

## THE WISDOM BEHIND OUR FIVE DAILY PRAYERS

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ. وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ. اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فِيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ، وَأَوْصِيكُمْ وَنَفْسِي بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَطَاعَتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ.

Let us all increase our devotion towards Allah the Almighty by performing all that He has commanded and abstaining from all that He has prohibited. Hopefully, we will be blessed in this world and in the Hereafter.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Every time the month of *Rajab* approaches, Muslims commemorate the event of *Israk* and *Mikraj* (miraculous night journey). The scholars have agreed that this great event took place spiritually and physically, while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was awake and was not dreaming.

The event of *Israk* and *Mikraj* is related to Allah's command for our compulsory 5-daily prayers. Praying is the main act of worship as it was commanded by Allah the Almighty directly without the intermediary of Angel Gabriel as was the case for the commands to fast, give charity, perform pilgrimage, etc. Originally, Allah the Almighty commanded 50 prayers within a 24-hour day but it was finally reduced to only 5 times as we do today without reducing the reward (as if doing it for 50 times).

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

One of the wisdoms of praying is:

It is a symbol of obedience of a servant to his Lord as mentioned by Allah the Almighty in the Quran in Chapter 20 (Surah Taha), verse (*ayat*) 14:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

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

Which means: "Verily, I am Allah: There is no god but I: So serve thou Me (only), and establish regular prayer for celebrating My praise.

Recognizing ourselves as servants will force us to obey the command of our Lord and steer away from committing sin. In addition, sincere and regularly performed prayers prevent a person from committing vile actions as declared by Allah the Almighty in the Quran in Chapter 29 (Surah Al-Ankabut), verse (*ayat*) 45:

﴿٤٥﴾ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّمَا الصَّلَاةُ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ

Which means: *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.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Praying also teaches us the importance of hygiene in life. Physical hygiene which involves our body, clothes and places to perform prayers are requirements for the prayers to be valid. Spiritual hygiene which requires the cleanliness of the heart and sincere intention are necessary for the prayers to be accepted. Cleanliness is a branch of faith. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said in a *Hadith* which was narrated by *Imam* Muslim:

الطُّهُورُ شَطْرُ الْإِيمَانِ

Which means: *Purity is half of faith (iman).*

The faces of those who perform prayers will be marked by light that saves on the Day of Judgment. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said in a *Hadith* which was narrated by Imam Ahmad:

مَنْ حَافِظَ عَلَيْهَا كَانَتْ لَهُ نُورًا وَبُرْهَانًا وَنَجَاةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

Which means: “*Whoever maintains the five prayers in terms of their purity and time will have a light and a proof on the Day of Resurrection*”

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The positive effects of prayers are not limited to individual Muslims only, but can also strengthen the relationship among the community members. In addition, the prayers performed in congregation are promised multiple reward. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said in a *Hadith* which was narrated by *Imam* al-Bukhari and Muslim:

صَلَاةُ الْجَمَاعَةِ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ صَلَاةِ الْفَذِّ بِسَبْعٍ وَعِشْرِينَ دَرَجَةً

Which means: “*Prayer in congregation is superior to a prayer performed individually by twenty-seven degrees.*”

Prayer also teaches us to value time. The call to prayer (azhan) that is called five times a day reminds us the importance of managing our time. So as believers, we are obliged to divide our time for worshipping, working, resting, playing sports, and spending time with family, friends, neighbors and the community. Thus believers are trained to discipline ourselves at all times. Allah the Almighty reminds us to perform our prayers at designated times as mentioned in the Quran in Chapter 4 (Surah Al-Nisa), verse (*ayat*) 103:

فَأَقِمْوْا الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَّوْقُوتًا ﴿١٠٣﴾

Which means: *When ye pass (Congregational) prayers, celebrate Allah's praises, standing, sitting down, or lying down on your sides; but when ye are free from danger, set up Regular Prayers: For such prayers are enjoined on believers at stated times.*

A person who keeps his prayer will have a peaceful heart as mentioned by Allah the Almighty in the Quran in Chapter 70 (Surah Al-Ma'arij), verses (ayat) 19 to 23:

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ خُلِقَ هَلُوعًا ﴿١٩﴾ إِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ جَزُوعًا ﴿٢٠﴾ وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ الْخَيْرُ مَنُوعًا ﴿٢١﴾  
إِلَّا الْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٢٢﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ دَائِمُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

Which means: *Truly man was created very impatient;- Fretful when evil touches him; And niggardly when good reaches him;- Not so those devoted to Prayer;- Those who remain steadfast to their prayer;*

Therefore, let us perform our prayers diligently, patiently and earnestly with a solemn heart, solely for the sake of Allah the Almighty. Let us do it congregationally at the mosques. Let us invite our family members, relatives and neighbors to do the same so that our prayers will be our rescuer in this world and in the hereafter as reminded by Allah the Almighty in the Quran in Chapter 2 (Surah Al-Baqarah), verse (ayat) 45:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ  
وَأَسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

Which means: *And seek help through patience and prayer, and indeed, it is difficult except for the humbly submissive [to Allah ]*

بَارَكَ اللهُ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيْمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيْمِ،  
وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيْمُ. أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ الْعَظِيْمَ لِيْ  
وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ.