

KHUTBA

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english

Three Degrees

Dear Muslims,

Abdullah ibn Umar reported Prophet Mohamed as saying: (*“Three things can save a person: fear of Allah the Exalted in private and in public, fairness in happiness and in anger, and generosity in poverty and in wealthiness. And three things can destroy a person: desires that are followed, covetousness that is obeyed, and a person being amazed and pleased with themself.”* And three can forgive sins: *“Perfecting the ablution under difficult circumstances, taking many steps to the mosque, and waiting for the (next) prayer after the (last) prayer has been performed”* And three degrees (i.e. gives special degrees (of rewards) in the judgment day): *Feeding (hungry) people, extension of salutation, and praying during the night while the others sleep*) **Narrated by Al-Tabarani.**

We will review here in this khotba the three things that give special degrees of rewards in the Judgment day.

The first one is feeding the poor:

This is one of the values Islam adds to the life of the poor so that they will not feel neglected at anytime. The emphasis of feeding the poor in Islam is not limited to time or place. The true Muslims should always strive to be generous and humble in their charitable contributions. This helps to minimizing the gap between rich and poor which in turn will help in creating healthy community and minimize the occurrence and effect of envy. That is why feeding poor is important and considered as one of the best deeds in Islam. It is also the reason behind the great rewards given for it.

Abdullah ibne Amr radiyallahu anhum narrates that a man asked Prophet Mohamed: “What is the best deed in Islam?” He answered: (*You feed people and say Assalamu alaikum to those whom you know and those whom you do not know.*) **Narrated by Al-Bukhari**

Abdullah ibn Amr reported that the messenger of Allah said: (*O people, extend the salutations, feed the people, keep the ties of kinship, and pray during the night while the others sleep, and you will enter Paradise in peace.*) **Narrated by Al-Termithy.**

Abi Malik Al-Asha’ri reported Prophet Mohamed as saying: (*In Paradise there are dwellings whose inside can be seen from the outside, and the outside can be seen from inside. Allah has prepared them for those who feed the hungry, extend the salutations, and pray at night whilst the people are asleep.*) **Narrated by Ibn-Hibban.**

The second is extending greetings:

This is particularly important because it spread the culture of love, harmony and helps to generate a friendly and relaxed atmosphere among the Muslim community. That is why Islam has provided special rules for greetings and gave it special value.

Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah (may peace and blessing be upon him) said: (*You shall not enter Paradise so long as you do not affirm belief (in all those things which are the articles of faith) and you will not believe as long as you do not love one another. Should I not direct you to a thing which, if you do, will foster love amongst you: (i. e.) give currency to (the practice of paying salutation to one another by saying) as-salamu alaikum.*) **Narrated by Muslim.**

It is reported on the authority of 'Abdullah b. 'Amr that a man asked the Messenger of Allah (may peace and blessings be upon him) which of the merits (is superior) in Islam. He (the Holy Prophet) remarked: (*That you provide food and extend greetings to one whom you know or do not know*) **Narrated by Muslim.**

In order to show respect and gratefulness to those who start with greetings, Allah Almighty ordered us to reply to the greeting with a better one. **“When you are greeted with a greeting, greet with better than it or return it. Allah takes count of all things”. Al-Nisa' 86.**

Prophet Mohamed also urged us not to stop greeting others as a tool to reform our community and overcome our disagreement and conflicts.

Abu Huraira reported that the Prophet, peace upon him, said: *(The most incapable of people are those who are incapable of supplication, and the most miserly of people are those who are miserly with their greeting)* **Narrated by Al-Tabarani**

Abi Ayoob (may Allah be pleased with him) reported prophet Mohamed as saying *(It is not permissible for a person to abandon his brother for more than three nights: they meet, each one turning away from the other. The best of the two is the first of them to greet the other (with Salaam).)* **Narrated by Al-Bukhari.**

The third degree is praying in the night:

Praying in the night (Qiyamulail) is part of the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH), which Muslims are preferred to follow all the time. Performing these Prayers regularly qualifies one as one of the righteous and makes one earn Allah's bounty and mercy. That is because it is pure from hypocrisy since it is performed in a time where no one is watching. Moreover, the person performing it is leaving his comfort and sleep for the sake of Allah. It is a great worship that results in great rewards but only few can afford. Because it brings the person close to his Lord, Allah and His Prophet urged us to do it.

Allah Almighty said, *“Establish worship at the going down of the sun until the dark of the night, and (the recital of) the Qur’an at dawn. Lo! (the recital of) the Qur’an at dawn is ever witnessed. * And some part of the night awake for its recital, as voluntary worship for you. It may be that your Lord will raise you to a praised estate.”* *Al-Israa 78-79.*

Abu Hurayra (Allah be pleased with him) reports that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, *(The best prayer after the obligatory prayers is the night prayer.)* **Narrated by Muslim.**

Abu Umama al-Bahili (Allah be pleased with him) reports that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, *(Hold fast to night prayer, for it was the way of the righteous before you, a way of drawing closer to your Lord, an expiation for wrong deeds, and a shield from sin.)* **Narrated by Al-Termithy.**

Allah has praised those who wake up at night for His remembrance, supplication, and to seek forgiveness and entreat Him. He described them as persons with true faith saying, *“They forsake their beds to cry unto their Lord in fear and hope, and spend of what We have bestowed on them. * No soul knows what is kept hid from them of joy, as a reward for what they used to do.”* *Al-Sajdah 16-17.*

*“The (faithful) servants of the Merciful are they who walk upon the earth modestly, and when the foolish one address them answer: Peace; * And who spend the night before their Lord, prostrate and standing...”* *Luqman 63-64.*

*“As to the Righteous, they will be in the midst of Gardens and Springs, * Taking joy in the things which their Lord gives them, because, before then, they lived a good life. * They were in the habit of sleeping but little by night, * And in the hours of early dawn, they (were found) praying for Forgiveness;”* *Al Dhariyat 15-18.*

Dear Muslims,

These are three deeds that give you special rewards at the judgment day. Nevertheless, it has a positive impact on the community and helps in spreading the love and harmony between Muslims. Hence, I urge you not only to follow them but also to persist in doing them.

We ask Allah to help us follow his guidance, to forgive our sins and make us survive the punishment in the Judgment Day.

Amen.