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Ritual Prayers

Allah loves us and has bestowed many bounties upon us. It is, therefore, necessary that we should be grateful to Him for all His bounties and blessings and should thank Him from the core of our hearts. The best way of showing our gratitude to Him is by offering prayers (Salat).

Muslims are required to pray to Allah five times a day, viz. dawn, midday, afternoon, dusk and night. These five prayers are obligatory.

The time for the dawn prayer is from dawn until before sunrise. The time for the mid-day and afternoon prayers commences with the declining of the sun and lasts until sunset. As regards the dusk and night prayers, their time is after sunset until mid-night.

Every prayer consists of a few units, each of which is called a Rak'at. In every Rak'at there is one Ruku and two Sajdah. Ruku' means bowing while Sajdah means prostration.

Every prayer has some compulsory Rak'ats. The dawn prayer has two, the dusk prayer has three and the remaining three prayers have four Rak'at each.

In the first verse of Surah al-Mu'minun of the Holy Qur'an, Almighty Allah mentions all the attributes of the believers and gives them good news of prosperity and success. He says:

"Blessed are the believers, who are humble in their prayers".

As is evident from the verse reproduced above that the greatest quality of the believers is that they show meekness before Allah while offering their prayers. They pay full attention to Him and do not display carelessness. They know that, while offering prayers, they stand before the Omniscient Allah.

The greatest human quality is to express humility before Allah.

Questions

1. What is the greatest quality of man?

2. Why should we not let our thoughts go astray while offering prayers?

3. How many prayers are obligatory for a Muslim during day and night?

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