

the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "The five daily prayers and the Friday Prayer until the Friday prayer are expiation for what is between them." (Recorded by Muslim)

Obligatory Prayers and their Sunan before and after them

Fajr: (Morning Prayer)

Two Sunnah (voluntary) before
Two Fard (obligatory)

Zuhr: (Noon Prayer)

Four Sunnah (voluntary) before
Four Fard (obligatory)
Four Sunnah (voluntary) after

Asr: (Mid-Afternoon Prayer)

Four Sunnah (voluntary) before
Four Fard (obligatory)

Maghrib: (Sunset Prayer)

Two Sunnah (voluntary) before

Three Fard (obligatory)
Two Sunnah (voluntary) after

Isha: (Night Prayer)

Two Sunnah (voluntary) before
Four Fard (obligatory)
Two Sunnah (voluntary) after
Three Witr (voluntary) after the Sunnah (voluntary)

There are other types of Prayer such as Duha (Forenoon) prayer, Istikharah (Seeking Consultation and Guidance) prayer. For more information, Visit the following link:

<http://www.islaam.com/Section.aspx?id=11>

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PRAYER IN ISLAM

Prayer In Islam

The importance of the prayer in Islam cannot be understated. It is the first pillar of Islam which the Prophet (peace be upon him) mentioned after mentioning the testimony of faith, by which one becomes a Muslim. It was made obligatory upon all the prophets and for all peoples. Allah has declared its obligatory status under majestic circumstances. For example, when Allah spoke directly to Prophet Moses (peace be upon him), He [Exalted and Sublime Be He] said:

And I have chosen you, so listen to what is revealed [to you]. Indeed, I am Allah. There is no deity except Me, so worship Me and establish prayer for My remembrance. (Surat Taha, 20:13,14)

Similarly, the prayers were made obligatory upon Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) during his ascension to heaven. Furthermore, when Allah praises the believers, such as in the beginning of Suratil-Mu'minun (23), one of the first descriptions He states is their adherence to the prayers. They who are during their prayer humbly submissive. (Suratul-Mu'minun, 23:2)

Once a man asked the Prophet (peace be upon him) about the most virtuous deeds. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated that the most virtuous deed is the prayer. The man asked again and again. The first three times, the Prophet (peace be upon him) again answered, "The prayer," then on the fourth occasion he stated, "Strive in the Cause of Allah." (Recorded by Ahmad and Ibn Hibban)

The importance of prayer is demonstrated in many of the Prophet (peace be upon him)'s statement. For example, he (peace be upon him) said: The first matter that the slave will be brought to account for on the Day of Judgment is the prayer. If it is sound, then the rest of his deeds will be sound. And if it is bad, then the rest of his deeds will be bad. (Recorded by At-Tabaraniy)

The importance of the prayers lies in the fact that no matter what actions one performs in his life, the most important aspect is one's relationship to Allah, that is, one's faith, God-Consciousness, sincerity and worship of Allah. This relationship with Allah is demonstrated and put into practice, as well as improved and increased, by the prayer. Therefore, if the prayers are sound and proper, the rest of the deeds will be sound and proper; and if the prayers are not sound and proper, then the rest of the deeds will not be sound and proper, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) himself stated.

In reality, the prayer is performed properly – with true remembrance of Allah and turning to Him for forgiveness – it will have a lasting effect on the person. After he finishes the prayer, his heart will be filled with the remembrance of Allah. He will be fearful as well as hopeful of Allah. After that experience, he will not want to move from that lofty position to one wherein he disobeys Allah. Allah has mentioned this aspect of the prayer when He has said:

Recite, [O Muhammad (peace be upon him)], what has been revealed to you of the Book and establish prayer. Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows that which you do. (Suratul-Ankabut, 29:45)

The effect of the prayer has been stated as follows:

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.

The overall affect that the properly performed prayers should have upon humans is

described in other verses in the Qur'an:

Indeed, mankind was created anxious: When evil touches him, impatient, And when good touches him, withholding [of it], Except the observers of prayer - Those who are constant in their prayer. (Suratul-Ma'arij, 70:19-23)

As for the Hereafter, Allah's forgiveness and pleasure is closely related to the prayers. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "Allah has obligated five prayers. Whoever excellently performs their ablutions, prays them in their proper times, completes their bows, prostrations and humility in the prayer where the person's heart is attuned to the prayer. This feeling in the heart is then reflected on the body. The person remains still and calm. His gaze is also lowered. Even his voice is affected by this feeling in the heart. And whoever does not do that has no promise from Allah. He may either forgive him or punish him."

The prayers are a type of purification for a human being. He turns and meets with his Lord five times a day. As alluded to above, this repeated standing in front of Allah should keep the person from performing sins during the day. Furthermore, it should also be a time of remorse and repentance, such that he earnestly asks Allah for forgiveness for those sins that he committed. In addition, the prayer in itself is a good deed that wipes away some of the evil deeds that he performed. These points can be noted in the following Hadith (Tradition of the Messenger (peace be upon him)):

"If a person had a stream outside his door and he bathed in it five times a day, do you think he would have any filth left on him?" The people said, "No filth would remain on him whatsoever." The Prophet (peace be upon him) then said, "That is like the five daily prayers: Allah wipes away the sins by them." (Recorded by Al-Bukhariy and Muslim)

In another Hadith, ...