

MODULE 3

Class title: Significance of Salah - Part 1

Aim of lesson: To understand that Salah is a peg in our life

Category: Worship

Class Format: Power Point Presentation, narration & discussion

(Greeting to students) *AssalamalaikumwaRahmatullahiwaBarakatuh*

(*Ta'awwudh*) *Aoodhubillahi min AsShaytanirRajeem*

(*Tasmiyah*) *BismillahirRahmanirRaheem*

(*Du'a*) *Rabbishrahlisadriwayassirliamriwahluluqdatummillisaniyafqahuqawli*(Surah At Ta-Ha

20: Verse 25-28

Slide 1:

InshaAllah today we are going to discuss the importance or the significance of *salah*. Now do you think that *salah* has been there all the time or it just came when *RasulAllah* (pbuh) became the prophet?

Student 1: All the time.

Student 2: It came when RasullAllah (pbuh) came.

Slide 2:

Ok the form of prayer that we are doing now, yes that became compulsory at the event of *Mairaj*. But the concept of *salah*, the concept of *namaz* has always been there.

Student: But how did people know how to pray?

Slide 3:

From their prophets. But they were not praying the way we are praying and it was fine at that time because that was the order, alright. Now we can't do that. Now I can't say that I'm going to follow what *'Isa* (as) told his people... I can't do that. Why? Because I have to follow *Muhammad* (pbuh), because his was the last commandment, alright?

So *salah* has been there from the very beginning but now if you look around can you see what the religion of *Adam* (as) was?

Student: It was Islam.

It was Islam... what about *Isa* (as)? Was he a Christian?

Students: No, no!

Musa (as) was he a Jew?

Students: No!

Slide 4:

See they were all Muslims, right? All the prophets were Muslims and they were following Islam the way Allah (swt) had told them at that time. They were all following Allah (swt)'s commandments and they were teaching their people to do the same. So the people were following whatever commandments had been told to them at that time by Allah (swt). They were offering *Salah* as it was taught to them by the prophet of their time. But how do we know? How do you know all this? How do you know that *namaz* has been there? Like some of you just said that *namaz* has been there before, how do you know?

Student: In the Qur-an.

Teacher: Yes it says so in the *Qur'an*. *Alhamdulillah*.

Slide 5:

It comes from Prophet *Ibrahim* (as) (Surah Ibrahim 14: Verse 40)

Ibrahim (as) said:

“My Lord! Make me and my descendants people who establish *salah*, my Lord! Accept my prayer.”

It shows that he was obviously praying and his people were doing the same. That is why he made this *du'a*. Now again for *Ismail* (as) it comes in (Surah Maryam 19: Verse 54-55)

“Mention *Ismail* in the book he was true to his promise and was a messenger and a prophet. He used to command his people to do *salah* and give the alms and he was pleasing to his lord”

Right. So again you look at *Ibrahim*, *Ismail* (as) or you look at *Musa* (as) in (Surah Ta-Ha 20: Verse 14)

“I am Allah” Allah (swt) is talking to *Musa* (as) “I am Allah there is no God but Me so worship Me and establish *salah* to remember Me”

Now *'Isa* (as); we are looking at the important prophets of all the religions that we see around us. Christianity, Judaism, right. *'Isa* (as), *Musa* (as) they were all given the same commandment.

Slide 6:

(Surah Maryam 19: Verse 30-31)

“I am the servant of Allah”

This is *'Isa* (as), he is saying:

“He has given me the book and made me a prophet He has made me blessed wherever I am and directed me to do *salah* and give the alms as long as I live”

Again he was given the commandment of *salah*. Maryam (as) who was a role model for all the women, again she was told in (Surah Aal-‘Imran: Verse 43)

“Maryam obey your Lord and prostrate and bow with those who bow”

Prostrate and bow means *rukuh* and *sajda*. So when you look at all the prophets, you see that all of them had been given the commandment to do their *salah* and they were asked to instruct the same to their people.

Slide 7:

Now coming to the next point, the way we got the gift of *salah*. One of you just said that first we were asked to do... I don't know fifty or hundred or whatever, we're coming to that *InshaAllah*. *Salah* is a special gift from Allah (swt) to the prophet, given to the prophet for us. Now how do we find out all the commandments of Allah (swt)? How do you get to know all that? How did they come to RasulAllah (pbuh)? Through the revelation which came through *Jibril* (as), right. So all the commandments came through *Jibril* (as) but this *salah* was a special thing that was given directly to RasulAllah (pbuh) in a special place. Where was it given? This commandment? Jannah! In the heaven that's when RasulAllah (pbuh) was taken to 'mairaj'. Do you know what that is?

Students: Yeah.

Slide 8:

When he was taken to the seventh heaven, Allah(swt)gave this special gift of *salah* to RasulAllah (pbuh).This was the night journey of RasulAllah (pbuh) called *mairaj* or *al-israh* when RasulAllah (pbuh) went from *Makkah* to *Medina* and also to *Masjid-e-Aqsa*. This comes in (Surah Al Israh 17) this was a year before the *hijrah*{the migration}.

Student: Where is *Masjid-e-aqsa*?

Slides 9- 13:

It's in "Jerusalem" which is now in Israel. RasulAllah (pbuh) was taken from *Makkah* to Israel. Right now which is Israel at that time it was Jerusalem. So he was taken from *Masjid-e-Aqsa*. Sometimes you see a golden temple in the pictures of *Masjid-e-Aqsa* that is not *Masjid-e-Aqsa*. Do you see the green dome? That is *Masjid-e-Aqsa*, behind the golden temple actually.

Slide 14:

Now there is a *hadith*, the prophet (pbuh) said,

“The prayers were made obligatory on prophet RasulAllah (pbuh) the night of his ascension to heaven. At first there were fifty in number but were reduced several times until they were five then it was proclaimed: Oh Muhammad! The order is not changed these five are equivalent to the fifty” [Ahmed, Tirmidi]

Now there is a very lengthy *hadith* that *RasulAllah* (pbuh) went to the seventh heaven and Allah (swt) said that your people have to pray fifty times. Now how many of us here can claim that we could have prayed fifty times a day? Could you have prayed fifty times? Even twenty-five? Five is also difficult for us! We were asked to pray fifty times. He came down and met *Musa* (as) and *Musa* (as) told him to go back because his people will not be able to pray fifty times. So *RasulAllah* (pbuh) went up to the seventh heaven again to Allah (swt) and He reduced the number of prayers. He came down and again *Musa* (as) said, “No your people will not be able to do that”. This kept on happening till it came down to ten and again *Musa* (as) said, “Your people will not be able to pray ten times” and again *RasulAllah* (pbuh) went up. Can you imagine the embarrassment of going back to Allah (swt) again and again and saying, “Please reduce it, please reduce it” Can you imagine? Imagine if you have go to your teacher or to your parent or anyone for something, then just after asking two three times it’s embarrassing... and do you think fifty prayers would have been difficult for *RasulAllah* (pbuh)? Would it have been difficult for him to pray fifty times? So why do you think he kept on going back? For us! He kept on going back for us, right.

So *RasulAllah* (pbuh) kept on going back for us. Again and again and again and the embarrassment he must have gone through... I can’t even imagine going back to Allah (swt) and saying please “reduce it” for a gift! And then it came down to five and *Musa* (as) said, “Go back your people will not be able to pray five”. *Musa* (as) knew us, right?

Student: But we do pray that much.

Alhamdulillah we do that but if we look at people around the world you will see that a lot of people, even Muslims do not read five. *Alhamdulillah* that we do, right? So *Musa* (as) told him to go back but *RasulAllah* (pbuh) said, “I’m embarrassed... I can’t go back again, I can’t keep on going back again and again to Allah (swt) and keep on saying this so I resign to His will” and then Allah (swt) said that “Oh Muhammad the order is not changed; these five are equivalent to the fifty”. Allah (swt) is AR-RAHMAN AR-RAHEEM. We are praying only five times but we are getting the reward of fifty! When *RasulAllah* (pbuh) said that I resign to His will, Allah (swt) said, “I’ve imposed My ordinance and alleviated (eased) the burden of My servants”.

Slide 15:

So now we are only praying five but we are getting the reward of fifty, because that was the initial command. *Salah* is the *mairaj*, it essentially is the highest point of a believer. Why? Because we bow and we prostrate in front of the biggest entity in the universe. You do not bow or put your head in front of anybody else, no other human being; you just bow your head in front

of Allah (swt). He's the biggest and that is why you are alleviated, you are bowing in front of the biggest entity in this world or in the whole universe.

You must have heard of *Allama Iqbal*, the poet. He said, "The prophet's *mairaj* has taught me that heaven lies within the bounds of human reach". That means by establishing *salah* you can achieve heaven *inshaAllah*.

Slide 16:

Now what is establishing *salah*? Is that equivalent to saying our *namaz* five times a day? Saying our *namaz* five times a day is not establishing *salah*. We discussed last time that saying your *namaz* is just the physical action and you say 'as *salamualaikum warahmatullah*' and you go back into your life. That is not establishing *salah*. Establishing *salah* is that Allah (swt) is the biggest, greatest entity and you follow His commandments in everything you do in your life that is 'aqeemu-*salatah*' that your *salah* is running your life. The system of *salah* is running your life and whatever you do. That is establishing *salah* and that *Insha'Allah* will take you to *jannah Insha'Allah*. Because when you establish *salah*, you follow Allah (swt) in everything you do. It just doesn't remain *namaz* five times a day. It becomes something which is twenty-four hours a day.

Slide 17:

Now *salah* is a distinguishing factor between 'kufr and imaan', 'belief and disbelief' this is the difference between black and white there are no gray areas... either you pray or you don't pray.

Slide 18:

Jabir (ra) narrated that the prophet (pbuh) said, "Between a person and disbelief (*kufr*) there stands his neglecting of the prayer" [Muslim]

Now based on this *hadith* many scholars have said that if you're not praying you're a *kafir* if you're not praying regularly, if you're not saying all your *salah* regularly you are a *kafir* you're not a *Muslim*. You're out of the boundaries of Islam and yet we leave our prayers very easily, sometimes we're busy, sometimes we go to our friends house and we forget over there or we're busy reading a book or sitting on the computer or we're just simply lazy! Sometimes in winter we just don't feel like getting out of the bed for *fajr*. The explanation is very simple; we just don't take our *namaz* as seriously as this *hadith*. Look at this.

Slide 19:

Abdullah bin Shaqiq narrated: [Tirmidhi and al-Hakim]

"The companions of *Muhammad* (pbuh) did not consider the abandonment of any act with the exception of prayer as being disbelief". Nothing! Lying, backbiting all these are big sins but they are not equivalent to *kufr* whereas leaving prayers is.

Slide 20:

You hear people on the TV. In interviews of important people they say, “No we don’t pray regularly, this is our personal thing you can do whatever you want, I pray when I want to pray”. Have you heard such statements? They’re in the papers or on the TV all the time. You pray when you want to pray, you pray when you feel like praying and look at this...that if you’re not praying you are a *kafir*, you’re out of bounds of Islam!

But this does not mean that we go home and we see somebody not praying and say, “You are a *kafir*, you also, I’m also a *kafir*, that friend of mine is also a *kafir*. Are we supposed to do that? No! That’s not our job, this *hadith* is there to remind us what we are supposed to do... that we are supposed to pray and we are supposed to tell the people around us by example. Especially when somebody’s dependent on you, like for us mothers, we are responsible for our kids. We have to tell them to pray, right. But we are not going to tell everyone that “You are a *kafir* because you don’t pray.” and you’re a *kafir* and you’re a *kafir*” you can’t do that. You can’t go around telling people that they’re *kafirs*.

Slide 21:

Salah is our peg. What is the purpose of a peg? To hold something in place. Last time when we asked what prayer is somebody said that prayer is the pillar of Islam. So here is that *hadith*.

Slide 22:

Abdullah bin Omar (ra) narrated:

“The prophet (pbuh) said “The foundation of Islam rests on five pillars:

-To bear witness to the fact that there’s no God except Allah and Muhammad (pbuh) is His servant and messenger”.

This is the first *Kalima* لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

If anybody reverts or becomes a Muslim he has to say this *shahadah*. That is the first pillar of Islam.

-“Then to offer salah regularly”. Not when you feel like it, not twice a year or on *Eid* days not on a weekly basis on Fridays but regularly.

- “Then you have to pay *zakat*”

-| “You have to fast” and

- “You have to do *hajj*”. [Bukhari and Muslim]

Slide 23:

These are the five pillars of *Islam*. Now why do you think *RasulAllah* (pbuh) used the words pillars? Can anybody tell me?

Student: Because it's like foundation.

Yes! Pillars hold the whole building together, right. If these pillars were not there what would happen to the roof?

Students: Collapse.

It would collapse on our heads it wouldn't be there. All the pillars the four pillars are holding it. The purpose of the pillar is to hold the building in its place. Have you ever seen a building being constructed? On your way you must have seen this new building under construction. Did you see how they were digging really really deep? Why? Since they're making a huge building they have to make the pillars go really deep down for the building to be strong, to be stable. So the pillars that you see on the ground are just the top portion whereas the major portion is actually under the ground which is holding the building together.

Slides 24- 27:

That is the purpose of a peg, it has a part of it above the surface but most of it is underground and that is its purpose, to stabilize whatever it's holding. Have you seen the mountains? What you see is only a small portion; the major portion is under the ground. In (Surah An Naba' 78: Verse6-7) Allah (swt) says,

“Have We not made the earth as a bed and the mountains as pegs?”

Because if the mountains were not holding the earth what would happen? What would happen if the mountains were not there and it was just a flat piece of earth? The earth's plates would be moving and we would not be able to stand on it. We would not be able to walk. Actually the mountains are holding it in its place and that is why we are able to move from one place to another.

Slides 28- 29:

In (Surah An Nahl 16: Verse 15) Allah (swt) mentions that,

“.. and He has affixed into the earth mountains standing firm lest it should shake with you”.

So that we don't shake, if the mountains weren't there the earth would be shaking and we would not be able to do anything, alright? So this is the function of the mountains, pillars have the same function they hold the building in place. This is an iceberg, a glacier. Do you think it's big? No? Where is the big portion? It's right underneath. You must have seen the movie 'Titanic'? It gets

hit by an iceberg, this is what it hit. The bigger portion is actually underneath. It's just holding it in its place and we think that is big.

Student: Why isn't it sinking?

The same reason why a boat doesn't sink? Physics, 'Archimedes principle' it's about water displacement .Allah (swt) has created all these laws of physics as well!

Slides 30- 31:

Now what about tents? You hold tents in their place by fixing them or nailing them or pegging them, right? If you don't put peg on one side what is going to happen? The tent is going to fly off. Right? So basically pegs hold it in place, you nail things in place to keep them fixed.

Slides 32- 35:

Now what is this? A clothes peg, right? We all have it in our house it comes in different colours. What is its purpose?

Students: To hold the clothes.

Yes, to hold our washed wet clothes in place to dry them, why? If we don't put pegs on them what is going to happen?

Students: They will fly off.

They'll fly off and become dirty so the whole purpose is going to fail, the clothes which you had washed are not going to stay clean if you don't put pegs on them. That is the purpose of pegs.

Slides 36- 46:

Now let's look at our lives, our pace of life is very fast like everything is happening very fast. Fast and furious. The city life is very very fast paced, you're 'on the go' all the time, you want fast food, instant coffee, instant noodles, you know we don't have time for slow cooking and brewing...no! Everything has to be done quickly, why? Because we are just on the run all the time we are busy all the time. What are you guys busy in these days? What do you do? School? Tuition? Friends? Games? Computer? Perceptions?

You name it. It's there. You know, just 'on the go' all the time. One day starts it ends, another day starts and you know it just keeps on rolling and you don't even realize what is happening but you need to stop and you need to check if you have your pegs or are you just flying away with the flow? Is anything holding you in place? Do you know where you are going? Do you know your destination? Or are you just flying away with the wind? Peg less like peg less laundry. Do you know your goals? You're busy with your friends or you're busy with studies or whatever you're doing, there are just so many gadgets that you don't know which one to use so you have

all of them! Computer, phone, iPad, iPod you name it... there are just too many things. So you have everything, but you don't have time... still you want everything. So are you just flying away like peg less laundry? Or do you know what is happening in your life? Do you know where are you heading? What is your destination?

Slides 47- 52 :

Students: *Jannah*.

Good, here in 'Perceptions' it's *Jannah* but what about in your life? Do you remember that? Is it your goal in the everyday life or you just forget about it whenever you're busy? So that is why you need your pegs during the day, you need you *Fajr* your *Zuhr* your '*Asr*, your *Maghrib* and then your '*Isha*... why? Because your *salah* is your connection with Allah (swt) it keeps you in place. It keeps you focused. It charges your battery otherwise you just go with the flow and you forget what is happening. It keeps you focused. Focused on your destination, it reminds you that there are only two places to go after this. Once you die there is no third place. There are only two places: heaven or hell. It reminds us of the choices that we have to make every day. *Salah!* That's what *salah* does! It keeps us in place, it keeps us intact, it reminds us of the choices that we have to make, and it reminds us of our ultimate destination because there is no third door. There is either heaven or there is hell and may Allah (swt) save all of us from hell (*ameen*).

So basically, the peg of *salah* what does it do? It stabilizes first your day and then your week, your month, your year, your life.... you know it just stabilizes everything! And you remain focused otherwise you're just like peg less laundry flying away with the flow like cattle in a herd. Do you know that the animals they just move with the flow, they don't know where they are going and that is the difference. We are not animals we have to know our destination.

Slide 53:

Let's get our pegs sorted. Let's look at this *du'a*:

(Surah Ibrahim 14: Verse 40)

"Oh my Lord make me one who performs *salah* and also from my off springs our Lord and accept my invocation"

I'm sure you know all of this *du'a* I think we discussed it last time also:

"*Rabbija'alni muqeemassalati wa minzurriyyati rabbana wataqabbal dua rabbanaghfirli waliwalidayya walil mumineena yauma yaqumul hisab*".

رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْحِسَابُ

If you don't know it then learn it, this is (Surah Ibrahim 14: Verse-40).

Rabbi ja'alni – O' Allah make me

Muqemassalati - One who establishes *salah*

Wa minzurriyyati– {*zurriyya* is offspring, children} make my children also ones who pray

rabbana wataqabbal dua- O' Lord accept my prayers

rabbanaghfirli-forgive me

waliwalidayya-and my parents

walil mumineena-all the *momins* all the people

yauma yaqumul hisab- on the day of judgment.

Now this is the way of *Sunnah* of how to pray. Generally speaking, who do mothers pray for first? Their children, right? But that's not the *Sunnah*, RasulAllah (pbuh) taught us that first we have to pray for ourselves, if I'm here I'll be able to guide my children so I have to pray for guidance for myself first, right? *Rabbija'alni* that is why I have prayed for myself first, that's how we are being guided here... that make *du'a* for yourself first and then for your immediate family. For me, my immediate family are my parents, my children, my siblings. For you, your parents and your brothers and sisters so you pray for yourself first then you pray for your siblings and your parents and then you pray for your friends and for all the people around you, for all the Muslims... that all of us are forgiven on the Day of Judgment. That is the *Sunnah* whenever you start praying, pray for yourselves first make *du'a* for yourself first and then pray for your parents, your children, your siblings, the people around you, your friends, everybody!

Wherever you are, *wherever* you are... you have to say your prayers! Somebody asked me in another class, "Do you have to pray on your vacation?" Tell me, do you have to pray on your vacation?

Student: Sometimes.

What do you mean by sometimes? That you have to pray some times and you don't have to pray other times?

Student: You can shorten it.

Yes, you can shorten the *salah* i.e. the number of *rakahs* are shortened.

Initially, I forgot to mention that when RasulAllah (pbuh) was given the gift of *salah* people only had to pray two *rakahs* in the morning and two *rakahs* in the evening but now we can't do that, we can't follow that because we have to follow the final rule now. But we have to pray on vacations yes. If it's more than two weeks you have to pray full and if it's less than two weeks we can shorten it. You can shorten the *salah* but you still have to pray, right.

I asked you if you have to pray when you are on vacation, the answer is yes, you cannot forget about your prayers if you are on vacation or wherever you are you have to pray!

You have to pray even if you're sick. Whatever the situation, you have to pray! If you're all praying five times then *Alhamdulillah* but if you are slipping somewhere then you need to think about this. This is just between you and Allah (swt) it has nothing to do with anybody else but you have to make a promise to yourself that you're going to try and pray five times.

Slides 54- 62:

The last thing we would want to be considered as is a disbeliever. Being a Muslim is our identity, right? You know people have reverted to Islam just by seeing other people pray. In the 'West' they've seen people pray in a park or somewhere and just by looking at the movements and the synchronized way people move - especially in *jama'at* - people have accepted Islam. They've been fascinated by the way we pray and we don't realize it!

We don't realize the importance and significance of *salah* so wherever you are, for men it is better to pray in *jama'at*. Wherever you are, in your house or 'on the go' somewhere like... look at him... he probably doesn't have a proper place to pray so he's just praying on the ground with stones on it, probably not the most comfortable place to pray but its *salah* time and he has to do it.

Student: Can you pray with shoes on?

Yes you can pray with your shoes on.¹ Wherever you are you have to pray if it is time for *namaz*. So what are we going to do now? *Ramadan* is the best time. If you are lacking somewhere or you feel your *namaz* is not up to the standard, your *salah* is not up to the standard this is the best time to do it! Why is this the best time to do it? Why is it easy in *Ramadan*?

Student: Allah forgives.

He forgives at other times also, if you ask from deep down, the bottom of your heart *Insha'Allah Insha'Allah* Allah (swt) will forgive. Why is it easy in *Ramadan*?

Student: Because the Satan is locked up.

¹ "Be different from the Jews, pray wearing your slippers or shoes." (Abu Dawood). But the condition is that the shoes must be *taahir* (pure, clean). If there is any *najaasah* (impurity) or dirt on the shoes, then one should not pray wearing them or enter the mosque in shoes, unless he is sure that they are free of impurity or dirt.

Yes! Yes because Satan is locked so it is easier to do good deeds.

Student: But if Satan is locked up then why do we still do the same things?

That's exactly what I was going to ask, that if the Satan is locked up then why do we still see bad things?

Student: He has corrupted us and then we've learned it from him and we do it ourselves even when he is not there he has taught us to do bad things.

We are really his good and obedient students "We say it again and again" yes, what she's saying is absolutely right. He has taught us so well that even if he is not there we follow him; he's a part of us. He's right next to me right now even though he's locked up but he's still a part of me because I'm such a good student that I've learned all the bad things from him so I don't need him to guide me now...I'm doing it myself. See if you follow the *shaitan* all year round (and we do that in a lot of things without even realizing it at times). What happens is that he becomes a part of us and when he's not there whatever he has taught us... has become our habit, right. So we just do them without even realizing that we are following him and we say that, "You know, he is not there, what is happening?" The problem is that my soul has become such a good student of his that I'm just doing whatever he has asked me to do, right.

But *Insha'Allah* if we try and if we pray and make *du'a*, anything can happen! *Du'a* can change anything... it can change the time of your death also! You know that *du'a* is the only change thing which can change the time of your death, so if you make *du'a* from the bottom of your heart *Insha'Allah Insha'Allah* Allah (swt) will surely listen to you *InshAllah!* But you have to take the first step and then Allah (swt) is just going to grab you *Insha'Allah!*

Du'a for end of a gathering) *SubhanaRabbikaRabbulIzzati 'ammayasifunwasalamun 'alalmursaleen, walhamdulillahiRabbil 'alameen*

(Parting salutation to students) *AssalamalaikumwarahmatullahiwaBarakatuh*