

Class 2

‘Levels of Salah’

Do you sometimes feel that your Salah (prayer) is not quite having the effect it is supposed to have on you and your life? Have you ever considered that perhaps it is because we are not giving it its due justice? It seems we have lost (or were never taught) that ability to *connect* in Salah that makes all the difference in its effect on us.

We know, that performing Salah restricts us from evil deeds but we see so many people praying and getting back to evil deeds. We need to ponder upon this. We have to see is our Salah Perfect. Are we fulfilling its rights? If we don't feel like not doing sins after our Salah, then surely we have a problem within our Salah

The Prophet ﷺ said: *“A person may offer a prayer and nothing of it is recorded for him except one tenth of it, one ninth of it, one eighth of it, one seventh of it, one sixth of it, one fifth of it, one quarter of it, one third of it, or half of it.”* (Narrated by Ahmad, Classed as Hasan)

The scholars say that this is based on how mindful we are in our prayer and how we fight against the whispers of Shaitaan.

But the question is which one is our Salah?

Taste the Iman (faith), if you please. Food possesses a special flavour. So does play. So does the spending of money. Even laughter has its special flavour. All these flavours share a similar pleasure, but the pleasure of true faith (Iman) is different from all the rest in this world. This is because it is not a state of the people of this world, but a state of the people of Paradise!- as Ibn Al Qayem said.

What do the people of Paradise feel? You will know- if you have experienced that sweetness and beauty. Have you ever tasted that beautiful sweetness of faith? Those who have say- It is sweeter than honey, but in reality is incomparable to anything we know. We want to try to taste this sweetness. This is our goal- To taste the sweet beauty of Iman and all that is in it. And we start with the sweetness of Salah- How to taste the true beauty of Salah!

Levels of Prayer

Ibn-Al-Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah (rahimahullaah) said: And mankind, with regard to their performance of prayer are in five levels:

- Level 5: The level of the one who is negligent and wrongs his soul: He is the one who falls short in performing wudhoo (ablution) properly, performing the prayer upon its time and within its specified limits, and in fulfilling its essential pillars.
- Level 4: The one who guards his prayers upon their proper times and within their specified limits, fulfills their essential pillars and performs his wudhoo with care. However, his striving

(in achieving the above) is wasted due to whispering in his prayer so he is taken away by thoughts and ideas.

- Level 3: The one who guards his prayers within the specified limits, fulfills their essential pillars and strives with himself to repel the whispering, thoughts and ideas. He is busy struggling against his enemy (Shaitaan) so that he does not steal from the prayer. On account of this he is engaged in (both) prayer and jihaad (against his nafs).
- Level 2: The one who stands for the prayer, completes and perfects its due rights, its essential pillars, performs it within its specified limits and his heart becomes engrossed in safeguarding its rights and specified limits, so that nothing is wasted from it. His whole concern is directed towards its establishment, its completion and its perfection, as it should be. His heart is immersed in the prayer and in enslavement to his Lord the Exalted.
- Level 1: The one who stands for the prayer like the one mentioned above. However, on top of this, he has taken and placed his heart in front of his Lord Azzawajall, looking towards Him with his heart with anticipation, (his heart) filled with His love and His might, as if he sees and witnesses Allaah. The whisperings, thoughts and ideas have vanished and the coverings which are between him and his Lord are raised. What is between this person and others with respect to the prayer, is superior and greater than what is between the heavens and the earth. This person is busy with his Lord Azzawajall, delighted with Him.

The Level 5 type will be "PUNISHED",

The Level 4 type will be "HELD TO ACCOUNT",

The Level 3 type will have his sins and shortcomings "EXPIATED",

The Level 2 type will be REWARDED

and

The Level 1 i.e. The Top Level will be CLOSE TO HIS LORD, because he will receive the portion of the one who makes his prayer the delight and pleasure of his eye. Whoever makes his prayer, the delight and pleasure of his eye, will have the nearness to his Lord Azzawajall made the delight and pleasure of his eye in the hereafter. He will also be made a pleasure to the eye in this world since whoever makes Allah the pleasure of his eye in this world, every other eye will become delighted and pleased with him. (Source: Al-Waabil us-Sayyib)

Now think about this, what level do you think YOU ARE IN?

Are you SURE?

Could be better, right?

The "MINIMUM LEVEL" we SHOULD be on is "LEVEL 3" but are we sure we strive enough to stay focused in our Salah? Or do we just get carried away with the whispers of Shaitaan?

This is kinda scary.

A true fight to the finish.

Al-Hasan al-Basri said: *"If a man who met the righteous predecessors of early generations were to be brought back to life today, he would not recognize anything of Islam"* End Quote. – This he said on that time and if we look around now we are in such a worse condition, our salah is mechanical movements or exercise, our heart is filled with desires and waswaas.

Abu Al Aliyah said: *"I would travel for days to meet a man and the first thing I would notice about him is his prayer. If he would establish the prayer perfectly and on time, I would stay with him and hear the knowledge he had. If I found him to be careless concerning the prayer, I would leave him and say to myself that for things other than the prayer, he would be even more careless."* End Quote. – And here we are so heedless of our prayer, where we see a person who is just offering prayers 5 times a day to be righteous, as the famous quote goes – Praying five times a does not make you righteous it makes you a Muslim! We have to be offer them on their time, offer them properly not just rush through them to get it over with. And that will be the prayer that will keep us away from sins as Allah has promised. As Allah says, *"Verily, the prayer keeps one from the great sins and evil deeds"* (al-Ankaboot 45).

Nadwi has described this effect in the following eloquent way, its aim is to generate within the subliminal self of man such spiritual power, light of faith and awareness of Allah as can enable him to strive successfully against all kinds of evils and temptations and remain steadfast at times of trial and adversity and protect himself against the weakness of the flesh and the mischief of immoderate appetites. [Nadwi, p. 24]

The overall affect that the properly performed prayers should have upon humans is described in other verses in the Quran: *"Verily, man was created impatient, irritable when evil touches him and niggardly when good touches him. Except for those devoted to prayer those who remain constant in their prayers..."* (al-Maarij 19-23).

As for the Hereafter, Allah's forgiveness and pleasure is closely related to the prayers. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, *"Allah has obligated five prayers. Whoever excellently performs their ablutions, prays them in their proper times, completes their bows, prostrations and khushu` has a promise from Allah that He will forgive him. And whoever does not do that has no promise from Allah. He may either forgive him or punish him."* [Recorded by Malik, Ahmad, Abu Dawud, al-Nasa'I and others., authenticated by Albani]

So how do we get better? How do we offer Salah properly? How do we get to higher levels of Salah?

We do so by learning and understanding the importance and virtues of Salah, by learning the Sunnahs, by implementing and alternating between different Sunnahs so our hearts are alive and we are not on auto pilot, we do so by understanding what we are reciting, by making Dua to Allah in prayer, by getting the feel of each action and position we take, but above by knowing that Who are we facing, The King of the Worlds!

May Allah give us all the Hidayah to get better in our prayers, to make us strong us so we can dispel the Shaitaan in our prayers and give us the heart where we can pray in a way where we can taste the sweetness of faith.

TIPS FOR THE TEST

1. Do not have to memorize the Ayahs or Hadeeths word for word, get a good understanding of the message in it.
2. Remember the Levels and rewards.