

Introduction

أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي

“...and keep up prayer for My remembrance.” (20: 14)

الصَّلَاةُ مِعْرَاجُ الْمُؤْمِنِ

“Prayer is the faithful's ladder to sublimity.”

– Prophet Muhammad (S)

Praise be to Allah, the ever Sublime; a praise that however sublime, cannot comprehend His mercy and blessings. Prayers and peace be upon the master of mankind, the conveyer of His Message, the truthful and the trustworthy: Muhammad (S), and upon his favourites and beloved ones – the Prophet's descendants, and upon those devoted to Allah and His helpers – the righteous companions of the Prophet (S), and upon all the revolutionaries who are travelling on the path of struggle till the Day of Judgement.

One misconception commonly held is that prayer (*salat*), and other Islamic rites, represent a mere abstract spiritual relationship between the Muslim and his Creator; a relationship that is irrelevant to the individual and the society's economic, social and political affairs.

This error can even be noticed among good natured Muslims who are involved in proselytizing for Islam. In addition, the enemies of Islam propagate the likes of these misconceptions about Islam in order to keep prayer out of its proper context and thus spiritless. The prayer would then become mere physical movements and unconscious uttering of formulas.

Another common mistake is that the performance of prayer is sufficient to ascertain a Muslim's identity.

There is also supposedly no wrong in embracing other concepts and even ideologies, indulging in unlawful dealings with others (e.g. taking usury, swindling and hoarding merchandise) and cooperating with tyrants all the while, thinking that performing prayer is sufficient and that one can still count her or himself among the Muslims. Most surely prayer that does not enjoin what is good and restrain one from committing wrong deeds, will not keep the individual from Allah's pleasure.

Another erroneous idea is that prayer has a single message for people: namely to remain good and honest in dealing with people. It may be argued accordingly that to be upright and 'democratic' with others, justifies cancellation of this Islamic rite. Such misconceptions and ignorance are widespread among a broad section of Muslim youth. This is part of our enemies designs for creating strife within the Muslim ummah.

Al-Balagh Foundation presents this booklet, "Prayer – Worship and Education" as one in its continuing series of publications dedicated to and entitled "Islamic Concepts" for our respected readers, hoping that you will thus become better acquainted with the significance of the prayer and its marked influence on psychological, social and ethical affairs. Our purpose is also to make better understood the unique devotional role of prayer in comparison with other Islamic obligations.

We invoke Allah the Sublime, the Powerful, to guide us to have trust in Him, hold fast to His laws and perpetuate the holy struggle in order to defeat our enemies and have the banner of Islam wave high and indomitable.

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