

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Salaat: Rituals and Meanings

Az-Zahraa Islamic Centre

By Dr. S. M. Soleimanpanah

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I. Preludes to Salaat

1. *Tahaarat* (Ceremonious Cleaning)

1) The Cardinal *Nijaasat* (uncleanliness):

Being attracted and absorbed into the Divinity and valuing it to the point of putting it on the head.

2) *Wudhu* (ablution):

-Washing of one's face: cleansing of the heart from others altogether

-Washing one's hands: from the elbow of the pollution of the world, down to the fingers of grasping and manipulating

-Rubbing (مسح) the head: rubbing off attention to the world and nature from this highest throne of attention

-Rubbing the feet: rubbing off walking towards the world for the purpose of achieving one's goals in it

It is also said that during *Wudhu*, extend your right hand toward the water of *rahmah* (blessing) pouring down from the right leg of the throne of Allah (s.w.t.), and keep in mind that He does not return the hand extended toward Him empty. Then, wash off from your face with that water of *rahmah* the dust of everything other than God, because it is not possible to see Allah (s.t.w.) with that dirt and dust. Then, wash off from your hands with that water of *rahmah* any power and ability claiming for yourself, because you cannot touch Allah's Book with such an impure hand. Then, rub off (مسح) from your head any eminence, pride, and arrogance so that Allah puts His Hands of love and mercy of your head because His Hands will not be placed on a head raised in pride and arrogance. Then, rub off (مسح) from your feet the habit of going back and forth amongst diverse manifestations.

2. The Covering of the Genitalia (ستر العورة)

- 1) **Various Levels of Understanding:** For the masses of the people, the covering of the genitalia means covering and hiding shameful parts of the body, i.e. reproductive organs, from a respected viewer during salaat. For the elite, it is the covering of the shameful deeds with the garment of righteousness (لباس التقوى) at the time of presence in the special domain of presence. And for the selected from the elite, it is the covering of the shames of the ego (نفس) with the garment of chastity. For the people of faith (اهل الإيمان), it is the covering of the shames of the heart with the garment of assurance (الطمأنينة). For the people of knowledge and discovery, it is the covering of the shames of the *sirr* (سرّ the secret) with the garment of witness (الشهود). For the people *wellaya* (الولاية companionship and closeness), it is the covering of the shame of the *sirr-us sirr* (سرّ السرّ the secret of the secret) with the garment of staidness (التمكين). When the person reaches this level, all his/her shames covered, he/she will become eligible for the presence and its continuity. Allah's widespread cover has covered all shames of human beings in this domain but they will be revealed in hereafter if we do not

cover them with proper garments before then. This must be done by appealing to the Names of Allah, العَقَار and السُّنَّار.

2) The Best Garment: Allah (s.w.t.) says:

وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ (7:26 الأعراف)

(The raiment of righteousness - that is the best)

It is said that your best garment is that which does not preoccupy you with itself from Allah, but rather takes you closer to Him and towards being grateful to Him. To be proud of one's clothes and to show off with them is one of the greatest harms to one's faith. Thus, putting on you garment, remember God's covering of your sins with His grace. Cover yourself genuinely as you cover your outward with clothes by holding your inward under the cover of fear and your outward under the cover of obedience.

3. Removal of Excrement (نجاسة) from One's Body

1) Excrement (نجاست) is distance from the presence of love and purity, and it is contrary to salaah which is Miraj (ascension) of righteous spirits. For the masses, *nijaasa* is the known bodily excrement. For the knowledgeable and people of the heart, it is any existence beside Allah (s.w.t.).

وَالرُّجْزَ فَاهْجُرُوا (74:56 المدثر)

(And uncleanness do shun)

4. On the Place for Prayers

1) For the masses, it is the *masjid* (mosque, places designated for worship). For the knowledgeable, it is the whole existence because everything prays to and worships Allah (s.w.t.). For the people of *wellaya* (Uliya اولياء), it is all the manifestations of Allah in the realm of His Names and Deeds. And the One who conducts the Salaah is His very Being (ذات). And in human beings, there are places of worship for all the manifestations of God's Names.

2) On the Lawfulness of the Place: For the masses, it means being liberated from the domination of the Satan by not transgressing God's laws. For the knowledgeable, it is liberation from the domination of the ego (نفس) by not seeing any power for himself. For people of *wellaya*, it is liberation from any kind of domination by not seeing any being, attributes, or deeds for oneself. All forms of domination over servants of God by anyone other than Him, is unlawful. As long as one is under any form of domination beside Allah, he/she cannot perform true salaah. To the extent that one is liberated from these unlawful dominations of Satan and his soldiers, he/she will be ruled by God and his Names of Mercy.

5. On the Time of Salaah

Allah (s.w.t.) says,

فَأَقِمْوَا الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَّوْقُوتًا (4:103)

(So establish the salaah, verily salaah is timely written upon the believer.)

1) What is Time (وقت)?

From an Irfanic perspective, time is one's state of being and how he or she is.

2) Time of Salaat

Thus, from an Irfanic perspective, it is said that the time for salaat is from the beginning of the uprightness of the Sun of the Reality in its outmost illumination with the singularity of all the Names, it is called salaat of *Rabb* and salaat of the Holy Prophet (s.a.), which was performed in *Miraj*. From then to the rise of the Sun of *Malikiya* (المالكية) from the horizon of the Resurrection Day, and it is the day of coming of certainty.

وَأَعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ (15:99 الحجر)

(Worship your Lord till the certainty (death) comes to you.)

أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِدُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَىٰ غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا
(الإسراء 17:78)

(Establish regular prayers - at the sun's decline till the darkness of the night, and the Morning Prayer and reading: for the prayer and reading in the morning carry their testimony.)

Thus, salaat is mandatory from the beginning of the decline of the Sun to the darkness of the night of the ego (النفس) and in the Morning after dawn.

- No salaat at the time of uprightness (استواء) except salaat of *Rabb*
- At *Zawal* (الزوال), when the shadow of the servant is seen, at the beginning of the descent before annihilation or after annihilation. The time for two *salaats* is from then till the Sun of Singularity (الشمس الأحادية) sets under the horizons of determinations (التعيينات); this period is the time for Salaat Zuhr and Salaat Asr, and these two are the most superior salaats, and salaats *Maqhrabain* (the one brought closest) and those who have been blessed with eternal Goodness. And the Middle Salaat (صلاة الوسطى) is believed to be one of these two *salaats*.
- It is said that the time of Adam's sin was the time of the Asr salaat.
- Salaat of *Ishayan* is in the darkness of the night of the nature and total covering of the Sun of Reality. For coming out of this darkness, *tawbah* (توبة) repentance from the sin of Adam (a.s.) is Salaat of *Maghrib*. And for coming out of the darkness of the grave, and the path (صراط), and *qiyamah* (the Resurrection), and the residue of the darkness of the nature, salaat of *Isha* is to be conducted. Grave and *qiyammah* are darkness, and with salaat of *Isha*, it is removed and the path becomes illuminated.
- It is narrated in Hadith of Massumin (a.s.) that Adam (a.s.) repented at the time of *Maghrib*, by performing three *rakka* of salaat. One for his sin, one for Eve's sin, and one for his repentance.
- The time for the Morning Prayer is from the beginning of the appearing of the day of gathering till the rise of the Sun of Reality from the Horizon of the *qiyamah*.