

The Arabic word for prayer ( **الصَّلَاة** : As-Salah) is derived from root words - **ص ل و** which means - prayer, supplication, follow closely, walk/follow behind closely, to remain attached.

In a horse race, when the second horse follows the first one so closely that its head always overlaps the first horse's body that horse is called AL-MUSSALLI (the one who follows closely / remains attached).

**“Indeed, I am Allah. There is no deity except Me, So worship Me and establish prayer for My remembrance.”** [Quran, 20:14]

Salah, is an obligatory connection with Allah for all sane Muslims, whether rich or poor, male or female, black or white, strong or weak. This spiritual practice allows the believer to draw closer to Allah and take a pause from this fast-paced world 5 times a day facing the Ka'bah in Makkah (known as Qibla).

**“Verily, the prayer is enjoined on the believers at fixed hours.”** [Quran 4:103]

Salah is the 2nd most important pillar of Islam, and is the most regular compulsory action in a Muslim's life. We fast just 1 month (in Ramadan) a year; we give Zakah once a year; and Hajj is an obligation only once a life time (for those who are able). However, prayer is the one act that must be fulfilled at least 5 times a day. You may shorten it (while travelling), you may sit down to pray (if not well) - or even lie down (if you can't even sit), but you can't leave Salah. In fact, Allah asked the Muslims to pray during the battle as well in [Quran, 2:238-239].

## Benefits of Salah (Prayer) in This World

1. It is a direct connection with Allah which brings peace to our heart and mindfulness in our lives

**“Verily, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest.”** [Quran; 13:28]

Salah is a direct connection with Allah. It shows us how religion is a (practical) part of our daily life. Praying repeatedly throughout the day and interrupting the daily activities brings about the realization that our life's focal point is Allah.

**The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “The closest that a person can be to his Lord, the Mighty and Sublime, is when he is prostrating, so increase in supplication then.”** [Nasa'i 1137]

**The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “Allah (SWT) continues to look upon His slave while he is praying, so long as he does not turn away...”** [Nasa'i 1195]

## 2. It is a strong identity of a Muslim and unites the Ummah

Actions will reflect what is in your heart. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was regular in his prayers and none of us have a cleaner heart than him.

**MeSSenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “The covenant between us and them is the Salat, so whoever abandons it he has committed disbelief.”** [Tirmidhi 2621]

Prayer in congregation cultivates brotherhood, equality and humility between Muslims. The worshipers stand in rows, shoulder to shoulder, without any distinction of race, nationality, colour, wealth, family or status, and all pray together as one body. This act of unity helps demolish all barriers which stand between them.

**Abu Huraira said, “I heard Allah’s MeSSenger (ﷺ) saying, ‘The reward of a prayer in congregation is 25 times greater than that of a prayer offered by a person alone. The angels of the night and the angels of the day gather at the time of Fajr prayer.’...”** [Bukhari 648]

3. It keeps us away from bad deeds and Satan away from us

**“...Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows that which you do.” [Quran, 29:45]**

When I told the following hadith to kids, they all started their karate gestures on how they will fight Shaitaan through Salah.

**The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: When the Mu'adhdhin calls to prayer, Satan runs back vehemently.” [Muslim 389 b]**

4. It brings more barakah (blessings)

**“And enjoin prayer upon your family and be steadfast therein. We ask you not for provision; We provide for you, and the outcome is for righteousness.” [Quran, 20:132]**

## 5. It rids us of laziness & improves our mental / physical health

Salah involves continuous gentle muscle contraction and relaxation with perfect harmony and balance. The body goes through a unique exercise routine during the Salah therefore these postures help to maintain fitness in the healthy individuals, leading to improved flexibility, muscle strength (ability of muscle to exert force) and muscle endurance (refers to the ability to perform many repetition). UMMC Cardiology Consultant Specialist Prof Dr Wan Azman stated that “12 ‘Rak‘ah’ (unit for a set of actions in a prayer) equaled to 30 minutes of light exercises daily as recommended by health experts.” Other beneficial activities can be combined with prayer, such as walking to the local mosque.

**“The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘If the people knew what (reward) there is in the ‘Isha’ prayer and fajr prayer, they would come even if they had to crawl.’”**

**[Ibn Majah 796]**

Ruk‘u strengthens the back, extends the spine and increases the flexibility of hips and hamstrings. It relieve the stiffness at spine, neck, and back and help to improves posture as well as balance and co-ordination. According to industrial engineering Prof. Muhammad Khasawneh et al: “the complex physical movements of the ritual can reduce lower-back pain if performed regularly and properly. In some

cases of chronic low back pain, as part of exercise plan, I often advise my Muslim patient to prolong the Ruku'u position every time they Pray for a few more seconds in order get the effective sustain stretch.”

Al- Gazal (2006) and Ayad (2008) stated that prostration (sajdah) is the only position in which the head is in a position lower than the heart and therefore, receives increased blood supply to the brain, stimulates the brain's frontal cortex. This reduces the chances of brain hemorrhage and headache, helps to reduces high blood pressure. This surge in blood supply also has a positive effect on memory, concentration, and other cognitive abilities.

**“When anything distressed the Prophet ﷺ,  
he prayed.” [Abi Dawud 1319]**

In Salah, a Muslim is required to focus during prayers and leave out all life distractions and connect with Allah during that time. The individual is fully awake and alert, but the mind is not focused on the external world or on the events taking place around the individual.

Prayer movements have many physical and physiological benefits, but we, as Muslims, pray out of love for Allah and as an obligation – not to gain physical fitness (which is just an added benefit from the bounties of Allah alhamdulillah).

## 6. It teaches us discipline and time management

**Messenger of Allah ﷺ said,..."if...you are always busy in remembrance (of Allah), the angels will shake hands with you in your beds and in your roads; but...time should be devoted (to the worldly affairs) and time should be devoted (to prayer)".**

**He ﷺ said this thrice. [Riyad as-Salihin 151]**

As Taimiyyah Zubair beautifully said: "Salah is not an interruption, it is a break. In the daily grind we get so preoccupied with work that we begin to neglect ourselves. We ignore the pleas of our bodies because we falsely believe that what we are doing at the moment is of utmost importance and cannot be delayed by a second even. Or we are unable to tend to our needs because of the demands of people. We constantly bear the stress on our shoulders, worrying, and working away. Salah rescues us from this madness. It extracts us from the grip that people have over us, and from the endless work that is consuming us and reminds us that no human being, no work, nothing is more important than Allah. It teaches us to say no. To set boundaries with people. And that people must learn to respect those boundaries. It teaches us that we matter. It forces us to disconnect from everything, even our thoughts, and to connect with Allah, and by extension with ourselves. Salah is self-care."

7. It cleanses us and provides protection from Allah

**Prophet ﷺ Said: “Whoever offers the morning prayer, he is under the protection of Allah, the Mighty and Sublime.” [Ibn Majah 3946]**

Prayer provides a means of repentance and is a restrainer from bad deeds. Just as the body requires physical needs such as food and water, the soul has spiritual needs. The needs of the soul are provided by acts of worship, the most important of which is prayer.

**Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, “Say, if there were a river at the door of one of you in which he takes a bath five times a day, would any soiling remain on him?” They replied, “No soiling would left on him.” He (ﷺ) said, “That is the five (obligatory) Salat (prayers). Allah obliterates all sins as a result of performing them.” [Riyad as-Salihin 1042]**



8. It is a powerful medium to seek help and thank Allah for His blessings

**“And Seek help through patience and prayer, and indeed, it is difficult except for the humbly submissive .” [Quran 2:45]**

**The Prophet ﷺ stood (in prayer at night) until his feet swelled up, and it was said to him: Allah has forgiven your past and future sins. He said: “Should I not be a thankful slave?” [Nasa'i 1644]**

## Benefits of Salah (Prayer) in The Hereafter

9. It will be the first deed to be accountable for in aakhirah

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “The first thing for which a person will be brought to account will be his Salah. If it is complete (all well and good), otherwise Allah will say: ‘Look and see if My slave did any voluntary prayer.’ If he is found to have done voluntary prayers, his obligatory prayers will be completed therewith.” [Nasa’i 467]

10. It will result in multiple rewards

Anas bin Malik narrated: “On the Night of Isra, fifty prayers were made obligatory upon the Prophet. Then it was decreased until it was made five. Then it was called out: ‘O Muhammad! Indeed My Word does not change; these five prayers will be recorded for you as fifty.” [Tirmidhi 213]

‘Uthman bin ‘Affan (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying: “One who performs ‘Isha’ prayer in congregation, is as if he has performed Salat for half of the night. And one who performs the Fajr prayer in congregation, is as if he has performed Salat the whole night.”

[Riyad as-Salihin 1071]

11. It will be a means to be under the shade of Allah

The Prophet ﷺ Said, “Allah will give Shade, to Seven, on the Day when there will be no shade but His. (*of which are*)...a youth who has been brought up in the worship of Allah (worships Allah sincerely from childhood), a man whose heart is attached to the mosques (i.e. to pray the compulsory prayers in the mosque in congregation),...and a person who remembers Allah in seclusion and his eyes are flooded with tears.” [Bukhari 660]

12. Special gate of Jannah for those who pray

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ Said, “...one who is constant in Salat, will be called from the Gate of Salat...” [Riyad as-Salihin 1216]

13. It will be a means to be recognized by Muhammad ﷺ in the Hereafter

It was narrated from Abu Hurairah that the Prophet ﷺ...Said:... "You are my Companions. My brothers are those who will come after me. I will reach the Cistern ahead of you." They (*the companions - may Allah be pleased with them*) Said: "O Messenger of Allah, how will you recognize those of your nation who have not yet come?" He Said: "If a man has a horse with a blaze on its forehead and white feet, don't you think that he will recognize it among horses that are deep black in color?" They Said: "Of course." He Said: "On the Day of Resurrection they will come with radiant faces, hands, and feet, because of the traces of ablution." [Ibn Majah 4306]

14. It is a means for admission in Jannah

**“And they who carefully maintain their prayers - Those are the inheritors. Who will inherit al-Firdaus. They will abide therein eternally.” [Quran, 23: 9-11]**

15. It is a means to see Allah

**Jarir bin ‘Abdullah Al-Bajali (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: We were sitting with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when he looked at the full moon and observed, “You will see your Rubb in the Hereafter as you see this moon having no difficulty in seeing it. So try your best to perform the prayers before the rising of the sun and that before its setting.” [Riyad as-Salihin 1051]**

## Conclusion

Allah is not in need of our Salah, we are!

**“And We had certainly given Luqman wisdom , “Be grateful to Allah .” And whoever is grateful is grateful for himself. And whoever denies - then indeed, Allah is Free of need and Praiseworthy.”** [Quran 31:12]

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