



Palestinians Solat on a street of Bethlehem as they are not allowed to enter Masjidil Aqsa by the Zionist Israeli force. Picture: Reuters

No Solat, Nobody

Solat and its effect upon abandoning sins and developing the soul

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah

Allah, the Sublime said, "Indeed Solat (prayer) restrains from the obscene and evil deeds." (translation of Allah's Words in Al-Quran surah Al-Ankabut: 45)

Allah has explained in this *ayah* that a correct prayer, performed with humility and submissiveness (*khusyu'*) undoubtedly prevents its performer from obscene and evil deeds and leads him to goodness.

Therefore, you will see that the people of the masjid are the most superior of mankind and the best amongst them. The sins and shortcomings of others are many times more than the sins and shortcomings of these people.

If Solat does not prevent us from obscene and evil deeds then it is necessary to carefully scrutinise the deficiency within it and to correct it. There is no escaping from correcting one's prayer and there is no fleeing from bringing about *khusyu'* 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 of Allah, peace and blessing be upon him, "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-Tabrani)

So in the correction of Solat lies the correction of all the other actions. The position of Solat (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 Solat. He calls upon his Lord and seeks forgiveness from Him. He returns to Allah and cries to Him, the Sublime.

Solat 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 Solat and is put to trial with sins and disobedience, he finds strength in his heart to repel them. This is because he looks at the temporary and vanishing pleasures and then at the bliss and joy which never ends and the happiness which is never cut off. So he puts the good which will remain (and last forever) ahead of that which is only transitory and vanishes.

The prayer of the servant is corrupted due to lack of the careful observance of Allah and weakness in *taqwa*. A *Tabi'i* namely Talq ibn Habib was asked to define *taqwa*, he said, "*Taqwa* is to act in obedience to Allah, hoping for His Mercy upon a light from Him. And *taqwa* is to abandon acts of disobedience to Allah, out of fear of Him upon a light from Him." (reported by Ibn Abi Syaibah in *Kitabul-Iman*)

There also occurs in the *hadith*, "Indeed, there is in the body a morsel of flesh, if it is sound and wholesome, then the whole body will be sound and wholesome and if it is corrupt, the whole body will be corrupt. Indeed it is the heart." (reported by Bukhari, Muslim and others from An-Nu'man ibn Basyir)

In the correction and purification of the heart lies the correction of the whole body and in the corruption of the heart lies the corruption of the whole body.

If the heart is corrected, the hand will be corrected so that it does not steal or strike anyone or commit *zina* (adultery) by touching what is unlawful.

The feet will also be corrected so that they do not walk towards what is unlawful. The ears will be put straight so that they do not listen to slander

or backbiting. The situation of the tongue will improve so that it does not speak except what is good. If the heart is corrupted, the whole body becomes corrupt and the limbs will not depart except towards evil conduct and mischief.

The matter of the heart is either set aright or corrupted by Solat. If the Solat is good it is an indication that the heart has benefited and that it is sound and wholesome. If it is not good, it is an indication of the heart receiving little benefit and of its corruption.

Evil deeds then become manifest and overtake the limbs. Know that every Solat which is performed with awe and humility enlivens the heart and stimulates it to do good deeds and also makes it adapt to good deeds, just as every good action which is performed outside of the prayer increases one's *khusyu'* within Solat.

The performance of prayer with earnestness and bringing together the elements of love, fear, hope, awe and reverence, all of which are constituents of *khusyu'* is a necessary and vital matter.

As is well known, the difference between an accepted Solat and a rejected one is *khusyu'*.

Two people pray in the same row, behind the same Imam -and the difference between the prayers of the two is like the distance between the heavens and the earth.

And this is because in one heart is *khusyu'* and in the other heart -which is dead and has found more pleasure in escaping to the valleys of the world-there is the darkness of heedlessness. **Abdurrahman**

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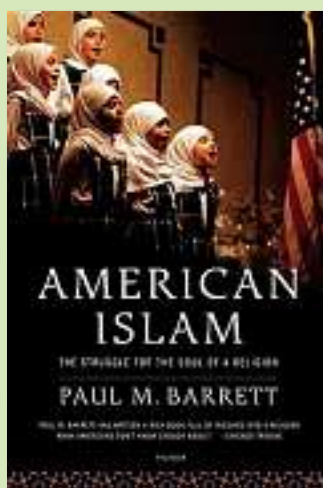
Islamia Quiz

1. Name a prophet mentioned by Allah in Al-Quran who possessed a kingdom unrivalled before and after him.
2. Name a *Sahabiyah* (female Companion of the Prophet) who was known as the Black Rider for her bravery in the battles against the Roman forces.

1. Prophet Sulaiman, peace be upon him
2. Khaula binti Azur

ANSWERS

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