

THREATS OF NEGLECTING PRAYERS

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ 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 increase be righteousness and obedient servants to Allah the Almighty by doing all that He prescribes and and leaving all that He prohibits. May we be blessed by Allah the Almighty in this life and the hereafter.

Dear brothers and sisters

The decree asking us to pray has been mentioned in the al-Quran various times. This shows that its execution is compulsory and abandoning it is a great sin. Allah the Almighty says in chapter 20 (surah Taha) verse 14:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

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

Which means: *I am Allah! There is none worthy of worship but I, so worship Me and offer prayer perfectly for My remembrance.*

Islam was built based on five pillars of islam and one of them is the command to pray. The Prophet (pbuh) said in a hadith narrated by Imam al-Tirmizi:

رَأْسُ الْأَمْرِ الْإِسْلَامُ وَعَمُودُهُ الصَّلَاةُ وَذِرْوَةُ سَنَامِهِ الْجِهَادُ

Which means: *The head of the matter is Islam, its pillar is prayer and its top is jihad.*

Dear brothers and sisters

Lately, many muslims neglect their obligatory prayers and some even do it deliberately without any feeling of guilt. Sometimes the neglect is due to trivial excuses such as being engaged in sports, busy working, busy shopping or being too exhausted to pray.

Various promises of punishment awaits those who leave their prayer. Among them are:

One can be declared as a disbeliever (*kafir*) if one denies the obligation of prayer. The Prophet (pbuh) said in hadith narrated by Imam al-Tirmizi:

الْعَهْدُ الَّذِي بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمُ الصَّلَاةُ فَمَنْ تَرَكَهَا فَقَدْ كَفَرَ

Which means: *The difference between us and them (Kafir) is that of salaah. So, whoever abandons salaah certainly commits kufr.*

مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِي سَقَرٍ ﴿٤٢﴾ قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

Which means: *[And asking them], "What put you into Saqar (Hell)?"*. They will say, *"We were not of those who prayed."*

Dear brothers and sisters

Those who abandon their prayer are also threatened that they will be tortured together with Qaroon, Firoun, Hamaan and Ubay bin Khalaf. The Prophet (pbuh) said in a hadith marrated by Imam Ahmad:

مَنْ حَافِظٌ عَلَيْهَا كَانَتْ لَهُ نُورًا وَبُرْهَانًا وَنَجَاةٌ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ. وَمَنْ لَمْ يُحَافِظْ عَلَيْهَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ نُورٌ وَلَا بُرْهَانٌ وَلَا نَجَاةٌ. وَكَانَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مَعَ قَارُونَ وَفِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَأَبِي بَنِي خَلْفٍ.

Which means: *For the person who adheres to the prayer, on the Day of Resurrection prayer will become a means for his Nur (light), Burhan (proof) and Nijat (salvation). For the person who doesn't adhere to it, there will be no Nur, no Burhan and no Nijat. Also on the day of resurrection he will be (resurrected) with Qaroon, Firoun, Hamaan and Ubay bin Khalaf.*

The souls of people who abandon their prayers are always restless and not calm. While those who pray will feel calm and serene. Allah the Almighty says in chapter 70 (surah al-Ma'arij) verses 19-23:

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: *Indeed, mankind was created anxious: When evil touches him, impatient, And when good touches him, withholding [of it], Except the observers of prayer- Those who are constant in their prayer.*

What is more saddening is that nowadays, many muslims seldom or never perform Friday congregational prayer. The heart of one who leaves it intentionally without any illness or due to laziness will be shut out from accepting the truth and they are categorised as those who are neglectful. The Prophet (pbuh) said in a hadith narrated by Imam Muslim:

لَيَنْتَهِيَنَّ أَقْوَامٌ عَنْ وَدْعِهِمُ الْجُمُعَاتِ أَوْ لَيَخْتَمَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ ثُمَّ لَيَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ

Which means: *“People must cease neglecting Jumu'ah, or ALLAH will put a seal over their hearts and they will truly be among the negligent.”*

Dear brothers and sisters

Let us emulate Muslims in Turkey who express their love for Islam. Thousands of people attend obligatory prayers in congregations in the mosque, especially in the dawn prayers. We should emulate this behavior. Prior to this, they were so proud of their secularism.

It is our duty to increase our efforts and encourage each member of our families, society and the muslim ummah to pray steadfastly (*istiqamah*) and not to neglect it.

Allah the Almighty says in chapter 20 (surah Taha) verse 132:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا

Which means: *And enjoin prayer upon your family [and people] and be steadfast therein.*

بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ،
وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ. أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِيْ
وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.