

Importance of Juma'ah

By Sheikh Amin Abu Anas

The Friday prayer (Juma'ah Salat) is very important for each Muslim, male and female, because it is their weekly Salat and it is a blessing that Allah bestowed on the people of Muhammad (SAW).

The chosen one (SAW) has said, "Whoever makes an ablution, and makes it well, then comes to the Masjid on Friday for Juma'ah, and listens to the Khutbah attentively and keeps silent, his minor sins between that Friday and the following Friday will be forgiven, with the addition of three more days. But, he who touches pebbles (during the Salat or Khutbah) has caused an interruption." It is clear from this that one should listen attentively to the Imam during the Khutbah, and not play with anything, such as a watch, prayer beads, or anything else, or you will lose your reward.

The Prophet (SAW) said, "The five daily prayers, and praying one Friday prayer and the next, and the fasting of Ramadan, result in the expiation of the sins committed between them, so long as major sins are avoided." This does not, however, mean that the Muslims should come to the Masjid only on Fridays, neglecting it at other times. This does not mean either that Muslims should indulge in sins at will, thinking that they will be forgiven anyhow.

"If a man takes a bath on Friday, or purifies himself as much as he can with ablution, oils his hair, applies whatever perfume (or oil) available in his house, sets forth to the Masjid, and does not separate two people (to make space for himself), offers Salat that is prescribed for him, remains silent when the Imam speaks, his minor sins between that Friday and the following will be forgiven," the Prophet (SAW) has said. It is Sunnah to oil the head and beard, put on perfume, and pay attention during the Khutbah.

The Prophet (saw) also said, "The best day on which the sun has ever risen is Friday; on that day, Adam was created, he was admitted to Paradise, and he was expelled from there." He has also said, "Among the best of your days is Friday. On that day, invoke blessings on me frequently, for your blessings are presented to me." Rasul-Allah (SAW) said, "The Sun does not rise nor set on a day that is better than Friday, and there is no creature that is not scared of Friday except for humans and jinns." They are afraid because Judgment Day will be on a Friday.

Narrated Abu Hurairah: The Prophet (SAW) said, "There is a time on Friday at which a Muslim, while he is offering Salat and is supplicating, will be granted whatever he is

asking for.” He indicated with his hands that this period of time is very short, the duration kept unknown to induce Muslims to worship throughout Friday.

In a Hadith, it is said that “On Fridays, angels will be sent to the doors of the Masjid to write down the names of the people who enter the Masjid. When the Imam goes to the pulpit, they close their books, put down their pens, and start asking each other: ‘what has kept so and so from coming to Juma’ah?’ They then pray: ‘Oh Allah, if so and so is misguided, please guide him, and if he is sick, please cure him, and if he is needy, please enrich him.’” This should encourage us to go early to the Masjid on Friday for salat.

All of us go early to the marketplace to trade. Why then do we not do the same with Friday prayers, which benefit our salvation and help us to attain paradise? Abu Talib Al-Macci said, “The first innovation (bida’ah) in Islam was not going early to the Masjid on Fridays.” Ghazali adds, “Why do Muslims not feel ashamed that the Jews and Christians go early for worship on Saturdays and Sundays?”

The Prophet (SAW) said, “If you go to Juma’ah salat and try to sit close to the Imam, then you would be of the people of paradise. If you come late for Juma’ah, then you will be delayed from entering paradise, although you are from its dwellers.” He forbade people from going over worshippers’ shoulders when trying to reach the front rows; and forbade us from interrupting prayers in any form. He also asked us to sit in the front-most rows to show the intention of sincerity, the need for knowledge, and show humility for Allah who forbade us from sitting in the back, because its usually meant for boys and women.

Rasul-Allah (SAW) forbade Muslims from talking to each other during the Khutbah. If your neighbor is talking, you are not even allowed to him ask to keep quiet. Bukhari narrates: “If you ask your friend to ‘listen’ to the Khutbah, you will lose your reward.”

Not taking part in Juma’ah salat without a legitimate excuse is a sign of hypocrisy. Allah will harden the person’s heart and will close it from all goodness, and then it will not have any mercy and will not accept any guidance. Allah’s Messenger (SAW) said, “I wanted to leave a man in my place to lead Juma’ah salat, so I can go and burn down the houses of those who did not come for salat, because this would be easier on them than hellfire.”

It is very rewarding to read Surat Al-Kahf on Fridays before the salat. The Prophet (SAW) said, “Whoever reads Surat Al-Kahf on Fridays, there will be a bright light to shine for him between the two Fridays.”