

September 2004

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا
وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.

Praise be to **اللَّهِ**.

We praise him and ask him for help and forgiveness. We ask him for protection from the evilness in ourselves and from our bad deeds. Whomever God guides to the truth no one will lead astray, and whomever He leads astray, no one will ever guide.

I testify that there is no God but **اللَّهِ** to whom there is no partner

and I testify that Muhammad **ﷺ** is his servant and messenger

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيداً ☆ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ
لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ، وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزاً عَظِيماً ﴾ (الأحزاب، 1-70)

"O you who believe, fear Allah, and say what is the truth. That He may make your conduct whole and sound and forgive your sins. He that obeys Allah and His messenger has attained the great victory" (S33,

أما بعد:

☆ فَإِنَّ أَصْدَقَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ ، وَخَيْرُ الْمَهْدِيِّ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ ﷺ ، وَشَرُّ الْأُمُورِ
مُحَدَّثَاتُهَا ، وَكُلُّ مُحَدَّثَةٍ بَدْعَةٌ ، وَكُلُّ بَدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ ، وَكُلُّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ ☆
(مسلم ، أحمد ، النسائي)

The most truthful of words are those of the book of Allah, and the best of guidance is the guidance of Muhammad^(SAAWS), and the most evil of matters are its new innovations, for each innovation is invented, and each invention leads astray, and each will lead to hellfire. (narrated by Muslim, Ahmad and An-Nisaa'I)

The topic of today's Khutbah is "**Salat and the Jama'a Prayers** "

I have obtained my information from the book "Fiqh Al-Sunna" by Al-Sayed Sabeq. The book is in three volumes with volume "one" addressing all that relates to Salat. The text is supported by verses from the Holy Quran, from the hadeeth and Sunnah and from Ijma'.

I was asked to tackle this issue by a number of brothers as some of us, including myself, needed a reminder of the importance of Salat, and the importance of the Jama'a prayers and the value of the mosque.

First of all, Salat is an act of worship. We all know that. It is not a custom or a ritual but an act of worship, and is considered as one of the pillars of Islam. As an act of worship, it is very special and has no equal and no alternative. It was made compulsory during the night of ascension.

ليلة الإسراء والمعراج

Indeed it was the first act of worship that was made compulsory in Islam. Initially, the command to the Ummah was for fifty acts of worship per day. This was eventually reduced to five acts of worship as we now know it, to reduce the burden on the Ummah. However, God almighty confirmed to the Prophet^(SAAWS) that the even though the burden has been reduced, the reward will still be for fifty.

So, what is so important about Salat? Why are Muslims unique in this aspect? You hardly see anyone else from other faiths taking the time and effort to accomplish this task on the same regular basis. Day in day out, waking up in the early hours, making sure Dhuhr and Asr are prayed to fit in with our daily work, and attending the mosque in the evening, and so forth. What is so important about Salat in Islam?

Well, we start with the following hadeeth. This is the hadeeth to remember for today, and it should remain a constant reminder for myself and for you.

عبدالله بن قرط قال، قال رسول الله ﷺ ☆ أول ما يحاسب عليه العبد يوم القيامة الصلاة، فإن صلحت صلح سائر عمله، وإن فسدت فسد سائر عمله ☆ (الطبراني)

Abdul-Llah Bin Qart said, the Prophet^(SAAWS) said: *The first thing that a person is judged by on the day of judgement is Salat. If it was good, the rest of all his deeds will be good. But if it was poor, the rest of all his deeds will be poor. (Narrated by Al-Tabarani)*

This hadeeth, brothers and sisters, sets a clear declaration as to how we will be judged on the day of judgement, on that awesome day. We are given a clear message, get your Salat in good order, and it will take care of the rest. Lose your Salat, and you are in big trouble. Very simple message, but very powerful, and very direct.

Let me repeat the Hadeeth: *The first thing that a person is judged by on the day of judgement is Salat. If it was good, the rest of all his deeds will be good. But if it was poor, the rest of all his deeds will be poor.*

Salat was the last will of the Prophet^(SAAWS). As his soul departed he said with his last breaths:

☆ الصلاة الصلاة ☆

That is how important Salat is. It was the first command in Islam, it was the last will of the Prophet^(SAAWS), and it is the first act that we will be judge by on the day of judgement.

We therefore need to know why is it so important, and how can we uplift our prayers and make our Salat in the manner that will give us the reward in this life and in the hereafter.

With regards to its importance, the next hadeeth confirms the importance of Salat to the maintaining the Muslim Ummah.

قال رسول الله ﷺ ☆ لتُقَضَّنْ عُرى الإسلام عروة عروة، فكلما انتقضت عروة تشبث الناس بالتي تليها. فأولهن نقضاً الحكم، وآخرهن الصلاة ☆

The Prophet^(SAAWS) said: *the knots "in the rope of Islam" will be undone one by one. Every time a knot is undone, people will adhere strongly to the next. (by undone, we understand that people no longer act by this aspect of Islam). The first knot to be undone is living by the law of Islam, and the last to be undone is Salat. (Narrated by Ibn Habban)*

What we take from this hadeeth, is that when a Muslim community gives up Salat, it will be the last act in giving up their Islam. We have seen this happening across the world and across the generations. This is also why we see that when a Muslim

community wants to hold on to Islam, and wants to be recognised as faithful, people make that extra effort to return to Salat.

In this society, we can look at Salat in Islam as our last line of defence. We hold on to it, we preserve ourselves as Muslims, and God willing, we preserve our children and their children and so on, as Muslims. If we lose Salat, God forbid, we lose everything, in this life and in the hereafter. That is truly a disaster.

This is what the Holy Quran says about those communities who gave up their Salat.

"But after them there followed future generations who lost the Prayers and followed after lusts. Soon, then, will they face destruction" (S19, A59)

﴿ فَخَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ
وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهْوَاتِ فَسُوفَ يَلْقَوْنَ غِيًّا ﴿٥٩﴾

The following are just a few more verses from the Holy Quran to cast away any further doubts about the rule of establishing Salat in Islam.

"And establish regular prayer and give zakat and obey the Messenger, that you may receive mercy" (S24, A56)

﴿ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِيعُوا
الرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

"And be steadfast in prayer; give zakat and bow down your heads with those who bow down 'in worship'" (S2, A43)

﴿ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا
مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

"They are those who, if We establish them in the land, establish regular prayer and give zakat, enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. With Allah rests the end (and decision) of (all) affairs" (S22, A41)

﴿ الَّذِينَ إِنْ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا
الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۗ وَإِلَيْهِ عَدِيبَةُ الْأُمُورِ ﴿٤١﴾

Brothers and sisters, there should be no doubt in our minds and hearts about the need to establish regular prayers. It is vital for our present community, and it is vital for our future generations. We cannot instil in our children the need to establish regular prayers if we do not act as an example. We cannot understate this point. We have to act as an example to our children. We are asked to encourage our children by age seven, and we are asked to enforce prayers by age ten. There is no doubt as to what the instructions are. We are responsible for our children. We may feel happy that we

have been able to establish regular prayers ourselves, and that we have preserved Islam in our community for this generation, but what about the next, and what about the one after. There is no room for leniency here, and we need to be very vigilant. Indeed, there is a Hadeeth that states that between the person and Kufr (wilfully renouncing Allah) is abandoning Salat on purpose. This was narrated by Muslim and by Ahmad, and it is also agreed by the Sahabah.

أقول قولي هذا وأستغفر الله لي ولكم

2nd Khutbah:

الحمد لله ثم الحمد لله. الحمد لله نستعينه ونستغفره، ونعوذ بالله من شرور أنفسنا وسيئات أعمالنا. أما بعد:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ * الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ﴾ (المؤمنون، 1-2)

"Successful indeed are the believers. Those who humble themselves in their prayers." (S23, A1-2)

How do we improve our prayers, and what is the relevance of the mosque. First of all, some general guidelines:

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا

"O you who believe, when you prepare for prayer, wash your faces, and your hands (and arms) to the elbows, rub your heads (with water) and (wash) your feet to the ankles. If you are in a state of impurity, bathe your whole body" (S5, A6)

We are all aware of the importance of cleanliness and performing either Wudu or Ghussle before Salat depending on the circumstances.

What about the role of the mosque and the Jama'a prayers. This is an important concept in Islam. Islam encourages the Jama'a prayers. In an agreed Hadeeth, the Prophet^(SAAWS) states that the Jama'a prayers is worth 27 times the prayers of a person by himself. There is always more reward when we pray together.

In another hadeeth, the Prophet^(SAAWS) states that the prayers of the man in Jama'a is worth 25 times his prayers alone. When he performs good Wudu, and leaves his house for the sole purpose of prayers, with every step he takes his status is uplifted, and a sin is forgiven. As he prays, the angels will continue praying for him, saying, God bless him and God forgive him, until he finishes his Salat. This is the reward for establishing Jama'a prayers.

In another Hadeeth, the Prophet^(SAAWS) mentions that if three Muslims are present in a community, they need to establish Jama'a prayers, or Satan will get to them, as we are weakened by being separate, and strengthened by the Jama'a. In fact, establishing Jama'a prayers is a definite Sunnah, to the extent that we are informed in another Hadeeth, that if we leave the Jama'a prayers, we are actually abandoning an established Sunnah of the Prophet^(SAAWS).

We are very fortunate in Altrincham. When I moved to this area over two years ago, my intention was to move as near the Didsbury mosque as possible so as I can benefit from the Jama'a prayers. But even then, this was a 20 minute drive. Imagine the joy when this Mosque came into existence. It is now no more than three minutes away. Imagine brothers and sisters. We have been blessed with this mosque within our own community. It is as if we are invited to accomplish our Jama'a prayers by having a mosque so near us, by God's blessing. We need to make full use of this opportunity. We must establish Jama'a prayers to strengthen our community and give Satan no chance to get at us one by one in his own time.

There are however some simple rules. We are reminded to walk slowly and quietly to the mosque. Even if prayers have started, we come into the mosque quietly and gently and join the lines and make up what we have missed. There is no need to run or barge in, and we are always reminded as Muslims to keep calm and dignified.

Occasionally we are permitted to miss the Jama'a prayers under special circumstances. In the case of very cold, very windy or very rainy weather, we are permitted to pray at home. These are exceptional circumstances, but the allowance has been granted.

Other examples of the reward for attending the mosque for Jama'a prayers are the following Hadeeth. The Prophet^(SAAWS) said who ever attends the mosque and returns, God prepares for him paradise on every occasion he attends and leaves.

The Prophet^(SAAWS) also says when you witness a person that regularly attends to the mosque for prayers, it is a testimony of his faith.

إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسْجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَآَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتَى
الزَّكَاةَ وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَعَسَىٰ أُوَلِّيٰكَ أَن يَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

"The mosques of Allah shall be visited and maintained by those who believe in Allah and the Last day, and establish regular prayer" (S9, A18)

The Prophet^(SAAWS) said; Shall I guide you to what wipes away the sins and lifts up your status. The mosque is the home of every pious person. God will look after this person with mercy and guides him along the straight path to paradise.

Brothers and sisters. We all know that Salat is compulsory, but even with this pillar there are important issues that we need to address. The most important for us, for the community in Altrincham, is that we should encourage ourselves to attend the mosque for Jama'a prayers more and more. Not just the Juma'a prayers, but for most Jama'a prayers if we can. God willing, we will soon be starting Ramadan. During this month, Muslims tend to revitalise their faith, and it will be a good time to establish regular prayers and to establish Jama'a prayers.

My last point is that we must all strive to maintain and protect our mosque, for it is this establishment that will hopefully look after our children and their children. Please invest in this mosque, both financially and with your efforts. This is where our community starts, and this is where we maintain our faith.