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Preface

Know that for the *Salat*, beside its form, there is a meaning, and apart from its exterior it has an interior; and as the exterior has its disciplines, neglecting which would render the outer form of the *Salat* invalid or incomplete, likewise its interior has cordial spiritual disciplines, neglecting which would render the spiritual *Salat* invalid or incomplete; whereas observing them would inspire the *Salat* with a heavenly spirit.

It would be possible that after paying attention to and observing the cordial inner disciplines, the *musall*ī would have a share of the divine secret of the *Salat* of the "people of knowledge and of hearts" the *Salat* which is the delight of the people of *sul*ī*k*1 and the reality of the *mi'r*ī*j* (ascension) to the proximity of the Beloved. 2

Besides what was just said about the *Salat*'s interior and unseen divine images, and in addition to its being in conformity with a kind of proof and the observations of the people of *sul*ī*k* and asceticism, there are many ī*yah*s and narratives, in general and particular, which denote that, too, and we shall bless the following pages by relating some of them.

Among them is the saying of Allah, the Most High:

"On the day when every soul shall find present what it has done of good and what it has done of evil, it shall wish that there were a long duration of time between it and that* [*day*]*..."3

This noble ī*yah* says that everybody will see his good and bad deeds present and he will discern their unseen inner images. In another ī*yah* He says:

"... and they shall find present what they have done,"4
And

"So, he who has done an atom's weight of good shall see it...,"5

Which means that the soul shall see its deeds.

As regards the noble *Hadiths* in this respect, they are too many to be contained in these pages. So, it suffices to state a few of them.

Among them, in the *Was*ī*'il*, quoting Im*ā*m as-S*ā*diq (*'a*), it is said: "Whoever performed the obligatory *Salat*s at the beginning of their times and observed their restrictions, the angel would raise them, white and pure, to heaven, and the *Salat* would say (to the performer): "May Allah preserve you as you preserved me and entrusted me to a generous angel."

But whoever performed them after their times, with no excuse, and did not observe their restrictions, the angel would raise them, black and dark, while the *Salat* shouting at the performer: "You have lost me, may Allah lose you, and may He not care for you as you did not care for me". 6

It denotes that the *Salat* is raised by Allah's angels to heaven, white and pure, when it is performed at the start of its time and its disciplines are observed. In this case it invokes good for the *musall*ī; or it will be dark and black if it is delayed, without a reasonable cause, and its disciplines are neglected, in which case it will curse him.

This *had*ī*th*, besides denoting the fact that there are heavenly unseen images, it also denotes that they are alive, as evidenced by ā*yah*s and narratives. Allah, the Most High, says:

"... and the next abode, most surely, is the life..."7

There are many *Hadiths* to the same effect, relating which would lengthen the subject.

Im*ā*m as-S*ā*diq (*'a*) is quoted to have said: "When a believing servant is put into his grave, the *Salat* stands on his right and the *zak*ā*t* on his left, his good deeds stand shadowing over him and forbearance stands aside. When the two angels in charge of interrogation enter the grave, forbearance tells the *Salat*, the *zak*ā*t* and good deeds: "You have to help your friend. If you felt unable, I would be with him".8

This noble *had*ī*th* is related in the noble *al-K*ā*f*ī through two channels. Shaykh as-Sad*ū*q (may Allah have mercy upon him) has related this *had*ī*th* in *Thaw*ā*b al-A'm*ā*l*. It speaks clearly of the unseen images of the *barzakh*, and their life and common sense. The *Hadiths* about the heavenly images of the Qur'an and the *Salat* are numerous.

With regard to what has been said that the *Salat* and other forms of worship have, besides their outward disciplines, other inward disciplines without which the *Salat* would be incomplete or even unacceptable to Allah, the following pages will numerate and state those cordial (inward) disciplines, *insh*ā*' All*ā*h* (if Allah wills).

What one should know, however, in this stage, is that to satisfy oneself with the appearance and outer form of the *Salat*, and to be deprived of its blessings and inner perfections which bring about eternal happiness, or rather, bring one to the proximity of the Lord of Might, and set up the ladder of ascent to the stage of meeting the Absolute Beloved the Ultimate Goal of the godly men and the Final Hope of the

people of knowledge and those who have “hearts”, or rather, the Beloved of the Master of the Messengers (*s*)9 is one of the heavier losses, as it will be after leaving this world and entering the reckoning (day) of Allah the cause of so great regrets that our minds are incapable of comprehending them.

As long as we are enwrapped in the veils of this world, and live in the covers of nature, we cannot have knowledge of the other world, and cannot keep warm by a remote fire. What regret, remorse and loss can be greater than that after forty or fifty years of toiling for the sake of attaining a thing which is the means of man's perfection and happiness, and the remedy for the pains of the cordial deficiencies, and it is, in fact, the image of the human perfection, we cannot be spiritually benefited by it, and rather, it becomes the cause of tarnishing the heart and brings dark veils, and what is the pleasure of the Messenger (*s*) causes the weakness of our insight:

“...Alas for me, for what I fell short of my duty to Allah...”10

So, dear, tuck up the skirt of aspiration, extend the hand of demand, bear every labor and hardship in order to reform your affairs and acquire the spiritual conditions of the *Salat* of the people of knowledge, and make use of this divine mixture [*maj'n*], which is prepared with the complete understanding [*kashf*] of Muhammad (*s*) for the sake of soothing all the pains and deficiencies of the souls.

Since it is still not too late, try to break camp and leave this dungeon of darkness, regret and remorse, this deep pit, which is far away from the holy presence of the Lord, the Exalted and Most High. Release yourself and try to reach the ascension [*mi'rj*] of union [*wisl*] and the proximity of perfection. Beware! If this means were lost, other means would fit: “If it was accepted, other deeds would be accepted, and if it was rejected, other deeds would be rejected, too.” 11

We shall explain, as much as possible and necessary, the inner disciplines of this spiritual *sulk*, so that someone of the people of faith may have a share of it. This might as well be a cause for the divine mercy and the unseen care to be bestowed upon me, lagging as I am in the way to happiness and humanity, and chained in the prison of nature and selfishness. Surely Allah is the Patron of generosity and care.

1. It hints at some narratives, including one from the Messenger of Allah (s) saying, “My delight has been placed in the Salat.” Furu' al-Kafi, vol 5, “Book of Marriage”, ch. on “Loving Women”, hadith no.7, p. 321.
2. It refers to a narrative from the Messenger of Allah (s) saying, “The Salat is the mi'raj of the believer.” 'Allamah al-Majlisi, I'tiqadat, p. 29.
3. Surah al-i 'Imran 3:30
4. Surah al-Kahf 18:49
5. Surah Zilzal 99:7
6. Wasa'il ash-Sh'ah, vol. 3, Kitab as-Salat, sec. on “Times” ch. 3, hadith 17, p. 90 (with a slight difference).
7. Surah al-'Ankabut 29:64
8. Usul al-Kafi, vol. 3, “Book of Belief and Disbelief,” ch. on “Forbearance,” hadith 8, p. 143; Thawab al-A'mal, “Thawab as-Salat waz-Zakat wal-Birr was-Sabr,” hadith 1, p. 203.

9. Refer to footnote 7.

10. Sūrah az-Zumar 39:56.

11. Falāh as-Sā'il, p. 127, quoting Man Lā Yahduruh al-Faqīh, in which the text is: “The first thing about which the servant is questioned is the Salat, if it was accepted his other (devotional) acts would be accepted, and if it was returned to him, his other acts would be returned to him (too).” vol. 1. “The Merit of the Salat,” ch. 30, hadīth 5.

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