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Lesson 52: Salat al-Jama'ah (congregational prayer)

Prayer is offered individually and also in jama'ah (congregation). But there is great reward when the prayer is offered in jama'ah.
Prayer in congregation gives us both worldly and spiritual benefits:

1. Islamic equality

In the congregation, rich and poor, high and low, all stand shoulder to shoulder. This destroys the haughtiness of the rich and creates self-respect in the poor. The best scene of mankind's equality comes before us in congregational prayer.

2. Unity

In the congregational prayer all have one *niyyah*, one language and identical actions. All kneel together. All prostrate together. This teaches us the lesson of the unity of the Muslims.

3. Love and Co-operation

People meet with one another in the congregational prayer. They know the hardships and worries of each other and try to help each other. New things are known there. Mutual love develops. Circle of friendship is widened. We get an opportunity to perfect our life in the light of others experiences.

4. Discipline

While offering prayer in *jama'ah* we stand in rows, follow the Imam of *jama'ah* and practice obedience to command. This instills in us the discipline which is the essential feature of a community's life.

5. Prestige of Islam

Our mosques remain thriving due to prayer in *jama'ah*. It enhances the prestige of the Muslims and the unity of the Muslims affects the enemies greatly.

6. Limitless Reward

Allah has put a big reward for congregational prayer:-
Our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and the Imams (A.S.) have laid great stress on congregational prayer. Therefore, we should offer congregational prayer as far as possible.
The Holy Prophet said that if there are only 2 persons (the Imam and only one *m'amum*) in *jama'ah* prayer, every *rak'at* gets the reward of 150 prayers. The reward is increased by the increase in the number of people praying. Thus in a *jama'ah* prayer of 3 persons every *rak'at* gets the reward of 600 prayers.
If there are 4, every *rak'at* gets the reward of 1,200 prayers.
If there are 5, every *rak'at* gets the reward of 2,400 prayers.
If there are 6, every *rak'at* gets the reward of 4,800 prayers.
If there are 7, every *rak'at* gets the reward of 9,600 prayers.
If there are 8, every *rak'at* gets the reward of 19,200 prayers.
If there are 9, every *rak'at* gets the reward of 36,400 prayers
If there are 10, every *rak'at* gets the reward of 72,800 prayers.
It there are more than 10, then nobody can estimate its reward except Allah.

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