

# Lajna Ta'lim Lesson Plan

Month: March 2020

## Learning Objectives:

- To learn the key points from the advice given by Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad<sup>(RA)</sup> to improve one's Salat
- To understand the portions of Malfoozat.
- To understand the key points Key points on 'Blessings of Prayer' written by the Promised Messiah<sup>(AS)</sup>
- To revise questions on Kashti e Nuh (Noah's Ark) by The Promised Messiah<sup>(AS)</sup>

## ACTIVITY SALAT:

RESOURCE: **“Remembrance of Allah” By: Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad<sup>ra</sup> Khalifatul Masih II**

Time: 15 min

### The Prayers

I will now turn to the most important form of *Zikr*: the prescribed Prayers. In Prayers a Muslim perform *Zikr*, in all the postures—standing (*Qiyam*), bowing (*Qa'adah*). He recites the Holy Qur'an and perform other types of *Zikr*. A Prayer is a combination of all forms of *Zikr*. ...

### The Philosophy of Prescribing Sunnah and Nawafil

The prescribed Prayers have three parts (1) *Fard*, the obligatory part, (2) *Sunnah*, the part offered regularly by the Holy Prophet<sup>saw</sup> and enjoined by him, and (3) *Nawafil*, the voluntary part. ...

The *Sunnah* has been instituted to offset shortcomings in the obligatory parts. Allah does not accept defective Prayers; He only accepts the flawless. But He accepts *Sunnah* in lieu of defects in the *Fard*. If one of the *Raka'at* (component part) in the *Fard* Prayer lacks concentration, or is spoiled by temptations, it will not be accepted. But the loss will be offset with *Sunnah*. The Holy Prophet<sup>saw</sup> had a very keen awareness of human nature and its frailties. He has done a great favour to his followers by adding *Sunnah* in the Prayers.

Then there are *Nawafil*. These are means of attaining nearness to God. They raise a man above *Najat* (deliverance from sin). Anyone desiring nearness of Allah should give special attention to *Nawafil*. Some *Nawafil* are performed during the day; others during the night. Those performed at night—*Tahajjud*—carry special blessings. God Almighty says:

Verily getting up at night is the most potent means of subduing the self and most effective in respect of words of Prayer. (73:7) ...

The Holy Prophet<sup>saw</sup> has said, “May Allah have mercy on the husband and the wife who awake each other up for Prayer at night. If the husband wakes, let him offer *Tahajjud* and awaken his wife. If she does not get up, let him sprinkle some water at her face. Similarly, if the wife awakes, let her do the same, that is, offer *Tahajjud* and awaken her husband by sprinkling some water at his face.” The Holy Prophet<sup>saw</sup> has directed the wife to respect her husband. Yet he has permitted her to sprinkle some water, if necessary, to awaken him for *Tahajjud*. Obviously, he attaches great importance to *Tahajjud*.

The Holy Qur'an tells us that getting up for Prayer at night straightens the self. According to the Holy Prophet<sup>saw</sup> you must perform *Tahajjud*, even if it is of two *Raka'at*. He also says that God Almighty

accepts the prayers in abundance during the late part of night. *Tahajjud*, therefore, is very important and beneficial.

## How to Get Up at Night for Tahajjud

One way—not very useful in my opinion—is to use the alarm clock. It creates dependency, and fails to produce the resolute will. If you go to sleep having resolved to get up for *Tahajjud*, you will be in a state of worship all night. Being determined, you will get up. Those depending on the alarm clock, but lacking determination, will often shut the alarm clock to go back to sleep. When they get up, they generally feel sleepy in Prayers. Their dependency prevents them from full awakening and alertness. However, under certain circumstances the alarm clock may be used by beginners or others.

There are thirteen methods, which can help in getting up at night. ... I have derived these methods from the Holy Qur'an and *Hadiths*. It is Allah's Grace that these points, which remained hidden from others, have been manifested to me. ...

1. ... Perform *Zikr* for a while after *Isha* Prayers. The more *Zikr* you perform, the earlier you will get up for *Zikr* before the morning.
2. Do not talk to anybody after *Isha* Prayers. Although sometimes the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> continued his conversation after *Isha*, as a general rule he had forbidden it. ... You should go to sleep while thinking of your faith; you will get up with the same thoughts. It is not forbidden to carry out office work or other important assignments after *Isha*. But in that case it is better to spend some time in *Zikr* before going to sleep.
3. Perform *Wudu* (ablution) before going to bed, even if you are already in a state of ablution. It affects the heart and creates a special kind of freshness. ...
4. Recite some *Zikr* before falling asleep; this will cause you to wake up again for *Zikr* during the night. The Holy Prophet<sup>saw</sup> used to perform *Zikr* in the following manner before going to sleep: He recited *Ayatul-Kursi* (verse 2:256) and the last three chapters of the Holy Qur'an; he then gently blew upon his hands and lightly passed them over his body three times. Then he turned towards his right and said:

اللَّهُمَّ اسَلَّمْتُ نَفْسِي إِلَيْكَ وَوَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِي إِلَيْكَ وَفَوَّضْتُ أَمْرِي إِلَيْكَ رَغْبَةً  
وَرَهْبَةً إِلَيْكَ لَا مَلْجَأَ عِوَاذَ مَنْجَاءٍ مِنْكَ إِلَّا إِلَيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ أَمَنْتُ بِكِتَابِكَ الَّذِي  
أَنْزَلْتَ وَنَبِيِّكَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلْتَ.

O Allah, I put myself in Thy protection, and turn my face towards Thee and assign all my affairs to Thee, with complete inclination and fear of Thee. There is no refuge or protection from Thee except towards Thyself. I believe in Thy Book, which Thou hast revealed, and Thy Prophet that Thou hast sent

... then continue with another form of *Zikr* until sleep takes over. An important recitation for this time is:

سبحان الله وبحمده سبحان الله العظيم

Holy is Allah, with His Praise; Holy is Allah, the Greatess

The condition in which a person goes to sleep stays with him all night. If someone sleeps while performing *Tasbeeh* (Glorification of God) and *Tahmeed* (Praise of God) he will remain in that

spiritual state all night. It is a common observation that ladies or children, who are disturbed or are in pain at bedtime cry when they turn over onto their sides during sleep.

Similarly, if someone goes to sleep reciting *Tasbeeh* he will recite *Tasbeeh* when he will turn his side. God Almighty says:

تَتَجَافَى جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَ طَمَعًا ۚ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ (١٧)

*Their sides keep away from their beds; and they call on their Lord in fear and hope, and spend out of what We have bestowed on them. (32:17) ...*

## ACTIVITY MALFOOZAT

RESOURCE: Lajna Ima'illah UK Ta'lim Syllabus -Feb 2020 to Jan 2022, Page 39-43

Time: 10 min

### 1891 The Purpose of the Advent of the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>

Hazrat Maulvi Abdul-Karim Sahib<sup>ra</sup> states: 'I remember well—and I have written this in my notebook—that a person posed a question to His Holiness, our Truthful Imam, Hazrat Mirza Sahib<sup>as</sup>, in Jalandhar about the purpose of his advent in the world. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> said: "I have come to strengthen people in their faith."

#### The Types of Faith

There is another incident that is recorded in my notebook as well. This incident also took place in Jalandhar. A member of our community, our brother, Munshi Muhammad Arura Sahib<sup>ra</sup> inquired: "Your holiness, how many types of faith are there?" The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> gave an immensely beautiful and subtle response: "There are two kinds of faith—rudimentary and refined. Rudimentary faith is to remain firm in practising the fundamental principles of religion without any deep insight (*din-ul-aja'iz*) and refined faith is to follow me."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Taken from a speech by Hazrat Maulana Abdul-Karim Sahibra delivered on 29 December 1897. Refer to report on the Jalsa Salana of 1897, pp. 106-107.

#### 1895

Respected Mufti Muhammad Sadiq Sahib<sup>ra</sup> writes: 'Even in 1895 when I would visit the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>, in my eagerness, I would record his holy words on a piece of paper and take them to Lahore where I would read them out to Ahmadi friends in our weekly meetings. I present here some of my recollections from that time to readers. In those days, since exact dates were not recorded, I put forth all of these words undated.'

#### The Oath of Allegiance and Repentance

One should understand the benefit and need of swearing an oath of allegiance to a spiritual guide. Until the benefit and worth of a thing is known, its value cannot be appreciated. ... the outstanding aspect of swearing allegiance to a spiritual guide is repentance (*tawbah*), which means to turn back (*ruju*). Repentance refers to the state when man forsakes the ties that bind him to sin. When a person is indulged in a life of sin, he begins to dwell in this state and sin becomes his homeland, as it were. So, *tawbah* is to leave one's homeland and *ruju* means to purify oneself. ...

... A person who repents is compelled to sustain a heavy loss. Indeed, true repentance demands great sacrifices, but Allah the Exalted is Merciful and Munificent. God does not let a person die until He bestows upon them a better substitute for all such losses. This is the very indication in: *Allah loves those who turn to him.* (Al Baqarah:223)

When one repents, they become destitute and helpless and this is why Allah the Exalted holds love and affection for such a person, and includes them among the community of the righteous. ... If Allah was not Merciful, man could not survive for even a moment. How can one imagine that He who has created thousands of things for the benefit of man, even prior to his performing any action, would disregard his repentance and good deeds?

### The Reality of Sin and Repentance

The reality of sin is not that Allah first created it and then thousands of years later conjured up the idea of forgiveness. For example, a fly has two wings, one containing poison and the other its antidote. Similarly, human beings have two wings, one of sin and the other of shame, repentance and remorse. This is a general rule. For example, if someone were to violently beat a slave, remorse would overwhelm such a one. It is as if both wings move in unison. Poison is not without its antidote. Now the question is, why was this poison created in the first place? The answer is that although this is a poison, if harnessed, it possesses remedial properties. If sin did not exist, the venom of vanity would surge forth within man and lead to his ruin, but repentance prevents this from happening. Sin protects man from the calamity of arrogance and conceit. When the Prophet Muhammad<sup>sa</sup> would seek forgiveness seventy times in one day—despite being sinless—how great an effort should we exert? Only one who is content with sin does not repent; an individual who considers sin to be evil will ultimately refrain from it.

It is narrated in a Hadith that when a person weeps before Allah time and again to seek forgiveness, ultimately, God says, ‘We have forgiven you, now do as you please.’ This actually means that the heart of such a one has been transformed and thereafter he shall feel an innate aversion towards sin. No one who observes a sheep eating filth is driven by greed to consume it as well. Similarly, a person who is forgiven by Allah will never commit sin. ...

### Prayer is an Antidote

... Prayer is an antidote. Ultimately, such a one will observe how prayers serve to foster within him an aversion towards vice. In the end, those steeped in sin who despair of the acceptance of prayer and do not seek recourse to repentance, lose faith in the Prophets and their effects.

### Repentance is an Essential Component of the Oath of Allegiance

This is the reality of repentance (which has been mentioned above). But why is repentance an integral part of swearing allegiance to a spiritual guide? The fact of the matter is that man is given to negligence. When an individual takes the oath of allegiance at the hand of one upon whom Allah the Exalted has bestowed this transformed state, the same divine grace and light—that exists in this transformed individual—begins to emerge in the individual just as a graft changes the properties of a tree. The condition, however, is that one should possess a true relationship with this person as though they were a branch attached to his very being; not a lifeless branch. The greater a person’s affinity with this spiritual leader, the better.

### A Superficial Oath of Allegiance is Useless

A superficial oath of allegiance to a spiritual guide brings no benefit and it is difficult to derive any gain from such an oath of allegiance. A person shall truly reap benefit only when they abandon their ego and attach themselves to this person with abiding love and sincerity. Since the hypocrites did not

possess a true relationship with the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and his progeny, ultimately, they remained bereft of faith; they were left devoid of pure love and sincerity. And so, the mere proclamation (*There is nonworthy of worship except Allah*) was of no avail to them. Thus, it is very important to forge these bonds. If a follower does not strengthen these ties and fails to make an effort in this cause, any expression of grief or regret would be unwarranted. One should nurture a relationship of love and sincerity with one's spiritual guide and insofar as possible, adjust the hue of one's disposition to that of one's master, both in terms of action and belief. The inner self of man promises him a long life, but this is deception. There is no telling how long a person will live. One should hasten to adopt piety and worship, and introspect on one's condition from morning to evening.

I recall that the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> delivered this speech when Muhammad Nawwab Khan Sahib<sup>ra</sup> Tehsildar took the oath of allegiance at the hand of the Promised Messiah<sup>AS</sup>. (Editor)

### **ACTIVITY Key points on 'Blessings of prayer' written by the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> Pages 30-49**

Barakatud Du'a, or The Blessings of Prayer, written by the Promised Messiah (as) in 1893, is a refutation of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's view that there is no such thing as the acceptance of prayer, and that prayer is no more than a form of worship.

The Seventh Criterion (..for the correct interpretation of the Holy Quran) is the revelation granted to saints and the visions of the Muhaddathin.

It is also gross ignorance to deny the existence of such inheritors and to contend that the profundities of Prophethood are mere tales of the past which do not and cannot exist today, and that we do not have any example of them before us.

Muhaddathin are people who are honoured with Divine revelation and, in their inner power, bear a strong resemblance to the inner power of Prophets.

It is wrong to believe that Prophets (as) passed away from the world leaving behind no one to inherit their blessings, and that to talk about them is no more than telling old tales.

In this century God Almighty has sent this humble one for the reformation of this age, so that the errors which could not be removed except by special Divine help may be removed from the minds of the Muslims, and the proof of a True and Living God may be given to the disbelievers, and the superiority and truth of Islam may be proven with fresh signs.

One who has an iota of love for God and the Holy Prophet(sa) should rise up and test [my claim], and should join God's chosen Jama'at whose foundation God has laid with His own Holy Hand.

Let it be understood that it is the great favour of God Almighty upon His servants that He does not wish Islam to be a dead faith but wants to keep open forever the ways of certainty, true knowledge and overcoming the adversary with superior arguments.

These, in short, are the criteria for the correct interpretation of the Holy Quran. There is no doubt that at most places Sayyid Sahib's commentary falls quite short of these seven criteria.

Let it be clear that it is gravely erroneous, mischievous and misleading of Sayyid Sahib to contend that Divine revelation is no more than a natural ability.

My dear Sayyid Sahib! I swear in the name of God that revelation from heaven falls upon the heart just as the rays of the sun fall upon a wall. It is my daily experience that whenever the time comes for me to receive Divine converse, I all at once experience a trance-like state and become a wholly different entity. Although, at this stage, I remain in full possession of my senses and am fully conscious, yet I feel as if a most Powerful Being has taken my whole being in His grip and all the veins of my existence are in His hand, and whatever is mine is no longer mine but belongs to Him. At this point God Almighty brings before my mind those of my thoughts upon which He intends to focus the rays of His words. These thoughts then appear before my mind, one after the other, in a wonderful way; and it so happens that when a thought passes through my mind a piece of Divine revelation at once falls upon it like a ray, and this often shakes up my whole body.

For instance, how opposed to the laws of nature is Sayyid Sahib's belief that Prophetic revelation is no more than a special natural ability and that angels have no intermediary role to play between this ability and God Almighty.

God Almighty has made the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, and the elements subservient to us for the maintenance of our bodily functions and the achievement of our desired goals.

My own experience at the time of the descent of revelation—which comes to me in the form of Wahi-e-Walayah—is that I become aware of an external and very powerful hold over myself. At times this influence is so strong and its light so takes hold of me, and so forcefully do I find myself drawn towards it, that I am powerless to resist. Under this influence, I hear clear and manifest revelation. Sometimes I even see the angels and perceive the power and awe of the truth.

As to how much knowledge Sayyid Sahib truly possesses about Divine matters, it is enough to know that he has declared the whole creation to be free from the control of the True Lord of Destiny. He does not even seem to realize that the Divinity of God Almighty demands that He should have all power and authority.

If He is indeed the Creator, then, as He is unlimited in Himself, He must also have left enough room in His creation for the unlimited exercise of His control, so that at no point should His powers become dormant.

He is the Creator of all the particles of the universe, the souls and all the creations. If one would enquire about His powers, then let him know that He has the power to do everything with the exception of that which is contrary to His perfect attributes and His true promises.

That is why, in order to defend his unsubstantiated assertion, he has taken recourse to yet another feeble argument. He says that God Almighty has hinted in the Holy Quran at the heat of fire, and the cooling effect of water, and the fact that the Sun moves from East to West—all which are meant to express the present state of these things—but Sayyid Sahib sees them as promises which admit of no change.

If this indeed is the way to deduce arguments, then Sayyid Sahib is going to find himself in great deal of trouble, for he will have to declare that all the statements of the Holy Quran constitute promises.

For example, God Almighty gave the following glad tidings to Hadrat Zachariah (as) ‘We give thee glad tidings of a son’.—Maryam, 19:8

In accordance with Sayyid Sahib’s principle, Hadrat Yahya should always have remained a boy, because God Almighty has called him a boy and this [according to Sayyid Sahib] constitutes a promise.

Nor does Sayyid Sahib believe in such prophecies as are granted to men of God. In his view these prophecies are as much against the laws of nature as it is for the fire to forsake its property of burning.

Sayyid Sahib likewise believes that the innate efficacy of prayer—by means of which the objective prayed for is attained—is also opposed to the law of nature.

This, after all, is the very blessing of the presence of God, that He should hear our prayers and should Himself inform us of His existence; not that we should contrive in a thousand ways to establish in our hearts an imaginary god, like an idol, whose voice we cannot hear, and the manifestation of whose supreme power we cannot see.

You should know for a certainty that the Omnipotent God, Who has power over everything, does exist.

## **ACTIVITY**                      Kashti-e-Nuh (Ark of Noah)

Taken from lesson plan MAY 2017:

Questions on Kashti e Nuh (Ark of Noah) (Pages 56-78)

(The answers are taken direct from the book and not paraphrased.)

### **Q6 What are the main differences between the Gospel and the Holy Quran?**

The Gospel merely promises that the Kingdom of God will come, whereas the Quran says that the Kingdom of God is with you. Moreover, not only is it present, but everyone already practically reaps the advantages of its beneficence. Hence, the Gospel only makes a promise. The Quran however, does not make a mere promise; but rather speaks of an established kingdom and demonstrates its bounties.

The Gospels praise the forbearing, mild, meek and those who remain passive in the face of harassment. But the Quran does not advise that one should remain meek in every circumstance, nor to refrain from confronting evil. Rather, it teaches that forbearance, humility, meekness and passivity are all meritorious, but not when exercised inappropriately. All good deeds ought to be performed with an appreciation of appropriate time and circumstance.

### **Q7. What advise does the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> give to attain high moral values?**

You cannot attain these lofty morals simply through your own endeavours until they are bestowed upon you from heaven. And anyone who is not blessed with virtue through heavenly grace, which comes from the Holy Spirit, is false in their claim to possess good morals.

Remember that true and pure morals are but one of the miracles of the righteous, in which they have no equal. Those who are not lost in God are not bestowed strength from on high. Therefore, it is impossible for them to inculcate pure morals. So establish a sincere relationship with your God. Discard all ridicule, mockery, rancour, foul language, greed, falsehood, unchastity, casting lustful glances, sinful thoughts, materialism, arrogance, pride, self-conceit, mischief and obduracy. Then will you be bestowed everything from heaven.

**Q8. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> states that Surah Fatihah contains a grand prophecy. Explain.**

*Surah Fatihah* is not just a mere teaching, but also contains a grand prophecy. That is to say, God has described His four attributes: *Rabubiyyat* [providence], *Rahmaniyyat* [graciousness], *Rahimiyyat* [mercy] and *Malikiyyat-e-Yawm-id-Deen* i.e. the power to reward and punish; and after elaborating upon His all-encompassing omnipotence, God then teaches the following prayer in the subsequent verses: ‘Our Lord! Make us heirs to the pious Prophets and Messengers of the past. Open for us their path and bestow on us the blessings that were bestowed on them. Our Lord! Protect us from becoming like those people upon whom your punishment descended in this very life, i.e. like the Jewish people in the time of Jesus the Messiah, who were destroyed by the plague. Our Lord! Protect us from becoming like those people who were not guided by You and were thus led astray in the manner of the Christians.’

Hence, this prayer contains an underlying prophecy that there would be some from among the Muslims who will become heirs of the past Prophets on account of their truth and sincerity, and will be bestowed with the blessings of prophethood and messengership. And also that others would become like the Jews and punishment would descend upon them in the present life; while others still would cloak themselves in the garb of the Christians.

Therefore, the third part of the prophecy is also worthy of being readily accepted. For just as the Muslims would imitate the Jews and Christians and partake of the unrighteousness found to exist within them, there was bound to be others from among the Muslims who would be entitled to achieve the rank and status of those holy personages of the Children of Israel who once lived.

God Almighty proclaimed the good news that some people from among this Ummah would be bestowed the same blessings as the Prophets of the past.