

CLASS 10

KHUSHOO

Praise be to Allaah, Lord of the Worlds, Who has said in His book (interpretation of the meaning), “...*and stand before Allaah with obedience*” [al-Baqarah 2:238] and has said concerning the prayer (interpretation of the meaning): “... *and truly it is extremely heavy and hard except for al-khaashi’oon...*” [al-Baqarah 2:45]; and peace and blessings be upon the leader of the pious, the chief of al-khaashi’oon, Muhammad the Messenger of Allaah, and on all his family and companions.

Salaah is the greatest of the practical pillars of Islam, and khushoo’ in prayer is required by sharee’ah. When Iblees, the enemy of Allaah, vowed to mislead and tempt the sons of Adam and said “*Then I will come to them from before them and behind them, from their right and from their left...*” [al-A’raaf 7:17, interpretation of the meaning], one of his most significant plots became to divert people from salaah by all possible means and to whisper to them during their prayer so as to deprive them of the joy of this worship and cause them to lose the reward for it. As khushoo’ will be the first thing to disappear from the earth, and we are living in the last times, the words of Hudhayfah (may Allaah be pleased with him) are particularly pertinent to us: “*The first thing of your religion that you will lose is khushoo’, and the last thing that you will lose of your religion is salaah. There may be a person praying who has no goodness in him, and soon you will enter the mosque and not find anyone who has khushoo’.*” (al-Madaarij, 1/521).

Because of what every person knows about himself, and because of the complaints that one hears from many people about *waswaas* (insinuating thoughts from Shaytaan) during the salaah and the loss of khushoo’, the need for some discussion of this matter is quite obvious. The following is a reminder to myself and to my Muslim brothers, and I ask Allaah to make it of benefit.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): “*Successful indeed are the believers, those who offer their salaah (prayers) with all solemnity and full submissiveness.*” [al-Mu’minoos 23:1-2] – i.e., fearing Allaah and in a calm manner. Khushoo’ means calmness, serenity, tranquility, dignity and humility. What makes a person have this khushoo’ is fear of Allaah and the sense that He is always watching. (Tafseer Ibn Katheer, Daar al-Sha’b edn., 6/414). Khushoo’ means that the heart stands before the Lord in humility and submission. (al-Madaarij, 1/520).

Concealment of Khushoo’

Hudhayfah (may Allaah be pleased with him) used to say: “*Beware of the khushoo’ of hypocrisy.*” He was asked, “What is the khushoo’ of hypocrisy?” He said, “*When the body shows khushoo’ but there is no khushoo’ in the heart.*” Fudayl ibn ‘Ayaad said: “It was disliked for a man to show more khushoo’ than he had in his heart.” One of them saw a man showing khushoo’ in his shoulders and body, and said, “O So and so, khushoo’ is here” – and he pointed to his chest, “not here” – and he pointed to his shoulders. (al-Madaarij, 1/521).

Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allaah have mercy on him) said, explaining the difference between the khushoo’ of true faith and the khushoo’ of hypocrisy: “The khushoo’ of true faith is when the heart feels aware

and humble before the greatness and glory of Allaah, and is filled with awe, fear and shyness, so that the heart is utterly humbled before Allaah and broken, as it were, with fear, shyness, love and the recognition of the blessings of Allaah and its own sins.

“Khushoo’ in prayer happens when a person empties his heart for it (prayer), and focuses on it to the exclusion of all else, and prefers it to everything else. Only then does he find comfort and joy in it, as the Prophet ﷺ said: ‘... *and my joy has been made in salaah.*’” (Tafseer Ibn Katheer).

VIRTUES OF KHUSHOO’

The Prophet ﷺ said: “*Five prayers which Allaah has made obligatory. Whoever does wudoo’ properly for them, prays them on time, does rukoo’ properly and has perfect khushoo’, it is a promise from Allaah that he will be forgiven, but whoever does not do this, has no such promise – if Allaah wishes, He will forgive him, and if He wishes, He will punish him.*” (Abu Dawood, Saheeh).

The Prophet ﷺ also said: “*Whoever does wudoo’ and does it well, then prays two rak’ahs focusing on them completely [according to another report: and does not think of anything else], will be forgiven all his previous sins [according to another report: will be guaranteed Paradise].*” (Bukhari).

The reward recorded is in proportion to the degree of khushoo’, as the Prophet ﷺ said: “*A slave may pray and have nothing recorded for it except a tenth of it, or a ninth, or an eighth, or a seventh, or a sixth, or a fifth, or a quarter, or a third, or a half.*” (Reported by Imaam Ahmad; Saheeh).

When we look at the things that help us to have khushoo’ in prayer, we find that they may be divided into two types: things that help you to have and to strengthen khushoo’, and warding off the things that reduce and weaken khushoo’.

Ihsaan means ‘that you worship Allaah as if you see Him, and if you cannot see Him, He can see you.’ The more the slave tastes the sweetness of salaah, the more attracted he will be to it, and this has to do with the strength of his eemaan.

The means of strengthening eemaan are many, and this is why the Prophet ﷺ used to say, ‘*In your world, women and perfume have been made dear to me, and my joy is in prayer.*’ According to another hadeeth, he said, ‘Let us find comfort in prayer, O Bilaal’ – he did not say, ‘Let us get it over and done with.’

With regard to the second, weakness of distractions:

This means striving to push away all distractions that make you think of something other than the prayer itself, and warding off thoughts that keep you mind off the purpose of the prayer. This is something which differs from one person to another, because the extent of waswaas has to do with the extent of one’s doubts and desires and the heart’s focus and dependence on what it loves, and its efforts to avoid what it dislikes.” (Majmoo’ al-Fataawa, 22/606-607)

The means of developing Khushoo'

This can be achieved in several ways, such as the following:

Preparing oneself for prayer properly

- By repeating the words of the adhaan after the muezzin; By pronouncing the du'aa' to be recited after the adhaan: *"Allaahummah Rabba haadhihi'l-da'wati'l-taammah wa'-salaati'l-qaa'imah, aati Muhammadan il-waseelata wa'l-fadeelah, wab'ath-hu'l-maqaam al-mahmood alladhi wa'adtah* (O Allaah, Lord of this perfect call and the prayer to be offered, grant Muhammad the privilege (of interceding) and also the eminence, and resurrect him to the praised position that You have promised)";
- Reciting du'aa' between the adhaan and the iqamah;
- Doing wudoo' properly, saying Bismillaah before it and making dhikr and saying the du'aa' after it,
- Using siwaak to cleanse and perfume the mouth that is going to recite Qur'aan in a short while, because the Prophet ﷺ said: *"Purify your mouths for the Qur'aan."* (Reported by al-Bazaar. Al-Albaani said: its isnaad is jayyid. *Al-Saheehah*, 1213);
- Wearing one's best and cleanest clothes, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): *"O Children of Adam! Take your adornment (by wearing your clean clothes) while praying..."* [al-A'raaf 7:31]. Allaah is most deserving of seeing us "take our adornment" for Him. Clean, pleasant smelling clothes are also more comfortable and relaxing, unlike clothes for sleeping or working in.
- We should also prepare ourselves by covering our 'awrah properly, purifying the spot where we are going to pray, getting ready early and waiting for the prayer, and making the rows straight and solid, without any gaps, because the shayaateen come in through the gaps in the rows.

Moving at a measured pace during prayer

- The Prophet ﷺ *used to move at a measured pace during salaah, allowing every bone to return to its place.* (Its isnaad is classed as saheeh in *Sifat al-Salaat*, p. 134, 11th edn. Ibn Khuzaymah also classed it as saheeh as mentioned by al-Haafiz in *al-Fath*, 2/308).
- Abu Qutaadah (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: "The Prophet ﷺ said: *'The worst type of thief is the one who steals from his prayer.'* He said, 'O Messenger of Allaah, how can a person steal from his prayer?' He said, *'By not doing rukoo' and sujood properly.'*" (Reported by Ahmad and al-Haakim, 1/229; *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 997).

Remembering death whilst praying

- The Prophet ﷺ said: *“Remember death in your prayer, for the man who remembers death during his prayer is bound to pray properly, and pray the prayer of a man who does not think that he will pray any other prayer.”* (al-Silsilat al-Saheehah by al-Albaani, 1421. It was reported from al-Suyooti that al-Haafiz ibn Hajar classed this hadeeth as hasan).
- The Prophet ﷺ also advised Abu Ayyoob (may Allaah be pleased with him): *“When you stand up to pray, pray a farewell prayer.”* (Reported by Ahmad, 5/412; Saheeh al-Jaami’, no. 742) – meaning the prayer of one who thinks that he will not pray another prayer.

Thinking about the what is being recited during the prayer and interacting with them

- The Qur’aan was revealed to be pondered over. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): *“(This is) a Book (the Qur’aan) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its Verses, and that men of understanding may remember.”* [Saad 38:29]. No one can ponder over its verses unless he has some knowledge of the meaning of what he is reciting, so that he can think about it and be moved to tears by it.
- One example of interacting with the aayaat is to say “Aameen” after al-Faatihah, which brings a great reward. The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: *“If the imaam says ‘Aameen,’ then say ‘Aameen’ too, for whoever says ‘Aameen’ and it coincides with the ‘Aameen’ of the angels, will have all his previous sins forgiven.”* (Reported by al-Bukhaari, no. 747).
- Another example is responding to the imaam when he says *“Sami’ Allaahu liman hamidah* (Allaah hears the one who praises Him)”; the members of the congregation should say, *“Rabbanaa wa laka’l-hamd* (O our Lord, to You be praise).” This also brings a great reward. Rifaa’ah ibn Raafi’ al-Zirqi said: “One day we were praying behind the Prophet ﷺ. When he raised his head, he said, *‘Sami’ Allaahu liman hamidah,’* and a man behind him said, *‘Rabbanaa wa laka’l-hamdu hamdan katheeran tayyiban mubaarakan fih* (Our Lord to You be much good and blessed praise).’ When he finished, he said, *‘Who is the one who spoke?’* The man said, ‘Me.’ He said, *‘I saw thirty-odd angels rushing to see who would write it down first.’*” (Bukhaari).

Pausing at the end of each aayah

This is more helpful in understanding and thinking about the meaning, and it is the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ, as Umm Salamah (may Allaah be pleased with her) described how the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ would recite, *“Bismillah il-Rahmaan il-Raheem”*, and according to one report, he would pause, then say, *“Al-hamdu Lillaahi Rabbi’l-‘Aalameen, al-Rahmaan, al-Raheem.”* Then according to one report, he would pause, then say, *“Maaliki yawm il-deen,”* and he would break up his recitation aayah by aayah. (Abu Dawood; classed as saheeh).

Reciting in slow, rhythmic tones (tarteel) and making one's voice beautiful when reciting

As Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): "... *and recite the Qur'aan (aloud) in a slow, (pleasant tone and) style.*" [al-Muzzammil 73:4]. The recitation of the Prophet ﷺ was clear, with each letter pronounced distinctly." (Musnad Ahmad, 6/294, with a saheeh isnaad. Sifat al-Salaah, p. 105).

The Prophet ﷺ *"would recite a soorah in such slow rhythmic tones that it would be longer than would seem possible."* (Reported by Muslim, no. 733).

Knowing that Allaah responds to prayers

This hadeeth was quoted in Class 9. This is a great and important hadeeth also known as "Hadeeth Qudsi No. 8". If everyone kept it in mind when he prays, he would attain immense khushoo' and al-Faatihah would have a great impact on him. How could it be otherwise, when he feels that his Lord is addressing him and giving him what he is asking for?

This "conversation" with Allaah must be respected and accorded its proper value. The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: *"When any one of you stands to pray, he is conversing with his Lord, so let him pay attention to how he speaks to Him."* (al-Haakim, al-Mustadrak, 1/236; Saheeh al-Jaami', 1538).

Praying with a barrier (sutrah) in front of one and praying close to it

This will restrict your field of vision, protect you from the Shaytaan and keep people from passing in front of you, which causes a distraction and reduces the reward of the prayer.

The Prophet ﷺ said: *"When any one of you prays, let him pray facing a sutrah, and let him get close to it."* (Reported by Abu Dawood, no. 695, 1/446; Saheeh al-Jaami', no. 651).

Looking at the place of prostration

It was reported from 'Aa'ishah that *"the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ used to pray with his head tilted forward and his gaze lowered, looking at the ground."* (Reported by al-Haakim, 1/479).

When a person sits for Tashahhud, he should look at the finger with which he is pointing as he is moving it, as it was reported that the Prophet ﷺ *"pointed with his index finger and did not allow his gaze to wander beyond it."* (Reported by Ahmad, 4/3, and by Abu Dawood, no. 990)

Note

The Sunnah is not to close one's eyes, unless it is necessary to do so in order to avoid something that may adversely affect one's khushoo'.

Raising/Moving the index finger

This is something which is neglected by many worshippers because they are ignorant of its great benefits and its effect on khushoo'.

The Prophet ﷺ said: *"It is more powerful against the Shaytaan than iron"* (reported by Imaam Ahmad, 2/119), i.e., pointing with the forefinger during the Tashahhud is more painful to the Shaytaan than being beaten with a rod of iron, because it reminds the slave of the Unity of Allaah and to be sincere in his worship of Him alone, and this is what the Shaytaan hates most; we seek refuge with Allaah from him."

The Sunnah in pointing with the forefinger is that it should remain raised or moving, pointing towards the qiblah, throughout the Tashahhud.

Varying the soorahs, aayaat, adhkaar and du'aa's recited in prayer

This makes the worshipper feel that he is encountering new meanings and moving between different topics mentioned in the aayaat and adhkaar. This is what a person misses out on if he only memorizes a few soorahs (especially the short ones) and adhkaar. Varying what one recites is the Sunnah and is more conducive to khushoo'.

He used to vary the adhkaar he recited in rukoo', when standing upright from rukoo', in sujood, when sitting between the two prostrations.

So the worshipper may use one form one time and another at another time, and so on.

Striving to offer du'aa' at the appropriate times during the prayer, especially in sujood

- There is no doubt that talking to Allaah, humbling oneself before Him, asking things from Him and earnestly seeking His help, all help to strengthen the slave's ties to his Lord and increase his khushoo'. Du'aa' is an act of worship, and we are commanded to make du'aa'. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): "... *call upon Him in humility and in secret...*" [al-An'aam 6:63]. The Prophet ﷺ said: *"Whoever does not call on Allaah, Allaah will be angry with him."* (Reported by al-Tirmidhi).
- It was reported that the Prophet ﷺ used to make du'aa' at specific places in the prayer, i.e., in sujood, between the two prostrations and after the Tashahhud. The greatest of these is in sujood, because the Prophet ﷺ said, *"The closest that the slave can be to his Lord is when he is prostrating, so increase your du'aa' [at that time]."* (Reported by Muslim).

SEEKING REFUGE WITH ALLAAH FROM THE SHAYTAAN

- The Shaytaan is our enemy, and one of the aspects of his enmity is his whispering insinuating thoughts (waswaas) to the worshipper at prayer so as to take away his khushoo' and confuse him in his prayer.
- Waswaas is a problem that befalls everyone who turns to Allaah with dhikr and other kinds of worship; it is inevitable, so one has to stand firm and be patient, and persist in the dhikr or salaah, and not give up. His sticking to it will ward off the Shaytaan's plots from himself. "... *Ever feeble indeed is the plot of Shaytaan.*" [al-Nisaa' 4:76 – interpretation of the meaning].
- Abu'l-'Aas (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported that he said, "O Messenger of Allaah, the Shaytaan interrupts me when I pray, and I get confused in my recitation." The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said, "*That is a shaytaan whose name is Khanzab. If you sense his presence, seek refuge with Allaah from him, and spit [dry spitting] towards your left three times.*" [Abu'l-'Aas] said: "I did that and Allaah took him away from me." (Reported by Muslim, no. 2203)
- The Prophet ﷺ also told us about another of the Shaytaan's tricks and how to deal with it. He said, "*When any one of you gets up to pray, the Shaytaan comes and confuses him – i.e., mixes up his prayer and creates doubts in his mind – so that he does not know how many [rak'ahs] he has prayed. If any one of you experiences that, he should do two prostrations whilst he is sitting.*" (Reported by al-Bukhaari, Kitaab al-Sahw, Baab al-Sahw fi'l-Fard wa'l-Tatawwu').
- Another of the Shaytaan's tricks was described as follows. The Prophet ﷺ said: "*If any one of you is praying and feels some movement in his back passage, and is uncertain as to whether he has broken his wudoo' or not, he should not end his prayer unless he hears a sound or smells an odour.*"

Warding off distractions and things that adversely affect Khushoo'

Removing anything that may distract the worshipper

Anas (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: " 'Aa'ishah had a decorated, colourful curtain which she used to cover the side of her house. The Prophet ﷺ said to her, '*Take it away from me, because its decorations keep distracting me when I pray.*'" (Reported by al-Bukhaari, Fath al-Baari, 10/391).

This also includes avoiding praying in places where people pass through, or where there is a lot of noise and voices of people talking, or where they are engaging in conversations, arguments etc., or where there are visual distractions.

Not praying in a garment that has decorations, writing, bright colours or pictures

'Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) said: "The Prophet ﷺ stood up to pray wearing a checkered shirt, and he looked at the patterns in it. When he had finished his prayer, he said, "Take this shirt to Abu Jaham ibn Hudhayfah and bring me an *anbajaani* (a garment with no decorations or checks), because it distracted me when I was praying." (Reports in *Saheeh Muslim*, no. 556, part 3/391).

It is better not to pray in a garment that has pictures on it, and we should be especially careful to avoid garments with pictures of animate beings, like many garments that are widely available nowadays.

Not praying when there is food prepared that one wants to eat

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: "*Do not pray when there is food prepared.*" (Reported by Muslim, no. 560).

If food has been prepared and served, or if it is offered, a person should eat first, because he will not be able to concentrate properly and have khushoo' if he leaves it and gets up to pray when he is wanting to eat. He should not even hasten to finish eating, because the Prophet ﷺ said: "*If the dinner is served and the time for prayer comes, eat dinner before praying Salaat al-Maghrib, and do not rush to finish your meal.*" (Agreed upon. Al-Bukhaari, Muslim, no. 557-559).

Not praying when one needs to answer the call of nature

No doubt one of the things that can prevent proper khushoo' is praying when one needs to go to the washroom. The Prophet ﷺ forbade *praying when one is suppressing the urge to urinate or defecate*. (Reported by Ibn Maajah).

Not praying behind someone who is talking (or sleeping)

The Prophet ﷺ forbade this; he said: "*Do not pray behind one who is sleeping or one who is talking.*" (Reported by Abu Dawood).

- because one who is talking will distract the worshipper with his talk, and one who is sleeping may expose something that will distract the worshipper but if there is no risk of that happening, then it is not makrooh to pray behind someone who is sleeping.

Not occupying oneself with smoothing the ground in front of one

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: *“Do not wipe (the ground) when you are praying, but if you have to, then do it only once.”* (Reported by Abu Dawood, no. 946; Saheeh al-Jaami’, no. 7452).

The reason for this prohibition is so as to maintain khushoo’, and so that a person will not make too many extra movements in prayer. If the place where one is going to prostrate needs to be smoothed, it is better to do this before starting to pray.

This also applies to wiping the forehead or nose when praying. The Prophet ﷺ used to prostrate in water and mud, which would leave traces on his forehead, but he did not bother to wipe it off every time he raised his head from sujood. It remained there because he was so deeply absorbed in his prayer and his khushoo’ was so strong that he took not notice of it.

Just as a worshipper should avoid anything that will distract him from his prayer, by the same token he/she should avoid disturbing others. This includes:

Not disturbing others with one’s recitation

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: *“All of you are speaking to your Lord, so do not disturb one another, and do not raise your voices above one another when reciting”* or he said, *“in prayer.”* (Reported by Abu Dawood, 2/83; Saheeh al-Jaami’, no. 752).

Not turning around during prayer

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: *“Allaah continues to turn towards His slave whilst he is praying, so long as he does not turn away, but if he turns away, [Allaah] turns away from him.”* (Abu Dawood)

Turning away during prayer is of two types:

- The turning away of the heart to something other than Allaah.
- The turning away of the eyes.

Both of them are not allowed, and are detrimental to the reward for the prayer. The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ was asked about turning away during prayer, and he said: *“It is something that Shaytaan steals from a person’s prayer.”* (Reported by al-Bukhaari).

Trying not to yawn when praying

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: *“If any one of you feels the urge to yawn during prayer, let him suppress it as much as he can, lest the Shaytaan enter...”* (Reported by Muslim, 4/2293). If the Shaytaan enters, he will be more able to disturb the worshipper’s khushoo’, in addition to laughing at him when he yawns.

Not putting one's hands on one's hips when praying

Abu Hurayrah said: "*The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ forbade putting the hands on the hips during prayer.*" (Reported by Abu Dawood).

Not resembling animals

Allaah has honoured the son of Adam and created him in the best way, so it is shameful for the son of Adam to resemble or imitate animals. We have been forbidden to resemble or imitate a number of postures or movements of animals when we pray, because that is contrary to khushoo' or because it is ugly and does not befit the worshipper who is praying. For example, it was reported that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ forbade three things in prayer: pecking like a crow, spreading one's forearms like a carnivore, or always praying in the same place like a camel keeping to its own territory. (Reported by Ahmad, 3/428). It was said that when a man always prays in the same place in the mosque, making it his own, it is like a camel keeping to its own territory. (*Al-Fath al-Rabaani*, 4/91). According to another report: "*He forbade me to peck like a cockerel, to sit like a dog or to turn like a fox.*" (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 2/311; *Saheeh al-Targheeb*, no. 556).

Conclusion

Khushoo' is a serious, major issue, which is impossible to achieve without the help of Allaah. (*Remember the 5 levels of Prayers covered in Class 1*) Being deprived of khushoo' is nothing short of a calamity. Hence the Prophet ﷺ used to say in his du'aa': "*Allaahumma innee a'oodhu bika min qalbin laa yakhsha'...* (O Allaah, I seek refuge with You from a heart that has no khushoo'...)." (Reported by al-Tirmidhi, 5/485, no. 3482; *Saheeh Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, 2769).

Those who have khushoo' are of varying levels or degrees. Khushoo' is an action of the heart that may increase and decrease. Some people have khushoo' as great as the clouds of the sky, and others may finish their prayer without having understood anything at all.

Please join our free Certificate courses (available online now, register and learn) "**Enjoy your Salah**", to study the spiritual side of Salah, learn about how to prepare for Salah, increase Khushoo and enjoy the Salah. <https://learn-islam.org/enjoy-your-salah>

Assignment on next page...

ASSIGNMENT

Please do this assignment before taking the test, there will be a question asked about the Assignment worth 10 marks in the test: -

- I. Implement atleast 3 Sunnah prayers in your lives (please try for night prayers or any of the ones that you were not practicing already), and also motivate atleast 3 friends or family members about it informing them of the respective rewards. – **(7 Marks)**
- II. Share the Course and its benefits with atleast 10 people - **(7 Marks)**
- III. Pray for the Ummah. – **(1 Mark)**

Please take this assignment as a motivation to start talking about Islam and make it part of your regular day (even if you do not know too much, spread the little that you know, as the Prophet ﷺ said “*Convey from me, even if it is one verse*”), most of us are too shy to talk about Islam but are ok to talk about anything under the sky.

May Allah make us all amongst those who call others to good by spreading the Deen of Allah and help us in this noble path.