

CLASS 10

WAYS TO GET CLOSER TO ALLAH

Seeking Nearness to Allah

Seeking nearness to Allah, isn't that our ultimate gain. To be Loved by Allah so He has Mercy on us on the Day of Judgement, so He by His Mercy grants us Jannah but not just that when we Allah loves us He makes the people of the world love us. Now think about what all people do to make other people love them especially in today's age of social media where people go to extremes over mere likes and followers. When it is clear to us that the only way we can earn honor is by Islam and it by Loving Allah that we will be successful in this world and the Hereafter!

Therefore, it is essential to exert effort in seeking closeness to our Creator. To begin with, the prescription to getting closer to Allah requires a few things:

1. Strong intention to get closer to Allah
2. Patience
3. Consistency
4. Avoid doing nothing

We need to struggle to achieve great things. The harder the struggle is, the better the outcome becomes. Getting close to Allah takes time. We cannot expect everything to magically fall into place by doing a righteous deed. You need to depend on Allah and trust that what He has planned for you is the best you can have, for this life and the hereafter.

Ways to get Closer to Allah

1. Seeking Nearness through His Word (the Qur'an)

We need to build a strong relationship with the Quran. Unfortunately not many people actually ponder over the fact that the Quran is the Word of Allah! It is His way of communicating with us. He had sent the Quran down as guidance for us. And hence a strong relation with the Quran is essential.

The Quran would be an intercessor on the Day of Judgement, there are great rewards mentioned in the Hadeeth about the one who recites Quran during day and night, it saves us from the Evil in this world, puts Barakah in our lives.

The virtues of reciting the Qur'an are too numerous to list. In order to get closer to Allah we need to recite the Qur'an, understand it and implement it in our daily lives.

We should make a target of reading at least a chapter a day. If one can't manage that then at least half a chapter. If one still can't manage that then recite at least quarter of a chapter or even a page a day.

However much we can manage we should try to recite each day with its meanings and implement what we learn into our daily lives.

Reading a little each day is better than reciting a lot once in a while. We should build a close relationship with the Qur'an which is in fact building a close relationship with Allah! *"Verily Allah raises nations by this book (the Qur'an) and puts down (i.e. destroys) others by it."* [Muslim]

2. Abiding by the Laws of Allah (fulfilling the obligations & staying away from the Haraam acts) + Doing optional acts of Worship

The Prophet ﷺ explained the way that will bring us closer to Allah, may He be glorified, in the most concise and clearest terms. Al-Bukhaari (6502) narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: *"Allah says: '... My slave does not draw closer to Me by anything more beloved to Me than that which I have made obligatory upon him, and My slave continues to draw closer to Me by doing naafil (supererogatory) deeds until I love him..."*

This hadith clearly and concisely highlights the way to become a close friend of Allah, may He be exalted, for the one who wants to be one of His close friends.

So the Muslim must strive hard, first of all, to establish the obligatory duties that Allah has enjoined upon him, such as the five daily prayers, which are the most important of the practical obligatory duties, as well as giving zakaah, fasting Ramadan, performing Hajj (if he is able to do so), and all the other obligatory practical duties, such as honouring one's parents, upholding ties of kinship, fulfilling the rights of one's wife and children, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, to the best of one's ability, and other significant acts of worship which only draw one closer to Allah. One must also do acts of worship of the heart, such as being sincere to Allah, may He be exalted, alone, and loving Him, loving His Messenger and His law, loving the believers, putting one's trust in Allah, fearing Him, and other acts of worship of the heart that have been enjoined.

He must also strive hard to fulfil the rights of Allah, may He be exalted, with regard to the second type of obligatory duty, which is the obligation to refrain from that which Allah has instructed us to refrain from. This includes refraining from zina (unlawful sex), riba (usury, interest), alcohol, stealing, wrongdoing, backbiting, malicious gossip and other prohibited actions. If he does do any of these things, then he must hasten to repent and mend his ways.

After that the believer must do a lot of supererogatory actions, by means of which he may attain a lofty status before Allah and attain the love of Allah, may He be exalted, as mentioned above in the hadith.

There are many of these supererogatory actions; like optionals fasts, the regular Sunnah prayers (as-sunan ar-rawaatib), qiyaam al-layl (voluntary prayers at night) etc.

Voluntary fasting for the pleasure of Allah The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said that: *"Allaah said: 'Every deed of the son of Adam is for him except fasting; it is for Me and I shall reward for it...'"* [al-Bukhaari (1761) and Muslim (1946)]

Fasting is not restricted to Ramadhan, but it is an act of worship that can be [and should be in some cases] performed at any time and at any place except when not recommended. Indeed, it is a worship that draws the believer closer to Allah and closer to perfection.

“Fasting and the Qur’an will intercede for the slave on the Day of Resurrection. Fasting will say: ‘O My Rabb! I prevented him from food and desires, so accept my intercession for him.’ And the Qur’an will say: ‘I prevented him from sleep during the night, so accept my intercession for him.’ He ﷺ said: ‘And they will (be allowed to) intercede.’” [Ahmad, at-Tabarani, Al-Hakim, Sahih]

The voluntary Fasts: -

1. Fasting Mondays and Thursdays: (as those days the Deeds of a person are presented to Allah)
2. Fasting 3 days (13th, 14th, 15th) of a Lunar Month (Equal to fasting the full Month)
3. 6 Fasts of Shawaal along with Ramadan is equal to Fasting the Full Year
4. Fasts of Ashura (Expiates sins of the year)
5. Fasting on Arafah
6. Fasting in the Month of Sha’baan .

3. Dua’a (Supplication)

This is us asking and putting our troubles in front of our Lord, the Lord of the Universe. We need Allah’s help and strength to guide us. We need to ask Him for His help, even if it is to get closer to Him, or become better at worshiping Him. We need to seek refuge in Allah in everything. It could be negative thoughts we have, our lack of productivity or even our lack of faith. We need to ask Allah to help us and guide us to the Straight Path. Allah says in the Qur’an:

“And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me – indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided” (2:186).

4. Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah)

A person may ask, ‘How can we do Zikr all the time whilst we have so many things to do in life such as we go to work, feed the family, pay bills, etc.? Well, the answer to this is that, firstly, it is the Sunnah of Allah’s Messenger to work and feed the family which is rewarded by Allah and, secondly, that when a person is working or at school or wherever a person may be this does not mean that he should stop remembering Allah while he is working, while he is serving his customers or while he is programming his computer.

In fact the heart of the believer should be attached to Allah’s remembrance throughout his day to day activities such that he protects himself from falling in love with the materials and temptations of this world and that his love for Allah and his Messenger becomes stronger and stronger as time goes by. When a person begins to remember Allah all the time it is then that he becomes conscious of his actions.

"... And the men and the women who remember Allah much with their hearts and tongues. Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward (i.e., Jannah)." (33:35)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: *"Whenever some people gather in one of Allah's houses (mosques) to recite the book of Allah and study it among themselves – then calmness (tranquility) descends upon them, the angels surround them, mercy covers them, and Allah mentions them to those who are with Him."* (Sahih Muslim)

5. Follow the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

By following the Sunnah of our prophet we will gain the love of Allah . When you gain the love of Allah, you will get closer to him. Following the sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ makes you a better person. You will have better manners and ethics. Read more about the Prophet ﷺ; fall in love with your Messenger. After all, he was a mercy to all mankind. Allah says so in the Qu'ran: *"Say, (O Muhammad, to mankind): If ye love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (3:31)"*.

6. Keeping good company

One of the most important things we must do, which sadly many people neglect, is that we should avoid bad company. People we should avoid taking as friends those who speak too freely, who miss Salah, who do not dress modestly, who backbite, slander etc.

The company of such people is poison; just even sitting and talking with them will lead one to commit sins. Just as a person who sits for a long time with a perfume seller begins to smell nice, and a person who sits by a gutter cleaner begins to smell awful, similarly a person who spends time in the company of the wicked eventually gets affected badly by them.

Rather, we should seek out pious friends who fear Allah taala and who have the qualities of humility, charity, compassion, modesty and knowledge. If we sit with them we will always benefit and they will be a means for us to get closer to Allah taala!

The Prophet ﷺ said, *"The case of the good companion and the bad companion is like that of the seller of musk and the blower of the bellows (iron-smith). As for the seller of musk, he will either give you some of the musk, or you will purchase some from him, or at least you will come away having experienced its good smell. Whereas the blower of the bellows will either burn your clothing, or at least you will come away having experienced its repugnant smell."* [Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim]

Remember: *"All friends will be enemies of one another on that Day (Day of Judgment) except those of the virtuous."* (al-Qur'an 43:67)

7. Sincerely repenting to Allah

The concept of tawbah is amazingly beautiful and unique in Islam. We don't confess to any intermediary; we turn to our Creator directly. Allah al-Ghaffaar opened the gate of repentance to Himself and commanded us to turn to Him. This is an amazing combination! The fact that we can repent at any time and the fact that Allah gave us the knowledge of how to repent is a great rahmah (mercy). Tawbah is an opportunity!

Allah loves those who Repent Truly, Allah loves those who turn unto Him in repentance and loves those who purify themselves. [Quran, 2:222]

The Prophet ﷺ said: *By the One in Whose hand is my soul, if you did not commit sin Allaah would do away with you and bring people who would commit sin then pray for forgiveness.* [Muslim]

8. Having good manners, character and being kind

Ayesha (RA) narrated: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: *"Allah loves kindness in all matters"*. (Bukhari)

9. Being Mindful of Allah

Ibn 'Abbas (R.A.) reports: *"One day I was riding (a horse/camel) behind the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, when he said, 'Young man, I will teach you some words. Be mindful of God, and He will take care of you. Be mindful of Him, and you shall find Him at your side. If you ask, ask of God. If you need help, seek it from God. Know that if the whole world were to gather together in order to help you, they would not be able to help you except if God had written so. And if the whole world were to gather together in order to harm you, they would not harm you except if God had written so. The pens have been lifted, and the pages are dry.'*" (Related by Tirmidhi)

"Be mindful of Allah, He will be mindful of you..." This hadith reveals core truths about the nature of our relationship with Allah. If you take care of your relationship with Him, He will take care of you.

To conclude, make firm intention to get closer to Allah, strive to get there, seek knowledge and take action. The more you love Allah, the more you will do to get closer to Him. The more you get closer to Him, the more He will get closer to you. The more you will want to learn about the sunnah and the Qur'an and want to get even closer to Him, the closer you will become to reaching the level of ihsan. When you reach that level you will feel Allah's love and you will be satisfied with everything He gives you. You will be using the time to do make your hereafter better because you won't want to waste time without pleasing Allah. You will be confident in anything that you do in your life, because you will have full trust in Allah. May Allah guide us to the path that takes us closer to Him. Ameen.