

Establish the Prayers and the Prize is Paradise

Abdul Malik Al Qasim

For forty years, the Adhan was never called but Sa`id bin al-Musayyab radhiallahu `anhu was in the mosque before it was called. [Tabaqat al Hanabilah 1/141, Hilyat al Awliya 2/163, Sifat as Safwah 2/80]

`Umar became unconscious after he was stabbed, and according to Al Miswar bin Makhramah, it was said: "Nothing would wake him up except the call to prayer, if he is still alive." They said to him, "The prayer has finished, O Chief of the Faithful!" He woke up and said, "The prayer, by Allah! Verily, there is no share in Islam for whoever abandons the prayer." He performed the prayer while his wound was bleeding. [Sifat as Safwah 2/131, As Siyar 5/220]

After ar-Rabi` bin Khaytham became partially paralyzed, he used to go to the mosque helped by two men. He was told:

"O AbuYazid! You have been given permission to pray at home." He said, "You have said the truth, but I heard the caller heard, 'Hayya `ala al-Falah (Come to success)', and I thought that whoever hears this call should answer it even by crawling." [Hilyat al Awliya 2/113]

Adi bin Hatim, radhiallahu `anhu, said: "Every time the prayer time falls, it falls while I am eager for it and ready to perform it (i.e. having wudu)." [Az Zuhd by Ahmad, p. 249]

Abu Bakr bin Abdullah al Muzani said: "Who is like you, O son of Adam? Whenever you wish, you use water to make Ablution, go to the place for worship and thus enter the presence of your Lord (i.e. start praying) without a translator or a barrier between you and Him!" [Al Bidayah wa an Nihayah 9/256]

Abu Rajaa al `Ataridi, "Nothing that I leave behind grieves me, except that I used to bow down on my face five times a day before my Lord, the Exalted and Most Honored." [Hilyat al Awliya 2/306]

Abu Al Aliyah said, "I would travel for days to meet a man and the first thing I would notice about him is his prayer. If he would establish the prayer perfectly and on time, I would stay with him and hear the knowledge he had. If I found him to be careless concerning the prayer, I would leave him and say to myself that for things other than the prayer, he would be even more careless."

When Ali bin Al Husain used to perform Wudu, his color would change. His family asked him why this happened to him every time he performed Ablution, he said, "Do you know before Whom I am about to stand (in prayer)?"

Yazid bin Abdullah was asked, "Should we make a roof for our mosque?" He said, "Purify your hearts and your mosque will be sufficient for you." [Hilyat al Awliya 2/312]

Adi bin Hatim, radhiallahu `anhu said, "Ever since I became Muslim, I always made sure to have Wudu when the Adhan is called." [As Siyar 3/160]

Ubayd bin Ja`far said, "I never saw my uncle Bishr bin Masnur miss the first takbir, and whenever any person stood up in our mosque to ask people for help, my uncle gave him something." [Sifat as Safwah 3/376]

Ibn Sama`ah said, "For forty years, I only missed Takbir Tahrimah when my mother died." [As Siyar 10/646]

"If you know of a man's disinterest in Takbir Tahrimah, then wash your hands of him." [As Siyar 5/65, Sifat as Safwah 3/88]

Sufyan bin `Uyaynah, "Honoring the prayer includes coming before the Iqamah is recited." [Sifat as Safwah 2/235]

Maymun bin Mahran came to the mosque late and when he was told that the people had already finished the prayer, he said, "We all belong to Allah and to Him shall be our return! I prefer the congregational prayer to being the governor of Iraq ." [Mukashafat al Qulub p 364]

Yunus bin Abdullah said, "What is the matter with me? When I lose a chicken I feel concerned, but when I miss the prayer in congregation, it does not grieve me." [Hilyat al Awliya, 3/19]

`Umar said, while standing on the podium, "A man might have white hair in Islam (i.e. reaches in old age while Muslim), yet has not completed even one prayer for Allah, the Exalted!" He was asked, "Why is that?" He said, "He does not perfect the prayer's required Khushu`, solemnness and attending to Allah with his heart." [Al-Ihya 10/202]

Hammad bin Salamah said, "I have never stood up for prayer without imagining that Jahannam is before my eyes." [Tadhkirat al Huffadh 1/219]

Mu`adh bin Jabal advised his son, "My son! Pray the prayer of he who is just about to leave and imagine that you might not be able to pray ever again. Know that the believer dies between two good deeds, one that he performed and one that he intended to perform later on." [Sifat as Safwah 1/496]

Bakr al Muzani said, "If you want your prayer to be of benefit to you, say to yourself, 'I might not have a chance to perform another prayer.'" [Jami` al `Ulum wal Hikam, p 466.]

Shubrumah said, "We accompanied Karz al Harithi on a journey. Whenever he wanted to set camp in an area, he used to scan it with his eyes and when he found a good piece of

land that he liked, he would go to it and pray there until it was time to leave." [Sifat as Safwah 3/120]

Al Qasim bin Muhammad said, "Whenever I went out in the morning, I used to visit `Aishah radhiallahu `anha (his aunt and the wife of the Prophet, sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam) and greet her. One day I found her performing Ad Duha prayer, reciting this Ayah repeatedly, crying and invoking Allah: 'So Allah has been gracious to us, and has saved us from the torment of the Fire.' (52:27) I stood there until I felt bored, so I left and went to the market to do something and said to myself that when I finish what I have to do, I will go back (to `Aishah radhiallahu `anha). When I finished and went back to her, I found her still standing in prayer, reciting the same Ayah, crying and invoking Allah." [Al Ihya 4/436]

Maymun bin Hayyan said, "I never saw Muslim bin Yasar turning his head while praying, whether the prayer was short or long. Once, a part of the mosque came down and the noise caused fear to the people who were in the market, while he was in the mosque, did not fear nor even turn his head and kept praying." [Az Zuhd by Imam Ahmad p 359]

"I accompanied `Ata bin Rabah for eighteen yers. When he became old and weak, he used to stand in prayer and read close to two hundred Ayat from Surat al Baqarah while standing in such firmness that no part of him would move." [As Siyar 5/87, Sifat as Safwah 2/213]

Abu Bakr bin Aiyash said, "If you saw Habib bin Abu Thabit while in Sujud, you would think that he had died because of his long prostration." [As Siyar 5/291]

Ali bin Al Fudayl said, "I saw ath-Thawri went into Sujud while praying, and I performed Tawaf around the House seven times before he raised his head from Sujud." [As Siyar 7/277]

Uthman bin Abi Dahrash said, "I never performed a prayer without invoking Allah afterwards to forgive me for falling into shortcomings in the way I performed it." [Tarikhu Baghdad 13/207]

Mu`awiyah bin Murrah, "I lived during the time of seventy of the Companions of Muhammad, sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam, and had they lived among you today, they would not recognize any of your acts except the Adhan!" [Hilyat al Awliya 2/299]

Moreover, Maymun bin Mahran said, "If a man from the Salaf was resurrected among you today, he would only recognize your Qiblah."

When Hatim al Asamm was asked about his prayer, he said, "When it is near the time of prayer, I perform a perfect Wudu and go to where I am going to pray and sit down there until I become fully attentive to what I am about to do. I then stand up and pray, imagining that the Ka`bah is in front of my eyes, Paradise to my right, Hellfire to my left and the Angel of Death behind me. I imagine that it is the last prayer I am about to perform, stand up in hope (in Allah, His Paradise and rewards) and fear (from Allah's torment in Hellfire) and recite the Takbir while having full attention. I recite the Qur'an calmly, make Ruku` humbly, go into Sujud with Khushu1 and then sit on my left leg, with the left foot laid on the floor and the right foot raised up, all the while praying with sincerity. Afterwards, I do not know (nor feel certain) if that prayer was accepted from me!" [Al Ihya 1/179]

One of the Salaf said, "O son of Adam! You need your share in this life, but need your share in the Hereafter even more. If you took care of your share in this life, then you will lose your share in the Hereafter and are soon bound to lose your share in this life too. If you took care of your share in the Hereafter, you will also win your full share in this life with ease." [Fada'il adh Dhikr by ibn al Jawzi p. 19]

Talq bin Habib said, "Allah's Rights are greater than the slave's capacity and ability to fulfill them. Therefore, reach the morning in a state of repentance and reach the night in a state of repentance."