

## 'Khushoo & Imaan'

### Sins hinder Khushoo

Disobedience to Allah is a barrier which stands in front of khushoo' in the prayer. One who sins openly and is persistent on it cannot expect his/her heart to be soft and to be able to taste the sweetness of imaan, as sins harden the hearts.

So if we wish to attain Khushoo in all our prayers, we need to change and be more mindful of Allah outside of prayer for us to be able to be in that state in prayer.

Allah the Exalted said: *Indeed Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change what is in their souls* [Surah Ra'd 13:11]

Stay away from haram, do not waste 'free' time, read beneficial books and do not make your mind a piece of meat for Satan to devour upon. Keep Satan at bay when you are *not praying* and you will automatically be successful in cutting out his whispers *while praying* insha'Allah.

There is no escaping from correcting one's prayer and there is no fleeing from bringing about khushoo' within it. So let us look at the causes and let us strive to treat them with the cure, just as we treat our bodies for their diseases. However, the treatment of the souls is more appropriate and comes first, and this is what will help us to understand the saying of the Messenger ﷺ, *"The first thing for which a servant will be held to account is his prayer. If it is correct and sound, all the rest of his actions will be correct and sound, and if it is corrupt then all the rest of his actions will be corrupt."* [Reported by at-Tabaraanee in Al-Awsat and Ad-Diyaa from Anas. It is also in Saheehul-Jaami no. 2570].

So in the correction of the prayer lies the correction of all the other actions. The position of the prayer (relative to all the other actions) is like that of the head to the body. This is because the servant is nearest to his Lord during his prayer.

The prayer cannot be corrected except with the correction of the creed, being observant of Allah, having fear of Him, bringing oneself to account in front of Him, and trembling out of fear of His Fire. When he finishes his prayer and is put to trial with sins and disobedience, he finds strength in his heart to repel them.

The prayer of the servant is corrupted due to lack of the careful observance of Allah and weakness in taqwaa. A person is, therefore, not able to produce such awe as will come between him and his acts of disobedience.

Likewise obeying Allah in abundance increases khushoo' in the prayer and adds to its beautification.

## TAQWA

Taqwa is to obey Allah and His Messenger and to refrain from whatever Allah and His Messenger prohibited out of devotion and sincere belief in Him, His Messenger, and the Message of Allah which His Messenger ﷺ conveyed in order to obtain the Reward of Allah and avoid His Punishment. In their explanation of the meaning of Taqwa, some of the righteous predecessors said:

*"Taqwa is that you act in obedience to Allah, and hope in His Mercy, upon a light from Him; and to leave the acts of disobedience to Allah out of fear of Him, upon a light from Him."*

The great Companion and scholar, `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) explained the meaning of Taqwa, saying: *"The real meaning of Taqwa is for Allah is to be obeyed, and not disobeyed; remembered at all times, and not forgotten; and to be thanked, and not to be ungrateful towards."*

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: *"Fear Allah wherever you may be; follow up an evil deed with a good one which will wipe (the former) out, and behave good-naturedly towards people."* [Al-Tirmidhi]

### Taqwa is also Being Mindful of Allah

‘Abdullah bin ‘Abbas, *radiyallahu anhum*, reported: One day I was behind the Prophet ﷺ and he said to me: *"O young man, I shall teach you some words [of advice] :*

*Be mindful of Allah, and Allah will protect you. Be mindful of Allah, and you will find Him in front of you. If you (have need to) ask, ask of Allah; and if you seek help, seek help from Allah. Know that even if the Nation (or the whole community) were to gather together to benefit you with something, they would not benefit you with anything except that which Allah has already recorded for you, and that if they gather together to harm you with something, they would not be able to harm you with anything except that which Allah has already recorded against you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried."* [Al-Tirmidhi]

In a version other than that of al-Tirmidhi it reads:

*"...Be mindful of Allah, you will find Him before you. Get to know Allah in prosperity and He will know you in adversity. Know that what has passed you by was not going to befall you; and that what has befallen you was not going to pass you by. And know that victory comes with patience, relief with affliction, and ease with hardship."*

If we are “mindful of Allah”, i.e. we observe and fulfil His obligations/commandments, “Allah will protect us”.

There two kinds of protection from Allah:

1. Allah will protect or look after His servants in this world / in worldly matters. For example, our health and our senses. We will be enjoying Allah’s mercy and bounty for our sight, hearing and speech all of our lives – even as we grow old, Allah will still allow us to see and hear properly, or he will take care of our intellect and mental health.

Another example is Allah will protect our family and our property, belongings and money. Also, if one is mindful of Allah during his youth, Allah will protect him during his adult years.

2. Allah will protect His servants' *deen* (religion) and *iman* (faith). He will protect us from misunderstandings and being misled or influenced by misconceptions and self-desires. He will help us and give us guidance so that we are protected from negative influences.

Allah will also protect our *deen* when we leave this world. When we leave this world, we will leave with *iman* for being a *mua'min* (believer). We will be protected from *Shaitaan's* influence to lead us astray right at the very last moment in our life.

If we are mindful of Allah, we will find Him close to us. Allah is close to His servants (the *mua'minin*) by giving them guidance, support, help, protection, victory, etc.

And hence by realization of Taqwa a Muslim is granted many bounties and blessings which he/she may gain. Among them are: The Love of Allah, a criterion by which to judge and distinguish between right and wrong, a way out of difficulties, matters will be made easier for him/her, sins will be remitted, guidance, help to acquire beneficial knowledge, prosperity and success and brings us closer to taste the sweetness of Faith which helps us Khushoo.

*We ask Allah to set right the affairs of all Muslims, fill their hearts with Taqwa, and guide their rulers. May Allah bestow on us sincere Tawbah (repentance to Allah) of all our sins and to help us follow Islam.*

## TIPS TO KEEP AWAY FROM SINS

We list below some tips from the Quran and Sunnah and the deeds of the Companions that helps us keep away from Sins

- Recite the Qur'an with its meanings
- Keeping busy with Dhikr
- Be with good company
- Knowing the Tricks of Shaitaan & The means of defeating him
- LEARN ISLAM- *Gain knowledge as the people with knowledge are those who fear Allah*
- Voluntary Fasting- *13th, 14th, 15th of Lunar month, Mondays & Thursdays etc* Fasting trains the will to avoid desires and keep away from sin; it helps a person to overcome his own nature and to wean himself away from his habits.
- Remember much the destroyer of pleasures: DEATH!- The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: *"Remember often the destroyer of pleasure."* (Sunan al-Tirmidhi and Sunan al-Nasa'i)
- Implement as many voluntary Sunnahs in life as possible

- Do not be arrogant or complacent- *Never consider yourself higher or better than anyone else nor think that you have done enough to get to Jannah. Shaitaan worshipped so much before he disobeyed once and is the accursed.*
- Fear the punishment in this world and the next.

## Seeking Refuge with Allah

Allah has instructed us to seek refuge with Allah from the Shaitaan and his evils in the Qur'aan, *“And if an evil whisper comes to you from Shaitaan then seek refuge with Allah.”* [Surah al-A'raf (7): 200] And say, *“My Lord! I seek refuge with You from the whisperings (suggestions) of the Shayateen. And I seek refuge with You, My Lord! lest they may attend (or come near) me.”* [Soorah al-Mu'minun (23): 97-98]

Indeed, only Allah is able to prevent the evil of Shaitaan from touching the son of Adam. This is why Allah allowed us to be lenient and kind with the human devil (i.e., an evil doer) so that his soft nature might cause him to refrain from the evil he is indulging in.

Islam teaches us to seek refuge with Allah in certain situations, such as those mentioned in the following:

### a) Dispelling Shaitaan anytime of Day or night

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, *“Whoever says in the morning, 9the below Dua) ...has indeed gained the reward of freeing ten slaves from the children of Isma'eel and ten of his sins are wiped away and he is raised ten degrees and he has found a safe retreat from the Shaitaan until evening. Similarly, if he says in the evening, he will be protected until the morning.”* [Saheeh Ibn Majah]

*“None has the right to be worshiped except Allah alone. He has no partners. To Him belongs the Dominion, to Him belongs all praise and He is over all things Omnipotent.”*

- b) Dispelling Shaitaan from the House (Recite Surah Baqarah)
- c) Dispelling Shaitaan before food, drink & entering house (recite the Duas)
- d) Dispelling Shaitaan before going to bed. (Recite the recommended Ayahs & Adhkar)
- e) Dispelling Shaitaan before entering the Washroom. (Recite the dua)
- f) Dispelling Shaitaan upon leaving the house.
- g) Dispelling Shaitaan when Calamity befalls.

## Why doesn't Shaitaan go away when one seeks refuge with Allah

Seeking refuge is like a sword in the hand of a warrior; if the hand is strong then the sword will be able to deal the fatal blow to the enemy, otherwise the sword will not harm the enemy at all, even if it is made of burnished iron.

Similarly, if seeking refuge is done by one who is pious and fears Allah then it is like fire, which burns the Shaitaan, but if it is done by one who is confused and weak in faith then it will not have a strong impact on the enemy.

Abul-Faraj ibn al-Jawzi (rahimahullah) said, "Know that the likeness of Iblees with one who is pious is like a man who is sitting with food and meat in front of him, and a dog comes near him. He tells it, 'Get away!' and it goes.

Then it comes to another man who is weak in faith and every time he tries to shoo the dog away, it does not go. The former is like a pious man whom the Shaitaan approaches, and his dhikr is enough to banish him; the latter is like the one who is weak in faith; the Shaitaan does not leave him because of his weakness of faith. We seek refuge with Allah from the Shaitaan." [Talbees Iblees,p.48]

Thus, a Muslim who wants to save himself from the Shaitaan and his tricks has to work on strengthening his faith and seek the protection of Allah, his Lord and turn to him, as there is no power and no strength except with Allah." [See, Aalamal-Jinn wash-Shaitaan]

## Faith indeed increases if a person obeys Allah and decreases if he disobeys Him

We should be keen to preserve offering the obligatory prayers in congregation, pay Zakah willingly as a means to expiate sins, be merciful to the poor and the needy. You should keep company of pious and righteous people who may prove helpful to you in applying the rulings of Shari`ah and guide you to attain happiness in life and the Hereafter. You should avoid innovators and sinners lest they should beguile you into temptations and weaken your enthusiastic nature of benevolence. Do as many voluntary acts of goodness as you are able to, resort to Allah, and ask him to grant you success.

*With this we conclude our course. May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet, his family, and companions. May Allah make us understand the virtues and importance of Salah, give us the Hidayah to be on Level 3 as a bare minimum all the time and taste the sweetness in Level 1 as well. May Allah keep us mindful of Him in and out side of Prayer, give us the Hidayah to implement as many Sunnahs as possible in and outside of prayer and help us fight and win over our clear Enemy the Shaitaan. May Allah overlook our mistakes and accept our prayers and by His Mercy make us all Inhabitants of Jannah!*

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#### 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 different virtues and rewards, it keeps us motivated and helps us invite others.