

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَنِ الرَّجِيمِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كَمَا هُوَ أَهْلُهُ وَالصَّلُوةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَلِدِنَا آدَمَ كَمَا يُحِبُّ وَيَرِضُّ بِأَنْ يُصْلَى عَلَيْهِ

Allah azza wajal, in Whose Name we begin, The Most Compassionate, The Most Merciful
All Praise is due to Allah azza wajal, Countless Peace and Blessings be upon
His Beloved Messenger Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam

Riyaadus Saaliheen

Hadith #10

Salaah in Congregation

The Thawaab (reward), of Salaah in congregation!

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "صَلَاةُ الرَّجُلِ فِي جَمَاعَةٍ تَزِيدُ عَلَى صَلَاةٍ فِي سُوقٍ وَبَيْتِهِ بِضَعَاعِ عِشْرِينَ دَرَجَةً وَذَلِكَ أَنَّ أَحَدَهُمْ إِذَا تَوَضَّأَ فَأَحْسَنَ الْوُضُوئِ ثُمَّ أَتَى الْمَسْجِدَ لَا يُرِيدُ إِلَّا الصَّلَاةَ، لَا يَنْهَزُهُ إِلَّا الصَّلَاةُ، فَلَمْ يَخْطُطْ خُطْوَةً إِلَّا رُفِعَ لَهُ بِهَا دَرَجَةٌ وَهُنَّ عَنْهُ بِهَا خَطِيئَةً حَتَّى يَدْخُلَ الْمَسْجِدَ فَإِذَا دَخَلَ الْمَسْجِدَ كَانَ فِي الصَّلَاةِ مَا كَانَتِ الصَّلَاةُ هِيَ تَحْبِسُهُ، وَالْمَلِئَةُ يُصْلِلُونَ عَلَى أَحَدِكُمْ مَا دَأَمَ فِي مَجْلِسِهِ الَّذِي صَلَّى فِيهِ يَقُولُونَ: اللَّهُمَّ ارْحَمْهُ اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لَهُ اللَّهُمَّ تُبْ عَلَيْهِ مَا لَمْ يُؤْذِنِ فِيهِ مَا لَمْ يُحِدِّثُ فِيهِ -

(مسلم، کتاب الصلاۃ، باب فضل صلوۃ الجماعة وانتظار الصلاۃ، ص ۲۷، حدیث: ۲۷)

Hadrat Sayyiduna Abu Hurayrah *Radi Allahu 'Anhu* narrates that the Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam* has stated that:

“The status for a male to perform Salaah in congregation compared to performing Salaah alone or in a bazaar is twenty or more (in degree or excellence). The reason is that when the person performs the Wudu in a proper manner and only makes the intention to perform his Salaah and except for the Salaah, he has no other intention, and walks towards the Masjid, until the moment he arrives at the Masjid, for every step he takes, his status is raised (or elevated) and one sin of his is deleted. After he enters the Masjid, as long as he waits for the Salaah (to commence), he is considered as a person performing his Salaah. Among you, whosoever sits at the place of Salaah and as long as he does not trouble any person and is in a state of Wudu, the Angels make Du'a of mercy for him and they declare, ‘O Allah! Bless him, O Allah! Forgive him, O Allah! Accept his repentance.’” (Muslim)

The person is elevated in four degrees

Allama ibn Battal *Alaihir Rahmah* in the commentary of *Bukhari Shareef* explains that, “In some narrations twenty seven degrees (in status) have been mentioned and in some narrations twenty five degrees in status have been mentioned. This is clear proof that to perform Salaah in congregation can be even more.”

Among the benefits achieved by the person who performs his Salaah in congregation are four. This is not enjoyed by the person who performs his Salaah alone. They are:

1. He achieves the reward of having the intention to perform the Salaah in congregation.
2. For every step he takes, his status and degree increases and one sin is forgiven.
3. The Angels make special Du'a for that person.

4. Merely for waiting for the Salaah to commence, he is rewarded as a person actually performing his Salaah. (Sharah Bukhari Shareef)

Allama Badrudeen Aini *Alaihir Rahmah* explains that, “There is no doubt that the reward for performing Salaah in congregation in a Masjid is far greater than performing Salaah alone or in some bazaar. However, those who do perform Salaah in congregation somewhere else certainly their reward is greater than the person performing Salaah alone, however, they will also still not achieve the excellence of having performed this Salaah in a Masjid”. (Umdatul Qari)

Explanation of the different degrees in excellence

Allama Badurdeen Aini *Alaihir Rahmah* explains that, “The status of 27 degrees has appeared after the status of 25 degrees. In other words, Allah *azza wajal* has mentioned 25 degrees and then increased this to 27 degrees. Some are of the opinion that perhaps the congregational Salaah towards which one has walked a lesser amount of and waited a lesser time, the elevation of a person is 25 degrees, while if a person has walked longer and has waited longer for the congregational Salaah, his reward is 27 times more.

“Some are of the opinion that it depends on the person and the actual Salaah itself. Whosoever performs his Salaah in the proper manner, protects his Salaah or takes care of his Salaah, and performs the Salaah with all due concentration, his reward is much more. In some statements, it is said that there is much more reward in Fajr and ‘Isha congregational Salaah because in these Salaah the Angels during the day and night are also together.” (Umdatul Qari)

Consider life a treasure before death!

The Holy Prophet, Sayyiduna Rasoolullah *Sallal Laahu ‘Alayhi Wasallam* has declared that: “Before death, consider life a treasure.” (Mishkaatul Masaabih)

Looking at this Hadith Shareef, we should strive to take full advantage of life. We should also strive to earn as much reward as possible in performing congregational Salaah. Bear in mind that once you pass away, you would not have the opportunity of earning the

reward of performing congregational Salaah. There are some who would regret this and would wish that they had taken advantage of this opportunity and if only they had fought against their laziness and took part in congregational Salaah.

The forty intentions that should be borne in mind!

Ala Hadrat Imam Ahmed Raza *Alaihir Rahmah* has explained that, “Those who are learned in the matters of intention can achieve many reward through their action. For example, if a person walks towards the Masjid and only has intention of performing the Salaah and only Salaah, his mere act of walking is a blessing. For every step, the Angels record a good deed for him and for another step, one of his sins are forgiven. In fact, the person can achieve the reward of nearly 40 good intentions such as:

1. He is only walking to perform his Salaah.
2. He is visiting the Divine Court of Allah *azza wajal*.
3. He is displaying a sign of Islam.
4. He is answering the call of the Mu’azzin who has called towards Allah *azza wajal*.
5. He will perform the Tahayyatul Wudu.
6. He will remove any dirt or unclean object from the Masjid.
7. He will perform the ‘Itikaaf. According to the accepted Fatwa, keeping fast is not the prerequisite of being in ‘Itikaaf. ‘Itikaaf can also be for a single second.
8. He is obeying the Divine Command of Allah *azza wajal*.
9. If he meets people of knowledge there, he will enhance his own Islamic knowledge.
10. He will endeavour to teach those who are not aware of certain Islamic issues.
11. He will strive to practise upon his own knowledge with others having the same amount of knowledge.
12. He will bless himself with making the Ziyarah of the ‘Ulama.
13. He will bless himself by meeting pious Muslims.
14. He will meet fellow brothers.
15. He will strive to increase the mixing of Muslims.
16. If he meets any family, he will endeavour to meet them warmly so that he achieves the reward of creating good family relationship.
17. He will strive to greet as many Muslims as he can.
18. He will strive to shake hands with as many Muslims as he can.
19. He will endeavour to return as many Islamic greetings as possible.

20. He will achieve the blessing of being in a Muslim congregation and company.
- 21-22. When he goes to the Masjid and when he returns from the Masjid, he will send Salaam upon the Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam*.
- 23-24. When he goes to the Masjid and when he returns from the Masjid, he will send Durood upon the Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam*.
25. He will also visit the sick.
26. If there is a person there who has been struck with tragedy, he will achieve the reward of sympathising with that person.
27. If a person sneezes in the Masjid, he will achieve the blessing of saying "Al Hamdu lillah".
- 28-29. He will strive to preach good and forbid evil.
30. He will try to assist Muslims in making Wudu if there is need to do so.
- 31-32. He will also try to recite the Adhan and Iqaamah if no one is there to do so. If someone does do so before him, merely by making this intention while going to the Masjid, he will achieve the reward of having actually reciting the Adhan and Iqaamah.
33. He will guide those who are not aware where the Masjid is located.
34. He will guide the blind to the Masjid if the need so arises.
35. If there is a Janaza Salaah to be performed, he will also join the Janaza Salaah.
36. If he has the opportunity, he will also join in the burial rights of that person.
37. If there is disagreement between Muslims, he will strive to eliminate this and create unity among Muslims.
- 38-39. When he enters the Masjid, he will do so entering with his right foot and leaving with his left foot.
40. If he finds any sacred paper on the ground, he will show all due respect to it.

It must be remembered that besides the reward one achieves with every step taken towards the Masjid, these forty intentions are also recorded with every step. (abridged-Fatawa Radawiyyah)

Two decrees of freedom

Hadrat Sayyiduna Anas *Radi Allahu 'Anhu* narrates that the Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam* has declared that, "Whosoever performs congregational Salaah for forty days for the Pleasure of Allah *azza wajal* with Takbeer 'Ula, he is freed from two things - from the Fire of Hell and from hypocrisy." (Tirmidhi Shareef)

What is Takbeer 'Ula

Takbeer 'Ula is the first Takbeer in Salaah and it is also known as Takbeer Tahreemah. It is explained in *Baharah Shariah* that even if one manages to complete the first rak'ah with the Imaam, he will still receive the reward as having recited the Takbeer 'Ula with the Imaam.

He recited his Salaah twenty seven times!

Hadrat Sayyiduna Ubaidullah 'Umar Qawariri *Alaihir Rahmah* explains that, “I used to also perform the ‘Isha Salaah with congregation. However, sadly, one evening, I missed the ‘Isha Salaah with congregation because I had become busy with a guest. After I had finished with him and when I arrived at the Masjid, I found that the ‘Isha Salaah had already been completed.

“I then began to think of performing such an act which would be able to fulfill this loss. I also remembered the words of the Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam* about the different degrees in reward and therefore decided to perform this same ‘Isha twenty seven times alone! Thereafter, I fell asleep. I then dreamed that I was in the company of certain people on horseback and that we seemed to be going somewhere. Suddenly, one of these horse men turned towards me and remarked, ‘Do not strain your horse so much, you will not be able to keep up with us.’” When I asked why, he replied, ‘Because we had performed the ‘Isha Salaah in congregation.’” (Oyuul hikaayat)

The calamity and dire warning of not performing Salaah with congregation!

Hadrat Sayyiduna Abu Hurayrah *Radi Allahu 'Anhu* narrates that Sayyiduna Rasoolullah *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam* has declared, “Upon the hypocrites, the most difficult is the Fajr and ‘Isha Salaah. If they understood what is in these Salaah, they would certainly come even if they dragged themselves (to come). Without doubt, I have intended that I command the establishment of Salaah, to nominate a person to perform the Salaah, and allow certain people to walk with me who were carrying sticks and go to those people who do not present themselves for Salaah and burn their houses”. (Bukhari Shareef)

Hadrat Sayyiduna Abu Hurayrah *Radi Allahu 'Anhu* narrates that the Holy Prophet *Sallal Laahu 'Alayhi Wasallam* has declared that, "If there were no women and children in the houses, then 'Isha Salaah would be established (to such a degree) that the young people would be commanded to burn the houses (of those who were not present for 'Isha congregational Salaah). (Musnad Imam Ahmed)

Boiling lead in one's ears!

If a person hears the Adhan and without any valid excuse does not join the congregational Salaah, then it would be easier for him having hot boiling lead placed in his ears than to miss the congregational Salaah. (Such is the extent of harm which he has created for himself).

Hadrat Sayyiduna Abu Hurayrah *Radi Allahu 'Anhu* explains that, "If hot boiling lead is placed in the ears of ibn Adam, it would be better than listening to the Adhan being recited and not attending the Masjid." (Makaashifatul Qulub)

What have we learnt from this discussion?

1. If a person performs his Salaah alone at home or his shop or even organizes a congregation at these places, still he would be robbing himself of the blessing of coming to a Masjid. At the same time, having performed the Salaah alone, he would also be considered a sinner because it was Waajib to join the congregation.
2. To perform Wudu at home and then go the Masjid is indeed a noble and good act. The reason is that walking or travelling to the Masjid is an act of worship and it is better to perform this act of worship while one is in Wudu. There are some people who even make Wudu when going to see a sick person because visiting the sick and ill is also an act of worship. Therefore there is great reward in doing this while one is in Wudu.
3. For every step towards the Masjid, a single reward is recorded and a single sin is forgiven. This is for the ordinary Muslim. However, for the pious in the Ummah, for every step, two rewards are recorded and they are elevated in two degrees spiritually. (Miraatul Manaajih)

4. The lucky person who sits in the Masjid waiting for the Salaah to commence is someone who enjoys the Du'a of the Angels who are sinless. We should always endeavour to go to the Masjid and take full advantage of this special blessing. It must be remembered that the Angels continue to make Du'a for this person as long as he does not trouble anyone or does not break his Wudu. (Miraatul Manaajih)