanded:-

'You announce it. To make it heard is my responsibility'

Hażrat Ibrahim asked:-

'In which words shall I invite them?"

Allah replied:-

'Say - People! It has been made obligatory on you to make pilgrimage to the ancient house. All on the Heavens and the Earth have heard this. Are you not watching how they come from far away cities saying 'Labaik' (acceptance of being present at ones service)'

According to another narration Hażrat Ibrahim climbed onto *Koh-e-Qabas* (Mount Qabas) and putting his fingers in his ears announced:-

'People! Allah has made Hajj obligatory on you, hence accept the command of your Lord'

After hearing this, the souls replied 'Labaik' from the backbone of the men and the abdomen of the women. Hence, until the Day if Resurrection only those souls will perform Hajj who said 'Labaik' in answer to Hażrat Ibrahim's announcement, and none else.

It is our common observation that when we wish to converse with someone we try to attract their attention towards us. There are many ways to draw attention. You can create a sound to draw attention, you can call upon someone, you can send a message through another person or you can mentally (telepathically) send the message.

Every religion has its way to draw attention or call its followers. In certain places the sound of bells is used to gather people for worship, in other places conch shells are used to gather people at a point and invite the Hindu priest to lead the worship.

Whenever a certain practice comes into force in mankind, it stays set. Only the way it is practised is changed. In Islam the way devised to gather people at a point and to call people to worship Allah is called the ' $Adh\bar{a}n$ '.  $Adh\bar{a}n$  is also worship in its own place. In Islam the one who proclaims in the name of Allah has been blessed with respect. The Muezzin (one who calls the  $Adh\bar{a}n$ ) wearing clean clothes stands up on a height and with the feelings of respect and admiration and with a loud and clear voice proclaims

he then testifies Allah's majesty and sovereignty and with that he also testifies that Muhammad is Allah's Prophet. After that he announces on his left and right that Prayer is blessings, Prayer is welfare and prosperity in this world and in the hereafter. This announcement begins with the proclamation of Allah's greatness and ends with the proclamation of Allah's magnificence and grace. What we are trying to imply is that it becomes clear from the *Adhān* that the start of every deed and the limit of every deed is Allah.

The one who says the  $Adh\bar{a}n$  should have a blissful tone. His heart and mind should be enlightened and clean. The reason for this is that with the voice the emotions are also conveyed. If the Muezzin's emotions are not pure and his mind is contaminated with sin then his mind will be devoid of peace and tranquillity. When there is no tranquillity in the mind then the effect of his voice will not make an impact or attract people. It is also obligatory on people to give the Muezzin respect and honour due to his dignified status.

## Ablution (Wużū) and Science

It has been proven by scientific experiments that vegetation, minerals, animals and humans are all set upon an electric system. This electric system keeps them functioning. The electricity from a human body is enough to power a torch or a pocket radio. It has been proven by research that when a fly sits on the leaf of a tree and produces movement in the leaf's veins, an electric current starts flowing through the leaf.

Aristotle once explained that a torpedo fish can shock a human with its electric energy. To obtain its food it hides beneath the sand and when fish come near, it makes them fall unconscious with its electric current.

There is an incident that occurred in 1885 in Edinburgh relating to a black boy from whom an electric current could be felt by simply touching him with the finger. This boy was brought to much attention and experimented upon. Doctor Johnson kept this boy with him as a worker and at the same time experimented on him. He observed that by touching the body near the head, especially the tongue, a much stronger electric shock was felt. Doctor Aston and many other electricians investigated upon this boy but all were left open-mouthed and astonished. Doctor A.W. Milton, a famous African traveller, related that once his friends and him in anger started beating up an African boy and found that wherever they would whip the boy, an electric spark was produced. It has also been proven that by piercing the human body with a needle and by immersing the human body within hot or cold water a small electric current is produced. The sensations of a soft sound, light, taste and smell, all produce electricity within the human body.

It is a miraculous feature of nature that it keeps producing electricity within the human body, which after flowing through the whole body, is earthed to the ground through the feet.

To perform ablution is a requirement for Prayer. The reason being that when a person makes an intention to perform ablution, the usual route of the flow of lights within the body is changed. During ablution electric sparks are produced from the human organs. This action provides the human organs with strength, nourishment and energy.

It is the statement of the Holy Prophet (pbuh):-

'Once a person has performed ablution properly and then stands for Prayer, Allah directs his attention towards him and invites him to a secret conversation. Allah does not divert his attention from him unless the person himself diverts his attention away from Allah or makes his mind attentive towards other thoughts'

#### Washing the Hands

When we wash our hands when performing ablution, rays emerge from our fingertips to form a kind of circle, which results in an increased speed in the flow of the electric current within the body, and to an extent an electric current gathers in the hands. By performing ablution properly, such flexibility is produced in the fingers which activates one's talent to transfer the creative abilities present within one onto paper or canvas i.e. artistic abilities.

#### Rinsing the Mouth

After washing the hands we rinse the mouth. By rinsing the mouth we attain hygiene of the mouth, which leads to prevention of tooth diseases. The roots of the teeth become stronger and the teeth become whiter and shinier. The sense of taste becomes stronger and one remains safeguarded against tonsillitis.

The Holy Prophet (pbuh) has advised us to use a toothstick (misvak) to clean the mouth. He declared:-

'The *misvak* cleans the mouth and improves the eyesight. It also produces fluency within one'

#### **Putting Water into the Nose**

After rinsing the mouth we put water into the nose. The nose is a crucial part of the human body. The most remarkable ability of the nose is that it produces depth and pleasantness in the voice. Try speaking whilst pressing the nostrils with your fingers. You will feel the difference. The curtains in the nose play a very special role in the beauty of the voice. They also help gather light in the head. One particular duty of the nose is its involvement with cleaning. It makes the air clean, moist, warm and well balanced for the lungs to take in. In every human approximately five hundred cubic feet of air enters through the nose daily. A whole large-sized room could be filled with this large quantity of air. In the season of snow you can go skiing on a dry frosty day but the lungs will resist taking in the dry air. They are not ready to accept even a little gasp of it. Even at that time they need that air which is found in a warm and moist atmosphere. They require air with eighty per-cent moisture and of a temperature of at least ninety degrees Fahrenheit.

The lungs demand air that is free from germs, smoke, dust and pollution. A simple air-filter required to supply such clean air would be approximately the size of a small suitcase whereas the system of nature within the nose is so small and integrated that the nose is only a few inches long.

To make the air moist the nose produces approximately a quarter of a gallon of moisture daily. For cleaning and other difficult tasks the hairs of the nostrils come in use. There is a microscopic brush inside the nose. There are invisible fibres on this brush which kill the harmful germs passing into the stomach through the air. Apart from catching these germs instinctively these invisible fibres also have another method of defence called *Lysozium*. Using this defensive method the nose prevents the eyes from infection.

When a person performing ablution puts water into the nose the electric current functioning in the water increases the efficiency of the invisible fibres, which in return safeguard the human body from many complicated diseases.

#### Washing the Face

The hidden wisdom in washing the face is that the tissues of the skin gain elasticity, the skin becomes soft and fine. The closed pores caused by dirt and pollution are opened. The face becomes attractive and radiant. If the blood circulation is too slow or too fast, it is brought back into balance. When the water enters the eyes whilst washing the face it strengthens the eye muscles. The whiteness of the eyeball is increased and the pupil becomes shiny. The one who regularly performs ablution has attractive and beautiful eyes. Wiping the hands over the face with water three times provides the mind with peace.

#### Washing the Hands up to the Elbow

Washing the hands up to the elbows has the hidden benefit that this action establishes a direct connection between one and the stored lights within the chest. A flow is established in the stock of lights. This action strengthens and provides energy to the tissues of the hands and arms.

#### **Performing Masah**

The hairs on the head act as antennae within the human body.

Every conscious person acknowledges that 'human' is the name given to a store of information. Until one does not receive the information concerning an action he cannot perform that action. We only eat when we are hungry and we only drink water when we feel thirsty, we only lie in bed to sleep once we receive the information that our body now needs to rest. We only feel happiness when we receive any information concerning happiness. Similarly, the feeling of anger or annoyance is reliant upon receiving the information concerning anger or annoyance.

When we make intention to perform ablution it actually makes us attentive towards the fact that we are performing this action for Allah. By the time we have fulfilled the fundamentals of ablution and have reached the stage of performing *Masah* our minds are attentive towards Allah and away from all else. When we wipe our hands over our head the hairs on our head acting as antennae receive all information which is contrary to all kinds of impurity, grief and those things which distance us from Allah. Our mind only accepts that information which is directly related to Allah and helps us get closer to Him.

#### Masah of the Neck

Spiritualists have divided the human body into six parts. One part is the jugular vein. The words of Allah are that 'I am closer to you than your jugular vein (vein of life)'. This vein of life is situated between the head and neck. By wiping the neck with water (performing *Masah*) our body attains a particular kind of energy which is linked to the spinal cord (within the backbone) and human joints. When a person performs *Masah*, an electric current after entering through the hands gets stored in the jugular vein and after travelling through the backbone spreads to the nervous system of the whole body. Through this method the nervous system obtains energy.

#### Masah / Washing of the Feet

As we have already stated, the brain receives information and this information is then transferred through waves to the various organs of the body. Every wave of information has an existence. By existence we mean that it stays in motion. The law is that whether it is light or water, the flow of it is necessary. When a person washes his feet the build up of excess lights within him, which are poisonous, form a flow and are earthed through the feet and as a result the human body is safeguarded from poisonous matter.