

OUR SALAH IS FULL AND FULL MEANINGFUL

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَالسَّلَامِ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

Islam is so natural and meaningful that sparkling gems keep coming all along our path. We get enlightened and feel proud to be a Muslim.

In these pages, Br. Nouman Ali Khan enlightens us with some gems found hidden in the acts of our Salah. After reading this, I am sure the focus and concentration in one's Salah would increase, Inshaa'Allah.

1. Takbeer Tahreema at the beginning of Salaah/namaz/prayer:

‘Allahu akbar’ means - ‘Allah is greater’.

We say this at the beginning of our Salaah, and by saying it – we are telling ourselves that ‘Allah is greater’ than anything else in our lives. **So now we need to focus on Allah in our prayer.**

2. Rukoo’ (Bowling) – Subhaana Rabbiy al-’ADheem -

Subhaan comes from the root word Sabaha = it Floated.

Anything which is constantly Floating or Gliding.

Meaning: something which does not sink or fall – but keeps in its high position.

This is why Allah says; ‘Subhaan Allah’ about Himself when the disbelievers slander Him (i.e. by accusing Him of having a son, or daughters etc.)

Subh = Perfection, **Gliding/floating above all falsehood and evil.**

Subh-AAN = ABUNDANT/LOADS of Perfection.

So by saying; Subhaana Rabbiy = Abundant Perfection (to)

Rabb-IY (ربي) [MY Master].

The Meaning related to RUKOO’ (bowing)-

By bowing to Allah, we are standing in a position which is lower than our normal standing position. Which means **we are not in a state of ‘Subhaan’ (perfect balance and uprightness).** Yet we are bowing to One who is ALWAYS Subhaanah (Perfect/Above ALL).

GEM: This is why we are praising Allah as ‘subhaana Rabbiy’ (perfectly upright is my Master), showing that we are humbling ourselves to His Perfection, by Lowering ourselves from our normal Upright (subh) position.

al-’ADheem (العظیم) – from the word; ‘ADhm (عظم) = Bone.

The Bone is strong and firm and has all descriptions of being the Strength and structure of the body.

So Allah is the ‘ADheem = Strong, Firm, Powerful.

‘aDhEEm (the letter ‘Ya’ after the 2nd Root Letter signifies ‘Constant’)
= CONSTANTLY strong, firm, powerful.

= Subhaana Rabbiy al-’ADheem - Perfect is my Master, the Constantly Strong, Firm and Powerful.

RUKOO’ (bowing) – We praise Allah as al-’ADheem – the Firm, Powerful, and we know that the ‘ADhm (Bone) is Stable.

So Allah is al-’ADheem – constantly Stable/firm/powerful.

Now Abdul Nasir Jangda mentioned in his tafseer (i think surah Haqqah 69:52) that when we do Rukoo’ [bowing] to Allah – we are in one of the most Non-Stable positions. So that even if a really strong man was in Rukoo’ (bowing) position, and a child ran past him and accidentally pushed him – this man would probably fall or lose stability. Showing that humans are not Constantly stable.

GEM: So by bowing to Allah in Rukoo’ – we are admitting our Weakness and Instability (Lack of Stability/strength/firmness) to our Master Allah, al-’ADheem (the Constantly Firm/Stable/Strong.)

3. Sajdah (Prostration) – Subhaana Rabbiy al-A’la:

Subhaana = Abundant Perfection and Constant Highness is given to Allah as praise when we are in the lowest position in our prayer.

So we praise His highness when we are in low position which is not normal for humans to be in, except when in a state of total submission, dependance and weakness.

So we admit our weakness and dependance to Allah by lowering ourselves in a position which everyone (Muslim or non-Muslim) recognizes as submission.

al-A’la (أعلى) = the Higher.

When we prostrate (do Sajdah) to Allah – we place ourselves in the lowest position the human can get.

By placing your face on the ground – you are saying you are the lowest, and the Arabs would say to someone they hated; ‘May your nose be rubbed in dust’ (on the ground) – i.e. may you be humiliated.

So for someone to place their nose on the ground is humiliation, but the believer puts his nose on the Lowest ground for no-one,except for One only. Who? Al-A’la (the Highest!)

GEM: We gain strength through this, and none experiences the true joy of it except the Muslim, and none finds honor through sajdah (prostration) except the Muslim. ([Find something relevant here :\) Muqet](#))

Hadith:

«لله رفعة الله ثلاثٌ أفسيمٌ عليهنَّ: ما نقصَ مالٌ من صدقةٍ، وما زادَ الله عبداً بعفوٍ إلا عزاً، ومن تواضعَ»

(I swear regarding three matters: no charity shall ever decrease the wealth; whenever one forgives people, then Allah will magnify his honor; and he who is humble for Allah, then Allah will raise his rank.) [[Tafsir ibn Katheer](#)]

Introduction to Tashahhud

- **Tashahhud is the sitting part of the *salaah* and the supplication recited in it**
- **Tashahhud is one of the most critical parts of the prayer**
- Discussions about *salaah* usually deal with its *fiqh* [understanding/rulings], but hardly ever the meaning and eloquence of the *salaah*
- 5 variations of *tashahhud* mentioned in *ahadeeth* (each named after *sahaabee* who narrated it)

Now will study the one narrated by Ibn Mas’ood – he narrates the Prophet (*sallallaahu `alayhi was-sallam*) taught him with his hand in between the Prophet’s two hands. Ibn Mas’ud later taught his student Alqamah the *tashahhud* in the same way, and then Alqamah taught it to Ibraheem an-Nakhaa’ee in the same way, and Hammaad ibn Salamah, and then Abu Haneefah.

- Ibn `Abbaas, Ibn Mas’ood, and others narrated that the Prophet (*sallallaahu `alayhi was-sallam*) taught them the *tashahhud* as he would teach a *soorah* from the Qur’an. This emphasizes the importance of 1) importance of *tashahhud*, 2) necessity of memorizing *tashahhud*

Narration of Tashahhud by Ibn Mas’ood:

At-tahiyyaatu lillaahi wa’s-salawaatu wa’t-tayyibaatu

as-salaamu `alayka ayyuha’n-nabiyyu wa rahmatu’llaahi wa barakaatuh

as-salaamu `alaynaa wa `alaa `ibaadi’llaahi’s-saaliheen

ashhadu an laa ilaaha illa'llaahu wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan `abduhu wa'r-rasooluhu.

Meanings of Tashahhud:

At-tahiyyaatu lillaahi wa's-salawaatu wa't-tayyibaatu

At-Tahiyyaat

- “the greetings”
- plural of *tahiyyah* (greeting)
- from root *hayaat* (life) – because in times of pre-Islamic *jahiliyyah* would greet each other with *hayaakallaah*, making *du`aa* for the life of that person. The Prophet then taught us the greeting of Islam (*as-salaamu `alaykum*), but the word *tahiyyah* remains the same.

lillaahi

- for Allaah

What does that mean?? We don't greet Allaah, as He is *as-Salaam*, right?

- A scholar `Abdullaah b. Saalih al-`Ijlee narrated a story. He said he was really interested in finding out what this meant. He went to a scholar named al-Kisaa'ee, and he said it meant “*barakaat*” (blessings). So then he said, then what does *barakaat* mean? Al-Kisaa'ee said he could not tell him any more than this. Al-`Ijlee wasn't satisfied, and went to Muhammad b. Hasan ash-Shaybaani and asked him the meaning of *at-Taahiyyatu lillaahi*, and he said “this is a word we use to worship Allaah,” and that's all he could tell him. He still was not content. Then, he came across Muhammad b. Idrees ash-Shaafi'ee, and asked him the same question, telling him everyone he went to asking this. Ash-Shaafi'ee says, “Why did you ask them? They don't know poetry!” (because Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee was a brilliant poet). He said that when you go to the court of a king, you offer royal compliments (“your royal highness,” “your majesty,” “your greatness”). When we say *at-Taahiyyaatu lillaahi*, we are making royal compliments exclusively for Allaah.
- It means: “**royal compliments fit for a king are exclusively for Allaah.**” – saying this is like entering into the court of Allaah and praising Him as the King!

Wa's-salawaat

- Plural of *salaah*
- i.e. “and our prayers (are exclusively for Allaah)”
- signifies all the *`ibaadah* we do

Wa't-tayyibaat

- pl. of *tayyib*
- means “beautiful things, appealing things”

- used in conjunction with *salawaat* (*‘ibaadah*), it indicates all of the beautiful things we do, all of our beautiful character, mannerisms, and dealing with others, are for Allaah.

Look at the comprehensiveness of these four words!

Benefit: This also ensures sincerity, and that one will continue to conduct oneself in a noble manner. Even the way we conduct ourselves in public is based on our commitment to Allaah, not based on your perceptions of other people, or how they may treat you.

as-salaamu `alayka ayyuha'n-nabiyyu wa rahmatu'llaahi wa barakaatuh

as-Salaam

- peace and safety
- *islaam* comes from same root, because by submitting to Allaah we achieve peace and safety
- *sullam*, referring to stairs or a ladder, comes from the same root. Why? Stairs and ladders are something precarious, so they named then *sullam* so that the first thing to come to a person's mind would be to think of safety.

`alayka

- “upon you” (i.e. a *du`aa* “may *as-salaam* be upon you”)
- more emphatic and emotional (*ismiyyah* form) than *Allahumma sallim `ala fulaan*, which used to be used.

Ayyuha'n-nabee

- “O Prophet”
- *nabee* comes from one of two roots

* *naba* – news that is 1) very important and 2) relevant to you. **Benefit:** Therefore, *nabee* is one who brings news that is very important and relevant to you. Nothing the Prophet said (*sallallaahu `alayhi was-sallam*) is unimportant or irrelevant.

* *nabwun* – elevation or protrusion. The Prophet said (*sallallaahu `alayhi was-sallam*) is at an elevated status than the rest of the people.

Wa rahmatu'llaah

- “and mercy of Allaah” i.e. may the mercy of Allaah also be upon you

Wa barakaatuhu

- “and His blessings”
- *barakah*, in its root, indicates blessings that are long-lasting – longevity

- a pond of water that had been sitting around for a long time *birkah*
- “and may His long-lasting blessings also be upon you”

as-salaamu `alaynaa wa `alaa `ibaadi`llaahi`s-saaliheen

As-Salaamu `alaynaa

- peace be upon us

wa `alaa

- and upon

`ibaadi`llaahi`s-saaliheen –

- the righteous slaves of Allaah

`ibaadi`llaah

- Pl. *`abd* (slave). Two plurals in Qur’an:

* *`ibaad* – only used when referring slaves of Allaah (e.g. *`ibaadu`r-Rahmaan,ibaadu`llaah*)

* *`abeed* – general plural, may refer to slaves in general

as-saaliheen

- “righteous”

Implications:

- We make *du`aa*’ in plural form – emphasizes unity of Muslims...the *ummah*

* **Benefit:** *Salaah* is ultimate display of and means of cultivating unity – everyone stands next to each other without consideration of race, ethnicity, financial status, educational level

* **Benefit:** We should not be selfish in our *du`aa*’, but we should be sensible/practical. We make *du`aa*’ for ourselves first, then others. Think: airplane emergency briefing, they tell you if the oxygen masks fall you should put your own mask on and then help somebody else. Example from Qur’aan: “save yourselves (1) and your families (2)”

* **Benefit:** Did we make *du`aa*’ for all *`ibaadillaah*, or a certain group? A certain group: *`ibaadillaahi`s-saaliheen* – motivational technique. Every Muslim is making this *du`aa*’ in the *salaah*, everytime and anywhere in the world. If I inculcate righteousness in myself, then I will be included in the *du`aa*’ of every praying Muslim in the world, for generations to come, and generations in the past!

Ashhadu an-laa ilaaha illa'llaahu wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan `abduhu wa rusooluhu

Ashhadu

- Root *shaheeda* – to witness something
- “I bear witness, I give testimony”
- A *shaahid* (witness) is called such because he is present at the scene of a crime or presents himself to give testimony in court

* *Shaheed* (martyr) – presents himself for the ultimate sacrifice, and when the *shaheed* falls, angels are present with him

An = that

Laa ilaaha illa'llaah

Laa = no

- Special *laa*, implies “absolutely no” – no possibility

ilaah = something worshiped

Illa = except

Allaah

Wa = and

Ashhadu = I bear witness, I testify

Anna = that (most definitely)

- More emphasis than *an*
- Why more emphasis here? Because in the first statement, the “special” *laa* gives the emphasis, so it is not needed. There is balance.
- In another narration: *ashhadu an laa ilaaha illa'llaah wa anna Muhammadur-Rasoolullaah*. In the one we are using (Ibn Mas'ood's), there is a repetition of *ashhadu*. Why is it there? Is it redundant or unnecessary? It is there so that both statements are given equal importance.

Muhammadan

- Root *hamd* – to praise
- One who is very frequently praised
- *Ahmad* – one who is praised in a very beautiful and elaborate manner.
- “Muhammad” only said four times in the Qur'aan – not referring to him directly, but speaking about him (and in 3 of those instances, *rasool* occurs in the same *aayah*)

* In the Qur'an, when Allaah speaks to other prophets, he refers to them by name (*yaa Ibraheem, yaa Moosa, yaa `Eesa*), but when referring to the Prophet he refers to him by titles – *yaa nabee, yaa rasool*.

`Abduhu = His slave

- Very powerful. We mentioned that *nabee* refers to someone who is at a higher station than the rest of the people. Yet, even he is the slave of Allaah!
- Nobility and distinction are from being a slave of Allaah.

wa Rasooluhu = and His messenger

- *Rasool* from root that means, “to send a message from a higher authority”
- Linguistic difference from *nabee*? In the Qur'aan, when *nabee* is used – referring to a high station and delivering important and relevant news – it is used in the context of interactions with people (e.g. “O Prophet...” “...tell your wives,” “...tell the believing women,” etc.). When it is used in context of being sent from Allaah, *rasool* is used. (e.g. “Say: O people, verily I am the Messenger of Allaah who has been sent to all of you,” “O Messenger, deliver the message that has been revealed to you”)

Narration of *Tashahhud* by Ibn `Abbaas

At-tahiyyaatu'l-mubaarakaatu's-salawaatu't-tayyibaatulillaahi

salaamun `alayka ayyuha'n-nabiyyu wa rahmatu'llaahi wa barakaatuhu

salaamun `alaynaa wa `alaa `ibaadillaahi's-saaliheena

Ashhadu an laa ilaaha illa'llaahu wa anna Muhammadan rasoolu'llaah.

Differences with *tashahhud* narrated by Ibn Mas'ood:

Al-mubaarakaat

- Same root as *barakah*
- “blessed things”
- means that all blessed things are from Allaah

At-tahiyyaatu'l-mubaarakaatu's-salawaatu't-tayyibaatu (no *Waaw* separating the words)

- a Letter *Waaw* implies separate items (e.g. “a toaster *and* an oven”)
- omission of *waaw* indicates one item serving both functions (e.g. “a toaster oven”)
- all of these components together comprise one individual – our devotion to Allaah consists of all of these things, but includes multiple facets

lillaah [for Allah] is at the end instead of the beginning

- if I say, “Khaalid is my friend, *and* Zayd and `Amr,” it implies they are all my friends, but gives more importance to Khaalid
- in the *tashahhud* of Ibn Mas’ood: *at-tahiyyaatu lillaah* – “royal compliments are for Allaah, and prayers and beautiful things”
- this *tashahhud* (Ibn `Abbaas’) combines all of them equally

salaamun

- instead of *as-salaamu*
- *as-salaamu* is definite – “*the* peace,” or the ultimate peace
- *salaamun* is indefinite – it implies peace of all types and varieties, from all angles and all situations

ashhadu an laa ilaaha illa’llaah wa [omits second “*ashhadu*” (‘I bear witness’)] ***anna Muhammadan*** [omits “*abduhu*” (‘His slave’)] ***rasoolu’llaah*** (“Allaah’s Messenger”) [rather than “*rasooluhu*” (‘His Messenger’)].

- rather than two separate elements, it brings Allaah and Muhammad together – believing in Allaah and believing in the Messenger go hand in hand
- although *abduhu* is left out, *rasoolu’llaah* is more powerful than *rasooluhu* – includes the power of Allaah’s name

This is the end of Explanation *Tashahhud*, and the praise is for Allah.

Courtesy: linguisticmiracle.com