

## **Humility in Prayers (Salaat)**

You should know - may Allah have mercy upon you - that when the slave [of Allah] leaves his house to go to the mosque, that he is going to face Allah, the Irresistible, the One, the Omnipotent, the Exalted in Might, the Oft-forgiving, in the knowledge that nothing is hidden from Allah SWT, wherever it might be, and that nothing is hidden from Allah SWT and that even something as small as a mustard seed is not concealed from Him, nor even something smaller, nor larger - in the seven earths or the seven heavens, in the seven seas or the lofty mountains, fixed and firm.

And verily, the mosque to which he comes is one of the Houses of Allah SWT. He desires only Allah SWT and he sets out to one of His Houses, which:

"Allah has permitted to be raised to honour, for the celebration in them of His Name: In them He is glorified in the mornings and the evenings [over and over] by men whom neither traffic nor merchandise can divert from the practice of regular charity: Their [only] fear is for the Day when hearts and eyes will be transformed." [An-Noor: 36-37]

So when anyone from amongst you sets out from his house (for the mosque) he should say quietly to himself words of remembrance [of Allah SWT] - words unconnected with the affairs and business of this world. He should set out calmly, somberly, for this is what the Prophet SAW, ordered us to do; he should set out with (his heart full of) longing and desire [for His pleasure] and fear and apprehension [of His anger] and with humility and meekness towards Allah SWT.

For the more humble, the more meek, the more submissive he is to Allah SWT, the more virtuous and righteous does he become in Solaah and the greater becomes his reward, and the more noble and nearer to Allah SWT becomes the worshipper. But should he be filled with pride, Allah SWT will destroy him and will reject his deeds, for the deeds of the proud are never accepted.

It has been narrated in a hadeeth concerning Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.) Allah's Khalil, that he spent the night in worship and remembrance of Allah SWT, and in the morning, he was pleased with the night's worship and he said:

"How Good is the Rabb (Lord), and how good is the slave, Ibrahim (a.s.)."

On the following day, finding none to share his food with him - and he loved to share his food - he took his food outside to the road and sat, waiting for any passerby to eat with him. Then two angels descended from the heavens and approached him. So he invited them to eat with him and they accepted. Then Ibrahim (a.s) suggested that they approach a nearby garden which contained a fresh water spring.

They agreed to this and approached the garden, only to find that the spring had run underground, so there was no water. This was a severe blow to Ibrahim (a.s) and he was embarrassed by what he had said (because there was no spring in evidence) and so the angels said to him:

"Ask your Rabb to return the spring."

He did so, but the spring did not appear, and this was a great blow to him and so he said to the angels:

"You ask Allah."

So one of them asked Him, and behold! The water returned, then the other supplicated Allah SWT and the water flowed near to them. Then they informed him that his being impressed by his own standing in prayer the previous night had caused his supplication to be rejected. So beware - may Allah SWT have mercy on you - of pride, for no deed will be accepted if it is accompanied by pride. Be humble in your prayer.

Should any of you stand in prayer before his Rabb, he should know Allah SWT, in his heart by the great blessings which He bestows upon him and the abundant favour which He grants him, for Allah SWT has honoured him with great goodness, but he has saddled himself with sins. Therefore it is incumbent upon him to be excessive in his humility and meekness towards Allah SWT.

By Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal ('Treatise on Salaah')

Translation: S. Strauch (c) 1999 IIPH

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