

Clean and Clear

By Amina Shahid

A couple of weeks ago construction work caused dirt to mix with the local water supply, causing all of the water coming into my office building to have a brownish-orange tinge. The problem only lasted a couple of hours, and caused a minor inconvenience since the drinking water was unaffected. But I started reflecting on what a huge blessing it is to have clean, clear water at our fingertips (literally - just turn on the faucet). Seeing the discolored water, I was reminded of the rulings we learned in the Purification Act class, taught by Sheikh Abdul-Bary Yahya.

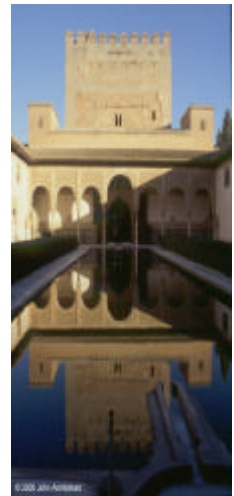
During the first part of the class, we discussed situations where *najasah* (an impurity) had fallen into a source of water. Sheikh AbdulBary described the use of ponds behind the masaajid in Cambodia. The ponds served multiple purposes, and halfway through the year the water would take on a different color and odor. Since the attributes had changed from their natural state, the water should not have been used to make wudu. I remember thinking that these rulings do not really apply to our lives since clean

water is always available, Al-humdulillah.

But having clean water is a luxury we are so accustomed to that often we forget it is not something everyone in the world has. One of my father's friends (who grew up in Karachi, Pakistan) was reminiscing about a wedding he attended in a small village. When someone brought him a glass of water, the water was brown. He decided to go thirsty until he got back home. But for people living in that village, the brown water was the cleanest water they had. According to UNICEF, 40% of the world's population lack basic sanitation facilities.

Verse 6 of Surah al-Maaidah begins with a description of how to make wudu and ends with, "...Allah does not want to place you in difficulty, but He wants to purify you, and to complete His favor to you that you may be thankful." Think about how good it feels to take a refreshing shower in the middle of a sweltering summer day. And how

convenient it is to get a thirst-quenching sip of water from the fountain as you're walking down the hallway. Now imagine how miserable you would feel not having access to water, or drinking unclean water. This comfort that we enjoy – is it not a compelling reason to worship Allah (Subhana wata'ala)? Let that thought sink in.



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Arkan As Salaah: Do You Really Know Them?

By: Anjum Khan

Br. Muhammad is back! And he's Vietnamese. This is how many of us at Thabt felt about dear Sheikh Abdullahbary. He had the same kind of enthusiastic teaching style, unforgettable stories of University of Madinah, and revival of "yeaaaaaaaaaaaaah" (although he had his own twist to it), as our previous ustadh who resides in Canada. However, Abdullahbary brought innovative new teaching techniques to Al-Maghrib: marching jumping jacks, counting in different languages, "Muslim Says" instead of "Simon Says," and etc. The Sheikh's stories of his dawah work in Cambodia were a riot. It was especially inspiring for me as an Asian to see someone so proficient in Arabic and the deen. May Allah bless him and his family for coming to Thabt and teaching us our religion.

"Purification Act" is a class all Muslims need to take. So many questions were answered that I've had for many years. How many takbirs do you make in your salah? Do you need to shake or keep your finger still during tashahud? What's up with making wudu and eating camel meat? And many more complex questions and issues are addressed in this class. One of the most important aspects of this class for me was to see the preservation of the Sunnah first hand. There is a hadith (proof) for every action or prohibition in this deen. I doubt any other religion can boast of such a conservation of knowledge. May Allah bless all those Muslims who took part in this preservation. We are greatly indebted to them.

"But no, by your Lord! They do not really believe unless they make you (O Prophet) a judge of all on which they disagree among themselves, and then find in their souls no resistance against your decision and give themselves to it in utter-surrender." (Sura Nisa: 65)

Truly the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was the teacher of all teachers.

For years now, I've been confused about what the arkan and sunnan of salah are. They seem to mix up in my head. I would often open my Fiqh-us-Sunnah and re-read the sections and forget once again. Alhamdulillah we learned this in our class and thought I would set the record straight insha-Allah, at least for myself and others who share my affliction.

Firstly, arkan (in this context) means the obligatory actions for your prayer to be accepted. Following acts are required:

1. **Intentions**- "Every action is based upon intentions" are the words of the Prophet. You don't need to make it our loud. Intentions take place in your heart.
2. **Saying the Opening Takbir and Beginning the Salah**- takbir is the opening of your salah. Takbir simply consists of standing straight, raising your hands and saying Allahu-Akbar.
3. **Standing During the Obligatory Prayers**- is a compulsory act if one is physically able to do so. If you are unable to, you may sit; however your reward is less than one who stands.
4. **Reciting al-Fatihah in every rakah of the prayer**- comes to us from many different ahadith and is the strongest opinion amongst the scholars. The hadith of Abu Hurairah states that the Prophet (saw) said, "Whoever prays a prayer and does not recite the opening chapter of the Quran has not prayed correctly."
5. **Ar-Ruku (Bowing Down)**- The position of ruku is established by bending down, putting your hands on your knees, and remaining in that position until one attains "calmness."
6. **Standing Erect After the Bowing**- without folding your hands back on your chest. It is said in a hadith the Prophet (pbuh) would raise his head from raku, and then stand straight until his bones returned to their places (Muslim).
7. **As-Sujud (prostration)**- along the same lines of ruku, one should perform the prostration until one finds "calmness." The hadith of Abu Qatadah relates

the Prophet (pbuh) saying "The worst of people are the thieves who steal part of the prayer. The thief does not complete his bowing and prostrations. He does not straighten his back during his bowing and prostration." (Ahmad) During the prostration seven parts of you body should be touching the ground: face, hands, knees, and feet.

8. **The Final Sitting and Recital of Tashahud**- this is the final position for the end of ones' salah. In a hadith it is stated, " when you raise your head from the last prostration and sit for the tashahud, you have completed your prayer."

9. **The Tasleem**- "One enters Salah with takbir and one exits with the salaam" ac-

ording to a hadith. There are several different varieties of giving salams at the end of prayer according to the Sunnah. However, saying salam at least once is the obligation.

Alhamdulillah the above were the arkan of salah. Everything else comes under the sunnah of the Prophet (saw). One is greatly rewarded for performing the salah the way of the Prophet, including the arkan and the sunnan acts. The difference is if one misses the arkan then one must repeat his salah. However, if one misses the sunnan he does not have to repeat his salah. One can complete sajud saho to compensate for the mistake.

May Allah bless our scholars, our teachers, and us, the aspiring students of knowledge.

Which of The Blessings of Allah Can We Deny?

Purification and Prayer Made Easy

Allah (ST) has said in the Quran in 5:6

“...Allah doth not wish to place you in a difficulty, but to make you clean, and to complete his favour to you, that ye may be grateful.”

This is an amazing Ayah, Allah first of all tells us that He does not want difficulty for us, secondly He wants us to be clean when we make the prayer, thirdly both of these are favors He has bestowed on us and lastly we should be grateful for his mercy on us. Allah has made purification and prayer easy for us in many situations. Concerning Purification, Allah has permitted us to perform Tayammum in the case we don't have water, Siwak or brushing the teeth was only recommended by the prophet (saw) and not obligatory before each Salah; and washing the feet in Wudu' is waived in the case one is wearing shoes or socks.

As for *Salah*, Allah has made it easy for us in the situations in which it could have been difficult; We are allowed to shorten our prayer when traveling, we are permitted to pray in sitting position if we are unable to stand and prayer can be performed anywhere on earth if we can not be at the Masjid.

Purification

Physical purification is a condition for performing Salah; Wudu and Ghusl are the two forms of physical purification required for Salah. Wudu and Ghusl normally require one to use water in order to purify oneself. You may ask yourself what happens if one can not find water? This is where Allah has allowed us to use the earth to purify ourselves performing Tayammum. Tayammum is the action in which a person strikes their hands on the ground and wipes the face and hands. It can be performed for purification instead of Wudu and/or Ghusl, and it is a valid form of purification as long as one can not find water. Tayammum can also be performed if the water available is extremely cold and would make the person sick or worsen their sickness.

The Prophet (saw) said “The earth is purification for the Muslim even if he used it for 10 years”. The Ummah before us didn't have this privilege; they could only use water to purify themselves. “Which of the Blessings from Allah Can We Deny?”

It is well known that the Prophet (saw) used to brush his teeth before each prayer, when he was asked if this was Waajib, the Prophet (saw) said “I would make it waajib but I am afraid that it will be a burden for my Ummah”---- “Which of the Blessings from Allah Can We Deny?”

Wiping over the Khuf/shoes/socks instead of washing the feet during the Wudu' is permissible and can be performed for three days and three nights by the one who is traveling, and one night and one day by the one who is not traveling. This wiping is valid as long as one is purifying from a minor impurity. “Which of the Blessings from Allah Can We Deny?”

Prayer

When a Muslim is traveling, it is permissible to shorten the prayer, and combine them. Anyone who has traveled knows how hard it can be to perform each prayer on time. “Which of the Blessings from Allah Can We Deny?”

If a Muslim is sick or unable to make salah standing and making ruku'/sujud, it is permissible to make the salah in any position we can. “Which of the Blessings from Allah Can We Deny?”

The Prophet (saw) said “ The earth was made pure for me except graveyards and bathrooms.” Therefore a Muslim can pray anywhere on earth except the graveyards and places where people use to relieve themselves.

“Which of the Blessings from Allah Can We Deny?”

A Gem I learned Today....

- When it gets dark remember the grave, when you are dry and thirsty and then even when you quench that thirst remember Jahanam. When you feel tired remember that those whose scales are light with deeds and heavy with sin will never sleep, it is continuous punishment. When you go home, don't stop your quest for Ilm and Jannah. When you hand hurts from writing knowledge remember that what you suffer in this life brings the opposite in the next.
- Food affects our Ibaadah, so we should be careful what we put into our body
- Just as Allah has removed the evil and harm from your body we want that Allah removes our sins which are evil and will harm us unless, by His mercy, they are removed.
- if you can't say bismillah (out loud or inside) before an action, you most likely shouldn't be doing it anyways
- Wudoo is the weapon of the Mu'min
- Time is the currency of the Muslim! Spend it on good deeds and pleasing Allah subhana wa ta'ala!



The Complete Al-Maghrib Experience

By: Sali Mahmoud

You open your eyes and look over to the alarm clock. You realize it is an hour before you are supposed to wake up. Today is the last day of the AlMaghrib seminar, and you have that bittersweet feeling in your heart as you wait in anticipation. It is sad to have the class come to an end: you will miss the wonderful atmosphere of Muslims from all walks of life coming together to learn for a few days. You will miss spending time with some of the most gifted scholars, and getting emanrushes on daily basis.

Well, don't despair!!! The AlMaghrib classes may last only two weekends, but the learning, the interactions with students and scholars, and the emanrushes can last until the next class. How? By frequenting the online forums, participating in study circles, and helping with the Qabeelah projects.

The forums are an excellent resource that many of our Qabeelah members are not taking advantage of. There you will find everything from poetry and short stories, to Qabeela quiz competitions and ideas for how to win your spouse's heart forever. You can find a book club, a dhikr-club to encourage daily remembrance of Allah, and much more. Most importantly the forums allow you to feel connected to the entire AlMaghrib community which now spans much of the U.S and even international communities that are desperately trying to get AlMaghrib to their locality.

The forums are a place where you can go to ask your AlMaghrib teachers and peers questions regarding your classes, studying, or to congratulate a recently engaged couple. There are many initiatives that take shape and get implemented through the forums. All this happens in a completely Islamic environment because the types of muslims that frequent AlMaghrib forums and the moderators take every measure to assure that Islamic etiquette is being followed.

Participating in study circles is another invaluable resource that is highly encouraged between AlMaghrib classes. Having a chance to meet your AlMaghrib peers outside class, exchange notes and discuss the material only serves to enhance your understanding of the material and offers numerous other rewards. You develop closer ties within the community, and through the discussions with other people, you get to experience different perspectives while gaining a deeper appreciation of the material and our beautiful religion. Ultimately what studying with partners will do is prepare you for the exams which are the greatest factor which decides whether or not our Qabeelah wins the liwa'a.

Another factor that the Qabeela is judged on, which also contributes immensely to the AlMaghrib experience is qabeela projects. The newsletter is one project that you can always look forward to as it is AlMaghrib policy that each Qabeela must produce a commemorative issue per class. There are other projects that are inspired by the materials offered in the classes or are thought up by individual Qabeelah members. For example, Qabeelat Assad in Montreal, Canada is currently researching Muslim and secular banking systems with hopes of eventually creating an interest-free banking system that would be available to muslims and non-muslims. Another Qabeelah, that of Hosna in Houston, Texas, had a member who was working on establishing a support group for divorced Muslim women. As you can see, many members choose AlMaghrib to channel their creative energies to help their community and the Muslim community at large.

So next time you feel sad that a class is coming to an end, remember to get involved. Get on the forums, study and prepare for the exam, write an article, and keep that emanrush all year round.

A Gem I Leaned Today.....

In this life, Allah grades you on your intention and your effort So give Every thing your best

- Make wudu, it'll keep the Jinns away [insha Allah]!!
- water is pure by default, unless there is proof that it is impure
- Wudu is Ibaadah, so we should make the intention and have khushuu, think about when you die that people will wash you and make wudu for you!
- Listen carefully, a few precious words may save you in this world and next
- knowledge, intention and a pure heart are the keys that would open the gates of Jannah
- Don't ever get caught with a counterfeit deed (deeds without sincerity), sort of like you never want to get caught with counterfeit money!
- We should remember to say bismillah before we eat and make sure we only eat halal meat because the halal meat returns to the bones afterward and the Muslim jinn eat from it.
- HARM = HARAM