

Etiquettes of Respect of Mosque

1. The best portion of the earth in the sight of God is that upon which a mosque is raised. The distinctive feature of the devotee of God is that he loves the mosque also. On the terrific day of doom when there will be no shade anywhere, God will keep that person under the shade of His Heaven whose heart is devoted to the mosque. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed

“The man whose heart is devoted to the mosque will rest under the shade of Heaven”. (Bukhāri)

2. Do service to the mosque ; keep the house of God populated. To render service to the mosque and keep it populated is a sign of faith. God affirms :

إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنِ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ .

«التوبة ١٨»

Innamā Ya'muru masājid-allahi man āmana bil-lahi wal yaum-il-ākhirī. (Al-Tauba : 18)

“He shall tend Allah's sanctuaries who believeth in Allah and the Day of reckoning”.

3. Always say your obligatory prayers with the congregation in the mosque. Maintain a regular system of congregation and announcement of the Prayer-call in the mosque and discipline your whole life in conformity with the system of the mosque. Mosque is the pivot around which the whole circle of a true believer's life revolves. The Holy

Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed :

“There are certain people among the Muslims who stay in the mosque permanently and do not leave the place. They have angels as their companions. If such people disappear from the mosque, the angels go about looking for them. If these people fall ill, the angels enquire after their health and when they are engaged in some task, the angels aid them——A person who sits in the mosque anticipates blessings of the Lord”.

(*Musnad Ahmad*)

4. Go to the mosque with eagerness and enthusiasm to say your prayers. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed: “The act of going to the mosque morning and evening is like going to fight in the cause of God”. And further observed: “The people who go towards the mosque in the dim light of the dawn will be accompanied by full radiance of light on the Day of Doom”. In addition, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed: “Each step that a man takes towards the mosque to say his prayers with the congregation, deletes one sin and adds one virtue to his account”.

(*Ibn Hibban*)

5. Keep the mosque clean and tidy. Sweep the place and clean out all dust or filth. Burn incense, especially on Fridays so that the whole mosque becomes fragrant with the aroma of the incense. The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: “To sweep the mosque; to keep it tidy and clean; to cast out all dust and filth from the mosque; to burn incense in the mosque, especially to make the place fragrant with the aroma of the incense on Fridays—all these are acts which lead to Paradise”.

(*Ibn Majah*)

Moreover, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed: “To clean out the dirt and

dust of the mosque is the mehr (مهر) (the consideration paid for the marriage contract) of a pretty-eyed Hourî".

(Tabrânî)

6. Go to the mosque in a state of fear and trepidation. Say 'Assalamo 'Alaikum' (peace be on you) on entering the mosque. Sit down quietly and pray in such a manner that your heart should be filled with the awe of the Greatness and Glory of God. Those who enter the mosque laughing and talking are careless and impudent. The hearts of such people are devoid of the fear of God. Some people in their bid to join the congregation before they lose any Rak'ah rush forward into the mosque. This act is contrary to the sanctity of the mosque. Whether you are able to join the 'Rak'ah' or not, walk in the mosque with poise, dignity and in humility ; avoid hurried movement.
7. Sit down in the mosque in peace and avoid worldly talk. To shout or make a noise, to cut jokes and raise laughter, to discuss bazar rates, to comment on the world affairs or to strike business deals in the mosque is a sacrilege. Mosque is a place of Divine Worship ; use it for the purpose of offering devotions to God only.
8. Do not take such small children with you in the mosque who have not yet attained awareness of the sanctity of the mosque lest they should discharge urine, defecate or spit in the mosque.
9. Do not use the mosque as a thoroughfare. On entering the gate of the mosque it becomes obligatory upon you to say prayers, or sit down and engage in the remembrance of God or recite the Holy Qur'ân.
10. If you lose something somewhere else, do not make an announcement of your loss from the mosque. Whenever someone made such an announcement in the mosque of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was offended and used to remark :

لَا رَدَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ ضَالَّتَكَ

La radd-al-lahu 'alaika dāallataka.

“May God restore not the lost thing to thee !”

11. On entering the mosque put your right step in and say ‘peace and blessings of Allah be on the Holy Prophet’ and then say the following prayer. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : “Whenever any of you enters the mosque, he should say ‘peace and blessings of Allah be on the Holy Prophet’ and then say this prayer :

اللَّهُمَّ افْتَحْ لِي أَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ .

Allahumm-afthah li abwāba rahmatika.

“O God ! Open the gates of Thy Mercy for me”.

(Muslim)

After entering the mosque, say two Rak‘ah’ of supererogatory prayers. These two Rak‘ah are described by the term *تحية المسجد* ‘Tahiyyat ul-Masjid’. Similarly, whenever you return from a journey, go first to the mosque and say two Rak‘ah of supererogatory prayers and then proceed to your house. On return from a journey, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to go first to the mosque and offered supererogatory prayers and afterwards proceeded home.

12. On coming out of the mosque, put your left step out and say this prayer :

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ . «مسلم»

Allahumma inni as'aluka min fadlika.

“O God ! I seek your Favour and Blessings”.

(Muslim)

13. Maintain a regular system of announcing the prayer-call and holding a congregation for the saying of prayers. Appoint only such persons as announcers of the prayer-call or Imam as are on the whole better than others in their devotion to religion and possess superior morals. If possible try to appoint those people as *Mu'adhdhins* and Imams who demand no honorarium for their services and are willing to discharge these duties voluntarily in anticipation of the reward in the Hereafter.
14. Say this prayer after hearing the prayer-call. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "The man who after hearing the announcement of the prayer-call offers the following prayer will thereby acquire a right over me to say prayer for him on the Day of Doom". (Mishkat)

اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّ هَذِهِ الدَّعْوَةِ التَّامَّةِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْقَائِمَةِ أَتِ
 مُحَمَّدَ بْنَ الْوَسِيلَةَ وَالْفَضِيلَةَ وَالدرَجَةَ الرَّفِيعَةَ وَأَبْعَثْهُ مَقَامًا
 مَحْمُودًا الَّذِي وَعَدْتَهُ وَارزُقْنَا شَفَاعَتَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
 إِنَّكَ لَا تُخَلِّفُ الْمِيعَادَ .

Allahumma rabba hādhik-id-da'-wat-il-tāmmati w-as-salāt-il-qā'imati aati Muhammada-nil-wasīlata w-al-fadīlata w-ad-darajat-ar-rafi'ata wab'athhu maqānam-Mahmuda-nil-ladhi wa'adtahu warzuqna shafa'atahu yaum-al-qiyāmati innaka lā tukhlif-ul-mī'ād.

"God ! The Possessor of this Perfect Call and this Congregation standing for Prayer ! Grant Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) thy Friendship, Grace and Excellence and appoint him to that exalted state the promise of which Thou gave him and grant us the favour

of Muhammad's (peace be upon him) intercession with Thee on our behalf. Undoubtedly Thou never take back Thy promises".

15. When the *Mu'adhdhin* is announcing the prayer-call, repeat his utterances after him. However, when he says *Hayya 'alassalāh* — *حَيَّ عَلَى الصَّلَاةِ* and *Hayya 'alal falāh* — *حَيَّ عَلَى الْفَلَاحِ*

say in reply *Lā haula walā quwata illa billahil 'aliyyil'azim* — *لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ*

*hauḷa walā quwwata illa billahil 'aliyyil'azim*¹. In the

course of announcing the call for dawn prayers when the

Mu'adhdhin says *Assalatu khairum min-nawm* — *الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ النَّوْمِ*

min-annaum. (Prayer is better than sleep) say these words

in reply *Sadaqta wabararta* — *صَدَقْتَ وَبَرَرْتَ*. (You spoke true and good).

16. When the announcer of Takbir says *Qad qama-tissalah* — *قَدْ قَامَتِ الصَّلَاةُ*

say these words in reply *Aqama-hallahu wa adamahā* — *أَقَامَهَا اللَّهُ وَأَدَامَهَا*. (May God preserve him for ever).

17. The women should say their prayers in the home instead of going to the mosque. On one occasion the wife of Hadrat Abu Humaid Sa'adi (God be pleased with them) submitted: "O Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon you)! I cherish a great desire to say prayers in your company". The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "I am aware of your eagerness. But it is better for you to say prayers in your room than in the verandah outside your room and saying prayers in the verandah of your house is better for you than saying prayers in the courtyard of your home".

However, the women should try their best to supply the need of the mosque. They should arrange the supply

1. There is no power and might but of Allah the Exalted, the Magnificent.

of water, mats, incense and perfumes and other articles of use to the mosques and should cherish feelings of deep attachment to the mosque in their hearts.

18. Take grown up children with you to the mosque. Mothers ought to persuade their children to go to the mosque so that they may develop eagerness and enthusiasm for prayers. Show tenderness, love and affection to children in the mosque. If they commit any wrong or an act of mischief, do not rebuke or bully them. Make them understand the proper etiquettes with love and affection and instruct them to perform good deeds.

Etiquettes of Saying Prayers

1. Observe perfect cleanliness and purity for the purpose of saying the prayers. Brush your teeth also when performing ablutions. The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed: "The distinctive mark of the members of my Ummah on the Doomsday will be that their brows and organs of ablution will be glowing with the radiance of Divine Light. Hence it is open to everyone to enhance his share of the Divine Light as much as he wants".
2. Put on clean, neat, respectable civilized and proper dress for observing prayers. The Holy Qur'an affirms:

يَبْنَى اَدَمَ خُدُوَا زِيْنَتِكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ .

Yā banī ādama khudhū zinatakum 'inda kulli masjidin.

"O sons of Adam ! Adorn yourself properly at each hour of prayer."

3. Be punctual in the observance of prayers.

اِنَّ الصَّلٰوةَ كَانَتْ عَلٰى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ كِتٰبًا مَّوْقُوْتًا .

Innassalāta kānat 'alalmu'minīna kitāban mauqūtā.

The prayer has been made obligatory for the believers to be observed at prescribed hours. Hadrat 'Abdullah b. Mas'ud (God be pleased with him) once submitted to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him):

“O Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon you) ! Which deed is the most favourite one to God”. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) replied : “To say prayer at the proper hour”. Furthermore, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : “God has made five prayers obligatory. A person who after performing ablutions carefully observes these prayers in perfect humility at their proper hours acquires a right of salvation by God ; but he who neglected these prayers has no right to anticipate forgiveness and salvation by God. In this case, it is entirely up to the Will of God to forgive him or to punish him” *(Malik)*

4. Always say your prayers in congregation. At times when you miss the congregation for any reason, try to say the obligatory (Fard) prayers in a mosque. However, offering of Sunnat¹ prayers is permissible at home also. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed : “The person who joins the congregation for prayer at the start i.e. first Takbir for forty days at a stretch is secured from the torments of Hell as well as from the evil of discord”. *(Tirmidhi)*

In addition to this, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also affirmed : “If the people become aware of the rewards and blessings of offering prayers in a congregation, they would hasten to join the congregation for prayer despite a thousand hinderances. The first row of a congregation for prayer is like the row of angels. It is better for two men to offer prayers together than separately. The larger the congregation the dearer it is to God”. *(Abū Dawud)*

5. Say prayers in peace. Perform bows (*Ruku'*) and prostrations (*Sajda*) calmly. Rising from a bow, stand straight with ease and then go into prostration. Keep a suitable

1. Prayers that are not obligatory (Fard) but supererogatory offered by the Holy Prophet practically and without fail.

interval between two prostrations and in this interval, say the following prayer :

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَارْحَمْنِي وَاهْدِنِي وَاجْبُرْنِي وَعَافِنِي وَارْزُقْنِي

«ابوداؤد»

Allahumm-aghfir li warhamni wahdini wajburni wa 'āfini warzuqni. (Abū Dawūd)

“O God, forgive me, be merciful to me, set me on the right path, remove my misery, grant me peace and provide for my sustenance.”

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed : “The person who observes prayer properly, the prayer itself blesses him with good wishes in these words ‘May God protect thee in the same manner in which thou took care of me’”.

And the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also affirmed : “The worst form of theft is the theft of prayer”. The people submitted : “O Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon you) ! How can one commit a theft in prayer”. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) answered : “By skipping over the complete performance of bows and prostrations”.

6. Start making preparations for the prayer at once on hearing the call. Perform ablutions and reach the mosque well before time. Sit down quietly in the line and wait for the congregation to form. It is symbolic of hypocrites to be sluggish, to tarry and go for the prayers in a languid manner after hearing the prayer-call.

7. Announce the prayer-call with eagerness and zest. A person asked the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) : “O Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon you) ! Tell me a deed that can lead me to Paradise”. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : “Announce the call for

prayer". The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) further affirmed : "Within the extent to which the call of the *Mu'adhdhin* reaches each man who hears the call will bear witness in favour of the *Mu'adhdhin* on the Day of Judgement. A shepherd who grazes his flock in the pasture and pronounces the call in a loud voice at the fixed hour, all things within the radius of the area in which his voice vibrates will stand testimony in his favour on the Day of Judgement". (Bukhāri)

8. If you are acting as an Imam, discharge your functions in relation to the saying of prayer in accordance with all the manners and rules prescribed by religion. Keep in view the interests of the congregation and perform your duty as a leader well. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed : "The Imams who lead the congregation in prayer in a proper manner and entertain a high sense of personal responsibility for the good performance of worship by members of their congregation will obtain reward for the prayers of their congregation also. The Imam's reward in this case will be equal to the combined reward of the congregation. However, the reward and virtue of the members of the congregation is not curtailed thereby". (Tabrani)
9. Say your prayers with humility in such a state that the heart should be filled with a sense of awe of the Greatness and Glory of God and your entire being should be overwhelmed with trepidation and solemnity. It is a great sacrilege to make unnecessary movements of hand and foot, scratching any part of the body, to pass fingers through the beard, to plug the nose with a finger or to fold up your dress. Take the utmost care to avoid such actions.
10. Seek to gain nearness to God through prayers. Say prayers in such a state of mind as if you are in the presence of God or at least be mindful that God is watching you. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon

him) observed :

“The bondman is nearest to God at the moment when he is lying in prostration before Him. Hence while you are performing the act of prostration, pray fervently.”

(Muslim)

11. Say prayers with eagerness and zest. The formal observance of prayers as if prayer were a burden or a compulsion is no genuine form of worship. Having said prayers of one time, look forward to the next hour of prayers with eagerness and fervour. One day after having offered the Maghrib prayers, some people stayed waiting for the hour of 'Isha prayers. Presently, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) arrived with such hurried steps that he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was panting for breath. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : “O people ! Be happy, your Lord opened a gate of the heavens and showed your view to His angels and said with pride : ‘Look my devotees have finished one prayer and are awaiting the next hour of worship’.” (Ibn Majah)
12. Do not say prayers in a hurried manner with a sense of ‘Let us get over with it’, like the careless and carefree persons. Remember God with a sincere heart and say prayers with complete devotion and a solemn awareness of duty and direct your heart, mind, feelings, passions, thoughts and ideas to converge on God. Prayer, in order to become a genuine form of worship, must contain remembrance of God. The prayer of the hypocrites is always devoid of the remembrance of the Lord.
13. Discharge the duty enjoined upon you by prayer even after the prayer and manage your whole life in such a manner that it should fully reflect the injunctions contained in the prayers. The Holy Qur’an affirms : “Prayer serves as a deterrent to immorality and contumacy”. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) elucidated the same point through a deeply impressive simile :

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) shook a dry branch of a tree briskly so that all the leaves of the branch fell off. Thereupon the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "The sins of those who say prayers drop off as the leaves of this dry branch fell off". Afterwards the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) recited this verse of the Holy Qur'an:

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفِي النَّهَارِ وَزُلْفًا مِنَ اللَّيْلِ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ
يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرٌ لِلذَّكْرِينَ . ﴿هود ١١٤﴾

*Wa aqimissalāta tarafayinnahāri wa zulfan min-allail.
Innal hasanāti yudh-hibnassayyiāti. Dhālika dhikrā
lidhhdhākirin. (11 : 114)*

"Establish worship at the two ends of the day and in some watches of the night. Lo! good deeds annul ill deeds. This is a reminder for the mindful".

14. Recite the Qur'an slowly in the course of prayers and observe other narrations of the prayer at a slow pace with careful attention and devotion of heart and mind. The practice of reciting the Qur'an and saying other words of the prayer with understanding augments your fervour and the prayer then attains the form of genuine worship.
15. Observe prayers regularly and don't ever miss any prayer. It is the basic attribute of the believers to be regular and punctual in observing prayers:

إِلَّا الْمُصَلِّينَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ دَائِمُونَ .

﴿المعارج ٢٢-٢٣﴾

Il-lal mussalinalladhina hum 'alā salātihim da'imūn.

(70 : 22-23)

“Save worshippers who are constant at their worship”.

16. Alongwith regular observance of obligatory prayers, you should offer supererogatory worship and offer praises to God frequently. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: “Any man who offers twelve Rak'ahs (supererogatory prayers) during a period of day and night in addition to the five obligatory prayers, God ordains a dwelling to be built for this man in Paradise”. (Muslim)
17. Say your supererogatory prayers (Sunnan and Nawafil) off and on in your homes also. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed: “Offer some supererogatory prayers at home after saying obligatory prayers in the mosque. God shall bestow goodness in your homes as a reward for these prayers”. (Muslim). The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) himself frequently offered Sunan and Nawāfil at home.
18. When you set out from the house for dawn prayers, say this prayer :

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ فِي قَلْبِي نُورًا وَفِي بَصَرِي نُورًا وَفِي سَمْعِي

نُورًا وَفِي يَمِينِي نُورًا وَفِي شِمَالِي نُورًا وَفِي خَلْفِي

نُورًا وَفِي أَمَامِي نُورًا وَاجْعَلْ لِي نُورًا وَفِي عَصْبِي نُورًا

وَفِي لَحْيِي نُورًا وَفِي دَمِي نُورًا وَفِي شَعْرِي نُورًا وَفِي

لِسَانِي نُورًا وَاجْعَلْ فِي نَفْسِي نُورًا وَاعْظِمْ لِي نُورًا وَاجْعَلْنِي

نُورًا وَاجْعَلْ مِنْ فَوْقِي نُورًا وَ مِنْ تَحْتِي نُورًا اللَّهُمَّ اعْطِنِي

نُورًا . «حصن حصين»

“Allahumma j'al fi qalbi nūran wa fi basari nūran wa fi sam'i nūran wa 'an yamini nūran wa 'an shimāli nūran wa min khalfi nūran wa min amāmi nūran waj'al li nūran wa fi 'asabi nūran wa fi dami nūran wa fi sha'ri nūran wa fi lisāni nūran waj'al fi nafsi nūran wa a'zim li nūran waj'alni nūran waj'al min fauqi nūran wa min tahti nūran Allahumma a'tini nūrā.

(Hisn Hasien)

O God ! Make Light in mine heart, Light in mine eye, Light in mine ear, Light on my right, Light on my left, 'Light above me, Light beneath me, Light before me, Light behind me, and make thou for me Light. Light in my tongue, Light in my sinews, Light in my flesh, Light in my blood, Light in mine hair, Light in my body, Light in my soul and magnify for me Light ! O God bestow upon me Light !

19. When you have finished the performance of dawn and evening prayers, repeat the following prayer seven times before engaging in conversation.

اللَّهُمَّ اجْرِنِي مِنَ النَّارِ

Allahumma ajirni minan nār.

“O God ! Protect me from the Fire”.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed :

“After the dawn and evening prayers, repeat the following prayer seven times before engaging in conversation. If perchance you die in the course of that day or night, you shall certainly be saved from Hell”.

20. After each prayer, repeat *استغفر الله Astaghfir ullah* three times and then say this prayer :

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ السَّلَامُ وَ مِنْكَ السَّلَامُ تَبَارَكْتَ يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ
وَالْإِكْرَامِ . «مسلم»

*Allahumma ant-assalāmu wa mink-as-salāmu tabarakta
yā dhal-jalāli wal-ikrām. (Muslim)*

“O God ! Thou art the peace and from Thee is the peace; Blessed art Thou, O Lord of Majesty and Glory.

Ḥadīrat Thaubān (God be pleased with him) reports :

“The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to repeat *أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ* (I seek forgiveness from Allah) three times after finishing each prayer and afterwards said this prayer”. *(Muslim)*

21. Observe proper care in keeping the lines straight for offering the prayer in congregation. Keep the lines perfectly straight and stand shoulder to shoulder close to each other, leaving no space in between. Do not form lines in the rear unless the front lines are filled. On one occasion in a congregation for prayer, a man was standing in line in such a manner that the position of his chest was inclined forward. On seeing the man standing in this fashion, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) warned : “O people of God ! you must stand in straight lines in a proper manner else God shall cause you to stand in opposite directions to each other” *(Muslim, Vol. 1)*. On one occasion, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : “Any man who arranges the line in a formation, God shall bestow Grace on him ; and any man who causes disarray in the line, God shall cause him to suffer chaos”.

(Abū Dāwūd, Vol. 1)

22. The line of the children must be formed behind the lines of men. Do not let the children stand with their elders. However, in the 'Īdgah, where certain difficulties might be faced or where the possibility of the loss of children exists, there is no need to send the children to form lines in the rear. Make them stand with you. The lines of women should be formed either at the farthest rear or separately if a separate enclosure has been built in the mosque for women. Similarly, in the 'Īdgah make separate arrangements for the congregation of women.

Etiquettes of Reciting the Qur'an

1. Recite the Holy Qur'an with eagerness and fervour and put all your heart and soul in the recitation. Be sure that love of the Qur'an means love of God. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed: "The best form of worship for my followers is recitation of the Qur'an".
2. Engage yourself in the recitation of the Qur'an most of the time and never feel weary of reciting the Holy Book. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed: "God has ordained that any man who engages himself in the recitation of Qur'an so constantly that he finds no time to send prayers to me, I shall provide him more without asking than those who ask". (*Tirmidhi*) Further than this, the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "The servant gets nearest unto God by means of reciting the Qur'an. (*Tirmidhi*) Instructing the people to recite the Holy Qur'an, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also observed: "The man who has studied the Qur'an and recites it daily can be likened to a basket full of musk whose sweet smell is making the whole atmosphere fragrant. And the man who has studied the Qur'an but does not recite it may be likened to a bottle full of musk whose mouth has been sealed with a stopper". (*Tirmidhi*)
3. Recite the Qur'an with the sole motive of seeking guidance. Do not recite the Holy Book for the sake of

gaining popularity, or establishing a reputation for good, harmonious recitation or making a name for piety. These are base motives and he who recites the Qur'ān with these motives in mind can obtain no guidance from the Qur'ān.

4. Take care to be completely neat and clean before you sit down for recitation. Do not touch the Holy Book without performing ablution and recite it sitting in a clean and tidy place.
5. Sit cross-legged with your face towards the Qiblah and recite the Qur'ān with your head bowed, with utmost care, complete attention, eagerness of heart and in a proper manner. God affirms :

كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ
أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ . «ص ٢٩»

*Kitābun unzalnāhu ilaika mubārakun liyaddabbarū
āyātihi wa liyatadhakkaru ulul-albāb. (38 : 29)*

“(This is) a scripture that We have revealed unto thee, full of blessing, that they may ponder its revelations, and that men of understanding may get guidance from it”.

6. As far as possible recite the Qur'ān in a clear and distinct manner and read the letters correctly and utter the syllables in proper style and recite slowly. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : “Use your voice and style to recite the Qur'ān in the best manner”. *(Abu Dāwud)*

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to recite each word in a clear and distinct manner and read each verse separately.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed :

“He who recites the Qur'ān will be told on the Day of

Judgement". Recite the Qur'an now in the same clear and distinct manner and in the same harmonious style in which you used to recite it with care and propriety in the world and as a reward for the recitation of each verse you shall be elevated one degree higher and your ultimate place is near the end of the final verse". (Tirmidhi)

7. Do not recite in an extremely loud or very low voice. Keep your voice at a medium pitch. God ordains :

وَلَا تَجْهَرُ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا تُخَافِتُ بِهَا وَابْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ

سَبِيلًا . «بني اسرائيل ١١٠»

Wa lā tajhar bisalātika wa lā tukhāfit bihā wabtaghi baina dhālika sabilā. (17 : 110)

"Be not loud voiced in thy prayer nor too low voiced but follow a way between".

8. Recite the Qur'an whenever you find time, but do try to recite Qur'an in the course of Tahajjud prayer at dawn. This recitation of the Qur'an entails the reward of highest degree and it should be the aspiration of the true believers to attain the apex of excellence in reward for recitation.
9. Do not complete the reading of the whole of the Holy Qur'an in less than three days. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "He who completes the recitation of the full text of the Qur'an in less than three days does not understand the meanings of the Qur'an at all".
10. Keep in mind the glory and value of the Qur'an and as you observe the etiquette of keeping your person neat and clean while reciting the Qur'an, so also you must purge your heart of evil thoughts, wicked passions and impure purposes. The heart that is tainted with evil and wicked thoughts and passions cannot appreciate and admire

the glory and value of the Holy Qur'ān, nor can the bearer of such an evil heart grasp the meanings and realities of the Qur'ān. Ḥadrat 'Ikrama (God be pleased with him), whenever he opened the Qur'ān, he often fainted. He used to say: "Those are the words of my Great and Glorious Lord".

11. Recite the Qur'ān with the conviction that on this earth this Book is the only source of guidance for mankind. Meditate and reflect deeply over the meanings of the Qur'ān from this viewpoint and try to grasp the realities and learn the wisdom contained in this Book. Do not recite it rapidly but form the habit of reading slowly, distinctly and with careful understanding of the meanings and try to ponder over the message conveyed to us. Ḥadrat 'Abdullah b. 'Abbās (God be pleased with him) often remarked: "I consider it far better to recite small Surahs like 'Al-Qari'ah' and 'Al-Qadr' with understanding and care than to read through the longer Surahs of 'Al-Baqarah' and 'Āli-'Imran' at a rapid pace without careful understanding of the meanings of the words. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) once recited this one verse over and over again all through the night.

ان تعذبهم فانهم عبادك و ان تغفر لهم فانك انت

العزیز الحکیم . «المائدة ١١٨»

*In tu'adhdhibhum fa-innahum 'ibāduka wa in taghfir
lahum fa-innaka ant-al-'aziz-ul-Hakim. (5 : 118)*

"If Thou punisheth them, Lo ! they are Thy slaves, and if Thou forgiveth them, Lo ! Thou only Thou art the Mighty, the Wise".

12. Recite the Qur'ān with full determination to adapt your life to the injunctions of this Holy Book and to reform the pattern of your living in the light of the guidance

provided by it. Make constant endeavours to order your life in conformity with the Qur'ānic injunctions and purge your life of all impurities. The Holy Qur'ān like a mirror will clearly reflect each blot and spot on your character. It is entirely your own responsibility to wash off these blots and stains from your life.

13. Feel the full impact of the verses during recitation of the Holy Qur'ān. Rejoice and feel happy on reading about the narrations of Divine Mercy, Forgiveness and the Everlasting bounties of Paradise. And on reading about the narrations of the wrath, anger and the terrific punishments of Hell your body should tremble, eyes should flow and the heart should melt with the sentiments of repentance and shame. Your face should glow with the light of happiness on reading about the successes of the pious and faithful people and you should be seized with deep sorrow on reading about the destruction of nations. The study of verses containing warnings and forebodings of torments should make you tremble and your soul should be filled to the brim with the sentiments of gratitude on reading the verses which bear glad tidings.
14. After reciting the Holy Qur'ān offer a prayer. The words of one of the prayers offered by Ḥaḍrat 'Umar (God be pleased with him) are as follows :

اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِي التَّفَكُّرَ وَالتَّدَبُّرَ بِمَا يَتْلُوهُ لِسَانِي مِنْ كِتَابِكَ
وَالْفَهْمَ لَهُ ، وَالْمَعْرِفَةَ بِمَعَانِيهِ وَالنَّظَرَ فِي عَجَائِبِهِ
وَالْعَمَلَ بِذَلِكَ مَا بَقِيَتْ ، إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ .

Allahummarzuqni-tafakkura wat-tadabbura bimā yat-lūhu lisāni min kitābika wal-fahma lahū-wal ma'rifata bimā'anīhi wan-nazara fī 'ajā'ibihī wal'amala bidhalika mā baqitū innaka 'alā kulli shai'in qadir.

“God! Whatever my tongue recites from Thy Book, grant me the favour to reflect upon it. God! bestow upon me the understanding of it. Vouchsafe to me the knowledge of its meaning, and spirit, and the vision to see its niceties. Grant me the favour to act according to its injunctions as long as I live. Your Being is without doubt Omnipotent”.

Etiquettes of Friday

1. Take full measures to clean and purify yourself on Fridays. Bathe and adorn yourself in the best possible manner.

Ḥadīrat ‘Abdullah b. ‘Umar (God be pleased with him) reports that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: “The person who comes to offer prayers in the Friday congregation should bathe himself first”.

(Bukhāri, Muslim)

According to the statement of Ḥadīrat Abu Huraira (God be pleased with him), the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: “Every Muslim owes duty to God that he should take bath every week and wash his head and body”.

Ḥadīrat Abu Sa‘id (God be pleased with him) relates that the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: It is obligatory upon every adult youth to take bath on Friday and to brush the teeth and use perfume if available”.

(Bukhāri, Muslim)

Ḥadīrat Salmān (God be pleased with him) states that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed: “Any man who bathes on Friday and takes full care to keep himself neat and clean and uses hair oil and perfume and then reaches the mosque just after mid-day and does not part two men sitting in a line in the mosque and then offers the prayer which God had decreed to him and afterwards listens to the sermon seated calmly when the Imam ascends the pulpit, God shall pardon all

the sins committed by him during the interval between this Friday and the preceding one". *(Bukhāri)*

2. Take care to perform good deeds on Friday such as most frequent remembrance of God, recitation of the Holy Qur'an, prayer, Sadaqa, charity, enquiring after the welfare of the sick, joining the funerals, visit to the graveyard and other pious acts.

Hadrat Abu Huraira (God be pleased with him) reports that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed :

"The most important day that ever dawned is the Friday. It was on this day that Adam (peace be upon him) was created and on this day he was admitted to Paradise and it was on Friday when he was expelled from there (and was appointed the vicegerent, of God) and it is on this day that the Doom will descend". *(Muslim)*

Hadrat Abu Sa'id Khudri (God be pleased with him, reports that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "There are five such acts that if a man shall perform them in the course of a single day, God shall write his name among those destined to enter Paradise. These acts are :

1. To enquire after the welfare of the sick.

2. To join a funeral.

3. To keep a fast.

4. To offer Friday Prayer.

5. To emancipate a slave.

(Ibn Hibban)

It is evident that the performance of all these five acts together is possible only on a Friday.

In another tradition Hadrat Abu Sa'id Khudri reports that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Any man who recites Surah Kahf on Friday, a radiant light will glow for him in the space between two Fridays". *(Nasa'i)*

And Hadrat Abu Huraira (God be pleased with him states that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Seventy thousand angels beg mercy for the man who recites Surah Ad-Dukhan on Friday night and all of his sins are pardoned". (Tirmidhi)

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed : "There is a certain blessed moment in the course of a Friday that any prayer said in by a believer is accepted by the Almighty". (Bukhāri)

Which blessed moment is this ? The opinion of the 'Ulama is at variance on this point, because of the reason that traditions mention different times in this respect. However, the 'Ulama agree that two statements are more correct than the others. According to one statement, the intervening time from the moment the preacher ascends the pulpit to deliver the sermon to the end of the prayers is the most propitious one. Another version holds that blessed moment is the end of Friday when the sun is about to set in the horizon. It is advisable, therefore, that you should pass both the times in offering prayers and supplications in utter humility and reverence to the Lord. It is better to add the following prayer with your other prayers :

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ رَبِّي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ خَلَقْتَنِي وَأَنَا عَبْدُكَ

وَأَنَا عَلَى عَهْدِكَ وَوَعْدِكَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ أُبُوءُ لَكَ بِنِعْمَتِكَ

عَلَى وَأُبُوءُ بِذُنُوبِي فَاعْفُرْ لِي فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا

أَنْتَ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا صَنَعْتُ .

*Allahumma anta rabbi la ilaha illa anta khalaqtani wa
ana 'abduka wa ana 'ala 'ahdika wa wa'dika mas-tata'u*

*abū'u laka bini'matika 'alayya wa abū'u biḍḥanbi
faḡfirli fainnahū lā yaḡfir-udh-dhunūba illa anta
a'udhu bika min sharri ma sana'tu. (Bukhāri, Nasā'i)*

“God ! You are my Lord. There is no deity except You. You created me. I am Your servant and I hold firm to my promise and allegiance to You as far as lies in my power. I acknowledge all the bounties and favours that You have conferred on me. I confess my sin ; forgive me, for there is no one else except You Who has the power to grant pardon for sins and I beseech protection against the evil effects of my own sins”. *(Bukhāri, Nasā'i)*

3. Observe Friday, prayers according to all the prescribed etiquettes. Friday prayer is obligatory upon every adult, healthy, resident and sane Muslim male. If there be two men beside the Imam present at a place, the Friday prayer must be offered. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed :

“The people ought not to miss Friday prayer under any circumstance or else God shall seal their hearts (and having been denied Divine Guidance) they will become one with those who are forgetful (of Religion)”. *(Muslim)*

According to the testimony of Ḥaḍrat Abu Huraira (God be pleased with him), the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed : “Any man who comes to the mosque for saying the Friday prayer after bathing and washing himself clean and then offers ‘Sunnah’ prayers which God had decreed and then sits quietly till the end listening to the sermon of the Imam and afterwards offers obligatory prayers with the Imam, God shall grant him pardon for the sins which he committed between the preceding Friday and this one and the sins committed till three days before”.

Ḥaḍrat Yazid b. Maryam (God be pleased with him) relates : “I was going to offer Friday prayers when I chanced to meet Ḥaḍrat ‘Abaya b. Rifa‘ah (God be pleased with him) on the way. He asked me : Where are you

going ?" I said : I am going to offer Friday prayers. Ḥaḍrat 'Abaya (God be pleased with him) remarked : "I congratulate you. Every step you move, you move on the path leading towards Allah". The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed : "Fire is made unlawful for the man whose feet are soiled with dust while walking along the path of God".

4. Hasten towards the mosque the moment you hear the call for Friday prayer. Close your business and stop your other activities at once. Listen to the sermon and say prayers with perfect devotion. Resume your business as soon as the Friday prayer is over. The Holy Qur'an affirms :

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ

فَأَسْعَوْا إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ

كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ . فَإِذَا قُضِيَ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ

وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَعَلَّكُمْ

تُفْلِحُونَ . «الجمعة ٩ - ١٠»

Yā-ayyu-halladhīna āmanū idhā nūdiya lis-salāti min yaumil jum'ati fasau ilā dhikrillahi wadhur-ul-bai'a dhātikum khairullakum in kuntum t'alamūn. Faidhā qudiatissalātu fantashirū filardi wabtaghū min fadlillahi wadhkur-ul laha kathīran-la'allakum tuflihūn.

(Al-Jumah : 9-10)

"O ye who believe ! When the call is heard for the prayer of the day of congregation hasten unto remembrance of Allah and leave your trading. That is better for you

if ye did but know. And when the prayer is ended, then disperse in the land and seek of Allah's bounty, and remember Allah much, that ye may be successful".

These verses contain the following injunctions for the true believers :

1. A true believer should offer Friday prayers with complete devotion and full awareness of all the etiquettes of this prayer. He should stop all other engagements on hearing the prayer-call and hasten towards the mosque.
2. It is unlawful for the true believer to carry on business or to engage in other worldly interests after hearing the announcement of the prayer-call and thus having forsaken the memory of God to turn into a world-loving creature.
3. The secret of a pious man's salvation lies in his living as a servant and slave of God in this world. Whenever the call of God reaches him, he should, as a devoted and obedient servant forsake all interests and set aside all worldly advantages and rush to respond to the call of his Master. He should proclaim by deed that the sacrifice of worldly advantage for the sake of fulfilling the demands of religion does not signify ruin and failure. On the other hand, destruction and failure lies in transgressing the bounds of religion in his lust for gaining worldly interests.
4. The theory of renouncing the world altogether is fallacious. Man should not be so much immersed in spiritual pursuits that he should become incapable of dealing with worldly affairs. The Holy Qur'an, in fact, enjoins upon the faithful to disperse on the earth as soon as the prayer is over and to take full advantage of all the resources and means of livelihood that God has provided on the earth. The Qur'an affirms that the pious should exert all their energies and employ all faculties in the business of earning their share of the subsistence provided by God. It is not proper for a true believer to be dependant on others for his needs, nor is it advisable for him

to neglect his duty of providing for the needs of his dependants and to cause them suffering and dismay.

5. The final important injunction is that the true believer should not be engrossed in worldly affairs so deeply that he should forget God. He should remember under all circumstances that the real gain and essence of his life is the remembrance of God. Hadrat Sa'id b. Jubair (God be merciful to him) remarks: "The remembrance of God does not only consist in announcing the greatness of Allah or uttering praises of God.

All those are engaged in the remembrance of God who are busy ordering their lives in conformity with the Commands of God".

Make an effort to reach the mosque for the Friday prayer as soon as possible and try to get a seat for yourself in front line by arriving early.

According to the statement of Abū Huraira (God be pleased with him), the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "Any man who bathes himself and washes his whole body to cleanse it of all impurities and then reaches the mosque first is like the person who offers the sacrifice of one camel, and he who arrives next to him is like the person who sacrifices one cow (or buffalo) and the one who reaches in the third place is like a person who offers the sacrifice of a horned ram. Coming next to him is like a person who gives away as it were, one egg in the way of God. Later when the Imam comes forward to deliver the sermon, the angels leave the gate of the mosque and come over to sit in the mosque to hear the sermon and say the prayers". (*Bukhāri, Muslim*)

Hadrat 'Irbad b. Sāria (God be pleased with him) states: "The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to invoke mercy of God three times upon those who formed the first line and only once upon those who were in the second line". (*Ibn Mājah, Naed'i*)

And Hadrat Abū Huraira (God be pleased with him) observes: "The people do not know the high degree of reward and blessings reserved for the people who form the first line of prayer. If they know it, they would start drawing lots for the privilege of joining the first line".

(*Bukhārī, Muslim*)

6. Offer your Friday prayers in a congregational mosque. Take your seat wherever it is available. Do not jump over people's heads and shoulders in an effort to get a seat in front. This causes considerable mental and physical discomfort to the people, disturbs their peace of mind and devotion and diverts their attention.

Hadrat 'Abdullah b. 'Abbas relates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed:

"The person who retreats from the first line of prayer and stands in the second line with the intention that his brother Muslim may suffer no inconvenience, God will grant such a man reward and blessing twice as much as to people in the first line".

(*Tabrānī*)

Hadrat Salman (God be pleased with him) reports that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed: The person who bathes himself on Friday and cleanses and purifies himself as much as he can, and then uses oil and applies perfume and reaches the mosque just after mid-day and does not part two men sitting together (in other words he does not commit the error of jumping over the heads and shoulders of people, or making his way through the lines or sitting between two men by pushing them apart, but sits down quietly wherever he finds room) and offers prayer and Sunnah which God had decreed upon him and afterwards listens quietly to the sermon when the Imam takes the pulpit, God will pardon all his sins which he committed during the period between that Friday and the preceding one"

(*Bukhārī*)

7. The sermon should be brief as compared to the prayer. The sermon in fact is meant to induce people to offer devotions and worship to God, while prayer is not only worship in itself, but the best worship. Hence it is in no way proper to prolong the sermon and go through the prayer quickly in a shorter period of time. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed :

“To prolong the prayer and deliver a brief sermon is an attribute of the wise preacher. Hence say prayers for a longer period of time and make the sermon brief”.

(Muslim)

8. Listen to the sermon in silence and rapt attention, and with devotion, eagerness and in a receptive mood. Make up your mind with all sincerity to act upon the injunctions of God and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that you have come to know through the sermon. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed :

“The man who bathes and comes to offer Friday worship and says the prayer which God has destined for him and then sits quietly and listens to the sermon in rapt attention and with perfect devotion till the preacher has finished the sermon and afterward says obligatory prayer with the Imam, God shall pardon all his sins which he committed during the period between that Friday and the preceding one and his sins even committed during three days before it”.

(Muslim)

According to another tradition : “When the Preacher comes forward to deliver the sermon, then it is improper to say any prayer or engage in conversation”.

9. The second sermon must be delivered in Arabic. However, in the first sermon describe some injunctions of God and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), give some advice, provide guidance and remember God in

the local language of the participants of the congregation. The sermons which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) preached on Fridays reveal that the Preacher should provide advice and guidance to the Muslims in regard to the prevailing circumstances. This purpose can only be achieved if the preacher delivers his sermon to the congregation in the people's own language.

10. It is highly propitious to recite Surah al-'Alā and al-Ghāshiyā or Surah Munafiqūn and Surah al-Jum'ah in the obligatory prayers on Friday as was the practice of the Holy Prophet.
11. Make it essential to offer Darūd as much as possible and pray for His peace and blessings upon the Holy Prophet on Fridays. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed :

“Recite as much Darūd for me as possible on Fridays. The angels join this ‘Darūd’ prayer and Darūd is presented to me .
(Ibn Mājah)

Etiquettes of Funeral Prayers

1. Do join the funeral prayers. The funeral prayer is a petition of mercy for the deceased and this is a duty which everyone owes to the dead. If you fear the funeral prayer will be over by the time you have performed ablutions, then perform 'Tayammum' and join the prayers at once. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed: "Do say the funeral prayers. May be this prayer induces feelings of sorrow in you. A sorrowful man remains under the shadow of God and welcomes every pious deed". *(Hākim)*

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also affirmed: "The deceased whose funeral prayers are offered by three lines of Muslims will certainly be admitted to Paradise". *(Abū Dāwūd)*

2. At the time of saying funeral prayers, put the bier on the ground so that the head is towards the north, the feet towards the south and the face of the dead is turned in the direction of the Qiblah.
3. If you are leading the funeral prayer, stand facing the bosom of the dead.
4. The number of lines in a funeral prayer must be odd. A single line would suffice if those present at the funeral prayer are few, but if there are enough present, fall in three. As the number of people increases, form more lines, yet the number of lines should be kept odd.

Make a resolve in your mind before starting the funeral prayer that you are saying the funeral prayers to beg Mercy

from the Kind and Beneficent Lord for the deceased. The Imam as well as the followers should make this resolve.

6. Whatever the Imam says in the funeral prayer, the followers must repeat the same. The followers should not keep silent. However, the Imam should say Takbirs in a loud voice and the followers should repeat them in a low sound.
7. Say four Takbirs in the funeral prayer. Raise your hands up to the ears while saying the first Takbīr and then fold them on your abdomen and offer praise to God :

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ وَتَبَارَكَ اسْمُكَ وَتَعَالَى جَدُّكَ
وَجَلَّ ثَنَاءُكَ وَلَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُكَ .

*Subhānakallahumma wa bihamdika wa tabarakasmukā
wa ta'āla jadduka wa jalla thanā'uka walā ilāha ghairuk.*

“God ! Thou art Pure and Supreme. High Praise and Thanksgiving is due to Thee. Thy Name is the Most Blessed one and the Bestower of Good. Thy Exaltedness and Glory art Most High. Thy Praise is Great and there is no deity except Thee”.

Now say the second Takbīr, but do not raise your hands, nor make a motion of the head. At the end of the second Takbīr, recite the ‘Darūd’ :

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ
عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ .
اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا بَارَكْتَ

عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَىٰ آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَّجِيدٌ .

Allahumma Salli 'alā Muhammadin Wa 'alā āli Muhammadin kama sallaitu 'alā Ibrāhīma wa-'alā-āli Ibrāhīma innaka Hamīd-um-majīd. Allahumma bārik 'alā Muhammadin v. 'alā-āli Muhammadin kamā bārakta 'alā Ibrāhīma wa-'alā-āli Ibrāhīma innaka Hamīdum-majīd.

“God : May Thy peace and blessings be upon Muhammad and his family, as Thou sent Thy peace and blessings upon Ibrahim and his family. Without doubt Thou possesseth the greatest attributes and art Most High. God ! May Thy peace and blessings be upon Muhammad and his family, as Thou sent peace and blessings upon Ibrahim and his family. Without doubt Thou possesseth the greatest attributes and art Most High”.

Now say the third Takbīr without raising your hands and offer a prayer with prescribed supplication to beg mercy from the Lord for the dead. Finally, say the fourth Takbīr and say ‘Salām’ turning the head to right and left.

8. If the deceased is an adult male or female, say this prayer after the third Takbīr.

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِحَيِّنَا وَمَيِّتِنَا وَشَاهِدِنَا وَغَائِبِنَا وَصَغِيرِنَا

وَكَبِيرِنَا وَذَكَرْنَا وَأُنْشَنَا، اللَّهُمَّ مِنْ أَحَبِّتَهُ مِنَّا

فَأَحْبِهِ عَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ وَمَنْ تَوَفَّيْتَهُ مِنَّا فَتَوَفَّهُ عَلَى

الْإِيمَانِ .

Allahummaghfir lihayyinā wa mayyitinā wa shāhidinā

wa gha'ibinā wa saḡhīrinā wa kabīrinā wa dhakarīnā wa unthānā. Allāhumma man-ahyaitahu minnā faahyihī 'alal-islām wa man tawaffaitahū minnā fatawaffahu' alal-īman.

“God! Show mercy to our living, to our dead, to those who are present with us here and to those who are not present, to our youngsters, to our elders, to our men and to our women. God! Whomsoever it pleases Thee to keep alive among us, keep him alive as faithful of Islam and upon whomsoever it pleases Thee to send death, let him die in faith”.

If the deceased is a minor boy, say this prayer :

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهُ لَنَا فَرَطًا وَاجْعَلْهُ لَنَا أَجْرًا وَذَخْرًا وَاجْعَلْهُ لَنَا شَافِعًا وَمُشَفَّعًا .

Allāhummaj'alhu lanā faratan waj'alhu lanā ajran wa dhukhran waj'alhu lanā shāfi'an wa mushaffa'ā.

“God! Let this boy serve as a means of Thy grant of salvation to us and let him be a repository of our reward and welfare in the eternal world and let him be our successful intercessor”.

If the deceased is a minor girl, say this prayer. The meaning of this prayer is identical with the prayer offered for the boy.

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهَا لَنَا فَرَطًا وَاجْعَلْهَا لَنَا أَجْرًا وَذَخْرًا وَاجْعَلْهَا لَنَا شَافِعَةً وَمُشَفَّعَةً .

Allāhummaj'alhā lanā faratan waj'alhā lanā ajran wa dhukhran waj'alhā lanā shāfi'atan wa mushaffa'atan.

9. While going along with a funeral procession think over your own end and visualise that as you are proceeding to commit the deceased to earth, in the same way others will be proceeding one day to bury you in the earth. In this pensive and thoughtful frame of mind, you will gain the favour of remembering your ultimate end for some time at least and the worries and cares of the world will vanish from your mind.

Etiquettes for Attending the Death-bed

1. When you visit a person whose end is near, keep on reciting the Kalimah $\text{لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ}$ —*Lā-ilaha illallahu Muhammad-ur-rasūl ullah*. (There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Apostle) in a loud voice. Do not press the patient to utter the Kalimah. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed : “When you sit by the death-bed of any Muslim, keep reciting the Kalimah”. (*Muslim*)
2. Recite ‘Surah Yasīn’ when the patient is heaving last breaths. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed : “Recite ‘Surah Yasīn’ by the death-bed”. (*Fatawa Alamgiri*, p. 100, Vol. 1). When the person has breathed his last, do not recite the Qur’ān near the deceased till his body has been washed. The man who needs a bath and the woman who is passing through the period of her menses or the after-birth course should not go near the dead.
3. Say $\text{إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ}$ —*Innā lillahi wa innā ilaihi raji’ūn.*¹
The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed : “The following three rewards are conferred on a man who recites $\text{إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ}$ —*Innā*

1. “We are for God and we shall return to Him”.

lillahi wa innā ilaihi rāji'ūn. (We are all creatures of God and we shall return to Him) in the moment of distress :

* Firstly, blessings and salvation descend on him from God.

* Secondly, he receives the reward for seeking the Truth.

* Thirdly, his loss is compensated and a better reward in lieu of the dead and lost one is conferred on the

bereaved person who says : *إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ* — *Inna*

lillahi wa innā ilaihi rāji'ūn. (Tabarānī)

4. Abstain from loud lamentations and wailing for the deceased person. However, if the eyes are filled with tears out of grief it is but natural. When the Holy Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) son Hadrat Ibrahim (God be pleased with him) expired, the eyes of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) were filled with tears. Similarly, when his grandson, the child of his daughter Zainab (God be pleased with her) passed away, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) shed tears. The people asked : "O Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon you)! How is it?" The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "This is a blessing which God has bestowed upon the hearts of His creatures. God shows mercy to those among His creatures who are tender hearted and kind". The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) further observed : "He who slaps his face, tears his clothes and indulges in lamentation like the pagans, has nothing to do with us".

5. As soon as one expires, straighten out his arms and legs ; close the eyes and pass a wide bandage below the chin and tie its ends over the head. Both toes of the feet should be tied together with a strip of cloth. Wrap the body in a

shroud and keep on reciting *بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَىٰ مِلَّةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ*

—*Bismillahi wa 'alā millati rasūlillah*. “In the name of God and according to the custom of the followers of the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Pass around an obituary notice among the people. At the moment of lowering the corpse in the grave, continue to say the same prayer.

6. Mention the virtues of the dead and avoid narration of his demerits. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: “Do mention the virtues of your dead and keep silent about their vices”. (*Abū Dāwūd*). In addition, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed: “When a man dies and a few of his neighbours testify that he was a good man, God observes—“I accept your testimony and I grant him pardon even for those of his acts which remained a secret to you”.

(*Ibn Hibban*)

On one occasion the companions (God be pleased with them) praised the virtues of a dead man in the presence of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) whereupon the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: “This dead person's abode has been made in Paradise! O people, you are the witnesses of God on earth. If you testify that a certain man is good, God admits him to Paradise and if you bear witness that a certain man is wicked, God consigns him to Hell”.

(*Bukhārī, Muslim*)

And the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also affirmed: “When you visit a patient to enquire after his welfare or join a funeral procession, do utter good remarks, for the angels say ‘So be it’ (‘*Āmin*) after each good remark you make”.

(*Muslim*)

7. Always show patience and fortitude on the death of your near and dear ones. Do not utter any ungrateful remark. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed:

“When a man observes patience on the death of his child, God enquires from His angels, “Did you extract the soul of the child of my bondsman?” The angels reply: “O, Sustainer! We have complied with Thy bidding”. Then God enquires: “Did you extract the life of the darling of my bondsman”? The angels submit: “Yes”. God then asks: “And what did my servant say?” They submit: Lord! He offered praise to Thee and recited

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ—*Innā lillāhi wa innā illaihi raji‘ūn.*

“We all belong to God and to Him shall we return”. Thereupon God ordains the angels: “Build a dwelling in Paradise for this servant of mine and name this dwelling ‘Bait al-Hamd’ (House of Thanksgiving)”. (*Tirmidhi*)

8. Do not delay washing the body of the deceased. It is better to put some leaves of the ‘plum tree’ in the bath water and heat it a little. Stretch the body on a clean wooden board; take off its garments and wrap a sheet round the lower part of the body. Cover your hand with a cloth and clean the front and back private parts of the body. Take care that the wrapping sheet does not slip off. Then perform ablution on the body; there is no need, however, to rinse the mouth or pass water into the nose of the body during the performance of ablution. When washing the corpse block the ears and nostrils with cotton wool so that water does not enter into them. Then wash the head clean with soap or something else. Turn over the corpse towards the left side and pouring water from the right side bathe the body from head to foot. Similarly, pouring the water from the left side wash the body from head to foot. Take off the water soaked sheet and wrap a dry sheet round the lower part of the body. Now lift the body from the board, and place it in the coffin on the cot. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed: “God shall pardon forty capital sins of man who bathes a corpse and conceals the sins of the dead person; and the man who lowers the corpse in the grave, provides,

as it were, a home to the deceased to live in until the Day of Doom". (Tabrani)

9. Use a white cloth of average quality as a shroud for the body ; don't use a very costly cloth nor a cloth of very low quality. For men the shroud should consist of three garments : one sheet, one 'Tehband' (a sheet for wrapping round the lower part of the body) and a 'Kafni' or 'shirt' (a covering for the upper portion of the body). The length of the sheet should exceed the stature of the dead in measurement so that its ends may be tied on the side of the head as well as on the side of the feet. The measure of the width of the sheet should be adequate to cover the body well. For women, include an additional apparel 'sarband', a piece of cloth to cover the head and conceal the hair in the coffin. It should be one yard long and measure a little less than a yard in width. A 'Chest Band', a cloth to provide an additional covering from armpits to the knees, should also form part of a woman's coffin. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed : "God will provide dresses made of Sundus and Astabra¹ in Paradise for him who puts the body of a deceased in coffin". (Hākim)
10. Keep your pace quick while taking the bier to the graveyard. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed : "Make haste in the matter of funerals". Hadrat Ibn Mas'ud (God be pleased with him) submitted to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) : "O Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon you) ! What should be the pace of our steps while taking the bier to the graveyard"? The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Keep the pace of your steps short of running. If the deceased was a good man, carry him to his good end quickly. If he was wicked one, make haste to remove his evil from your midst". (Abū Dāwūd)

1. Highest quality of silk interwoven with silver and gold threads.

11. Accompany the funeral on foot. On one occasion, when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was walking with a funeral procession, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw a few participants riding along. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) reprimanded them thus: "Don't you feel ashamed of yourselves! The angels are walking on foot, while you are riding on the backs of the beasts". However, on your way back from the burial, you can use a transport. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) went with the funeral procession of Abu Wahidi (God be pleased with him) on foot and returned on horseback.

12. Stand on your feet on seeing a funeral approaching and if you do not wish to accompany it, wait till the procession has moved on to some distance before resuming your journey or other activities. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed:

"Stand on your feet on seeing a funeral procession approaching. Those who accompany the funeral procession should not sit down until the bier has been placed on the ground".

13. Do offer funeral prayers. You should also participate in funeral processions and put your shoulder under the bier for some time. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed:

"Every Muslim owes a duty to accompany the funeral procession of a deceased Muslim". The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) further observed: "A man who participates in the funeral procession and offers funeral prayers will get a reward equal to one Carat. He who attends the burial also after saying the funeral prayers will receive a reward equal to two Carats". Some one submitted: "What will be the size of these two Carats?" The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed: "It will be equal to the mass of two mountains".

(*Bukhārī, Muslim*)

14. Let the grave be excavated from north to south lengthwise. Keep the body of the deceased turned towards the Qiblah when lowering it in the grave. If the body is light, two men are enough, otherwise three or four men may join in interring a body into the grave. At the moment of interment, untie the knots of the shroud and turn over the body towards the Qiblah.
15. Do observe purdah when interring a female body into the grave.
16. Start filling the grave with earth from the side of the head. Pick up the earth in both hands and throw it into the grave. Repeat the act three times. When throwing in the earth the first time say *Minhā Khalaqnākum*. "We created you out of this earth". When throwing in the earth the second time, say *Wa fiha nu'idukum*. "And We return you to the same earth". And when you throw in the earth the third time, say *Wa minhā nukhrijukum tāra'ā ukhrā*. "And We shall resurrect you from the same earth".
17. Do not raise the grave very high, nor make it in the form of a square. Fill the grave with the same amount of earth which was excavated from it. Sprinkle some water over the grave after filling it with earth.
18. Stay a while near the grave after burial. Offer prayers begging mercy for the deceased. Recite some verses of the Qur'ān and send its blessings after the departed soul. Ask other people to offer prayers to God to show mercy to the dead person. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) himself used to offer prayers to God for the grant of mercy to the deceased and observed to other people: "Pray to God that your brother may remain steadfast and beg mercy for him from the Lord as now is he to account for every moment of his wordly life".

(Abū Dāwūd)

19. If a bereavement occurs among the kin, relatives, or in the neighbourhood, send cooked food for one or two times to their house, because they will be too overcome with grief to think of cooking meals. *'Jami' Tirmidhi'* records that when the martyrdom of *Hadrat Ja'far* (God be pleased with him) was reported the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) commanded: "Prepare some food for the family of *Ja'far*. They are pre-occupied with grief today".
20. Do not mourn for the dead for a period of more than three days. However, for a woman whose husband is dead, the prescribed period of mourning is four months and ten days. When *Abu Sufyan* (God be pleased with him), the father of *Umm ul-Mo'minin Hadrat Ummi Habibah* (God be pleased with her) expired, the illustrious lady *Zainab* (God be pleased with her) came to offer condolences to her. *Hadrat Ummi Habibah* (God be pleased with her) sent for perfume in which some quantity of yellow saffron had been mixed. *Umm ul-Mo'minin* rubbed that perfume on her slave-woman and then applied some to her own face. She then observed: "God knows I did not need perfume, but I have heard the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) say: "No woman who believes in God and the Day of Judgement should observe mourning for more than three days for any man. However, the period of mourning in the case of her husband's death is four months and ten days".
- (*Abū Dāwūd*)
21. Offer some charity on behalf of the deceased according to your means. However, strictly avoid performance of unpropitious and improper rites in this case.

Etiquettes of Visiting Graveyards

1. Accompany the funeral procession to the graveyard and attend the burial. Do pay visits to the graveyard off and on. These visits remind one of the life hereafter and induce one to start making preparations for the life after death. On one occasion the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) accompanied a funeral procession to the graveyard and sitting down beside a grave shedded so much tears that the earth became wet. Then addressing the companions (God be pleased with them), the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Brothers ! Prepare yourself for this day".

(Ibn Majah)

Once when he was seated near a grave, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed : "Every grave proclaims in the most terrific voice ; 'O Progeny of Adam ! Have you forgotten me ? I am the house of loneliness. I am a strange land of wilderness ! I am a hole of mites and worms. I am a place of hardship and trial. Save those fortunate one for whom God makes me commodious and wide. I am for all other human beings a tortuous place". In addition, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon upon him) observed : The grave is either one of the pits of Hell or a small flower-garden out of the gardens of Paradise".

(Tabrani)

2. Take a warning from the sight of the graveyard and form the habit of concentrating your thoughts and imaginative powers on the meditation of life after death. Once upon a time, Hardat 'Ali (God be pleased with him)

visited a graveyard. Ḥaḍrat Kameel (God be pleased with him) accompanied him. On reaching the graveyard, Ḥaḍrat 'Ali (God be pleased with him) looked at the graves and then addressing the inmates of the graves, observed :

‘O inmates of graves ! O inhabitants of ruins ! O those who live in isolation in a land of wilderness ! Say, how you are ? As regards conditions over here, the assets left over have been divided, the offspring are rendered orphans, the widows have entered into new marriage contracts. This is the state of affairs in our world. Now tell us what is happening to you’. Ḥaḍrat 'Ali (God be pleased with him) then remained silent for some time and then turning towards Ḥaḍrat Kameel (God be pleased with him) observed : “Kameel, if the inmates of these graves were allowed to speak, they would say : ‘Piety is the most valuable treasure’. Having said this, Ḥaḍrat 'Ali (God be pleased with him) wept and continued to weep for a long time. Later Ḥaḍrat 'Ali (God be pleased with him) remarked : “Kameel, the grave is an enclosure where only deeds matter and as soon as one meets death he realises this fact”.

3. Say this prayer on entering the graveyard :

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَهْلَ الدِّيَارِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمِينَ وَ إِنَّا
 إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ بِكُمْ لَا حِقُونَ أَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ لَنَا وَ لَكُمْ الْعَافِيَةَ .

*Assalāmu 'alaikum ahlad-diyāri min-al mo'minīna
 walmuslimīna wa innā insha' allahu bikum lāhiqūna
 as'alullah lanā wa lakum-ul-'afiyah.*

“Peace be on you, O pious and faithful inmates of this habitation. God willing, we shall soon join company with you. We pray to God, for our sake and for your sake, that He may protect us from His Torture and Wrath”.

4. Don't laugh, crack jokes or engage in worldly talk in the graveyard like careless and carefree persons. Grave is the gateway to Eternity. Let the sight of this gateway turn your thoughts to the next world and overcome by feelings of care and remorse let your eyes shed tears of repentance. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "I had forbidden you to visit graveyards (so that faith in one God may take firm roots in your heart). But now if you wish you may go to the cemeteries, for the sight of graves makes one remember the life hereafter". (Muslim)
5. Avoid building graves of bricks and mortar and do not embellish them. When the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was close to end of his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) earthly life, he was restless with physical pain. In this state, he would sometimes draw the sheet over his holy face and then remove it. While the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was in this turbulent condition of restlessness, Ḥadīrat 'Āisha (God be pleased with her) heard him uttering the following words : "God's curse be on the Jews and Christians. They turned the sepulchres of their Prophets into places of worship".
6. Do pray that God may bestow rewards on the dead and grant them mercy, whenever you visit the graveyard. Ḥadīrat Sufyān (God be pleased with him) states : "Just as the living stand in need of eating and drinking, so do the dead stand in dire need of prayers for their salvation".

Tabarāni records the following tradition : "When God elevates a pious man one degree higher in Paradise, the man submits—"O Creator ! How did I come to deserve this reward ?" God thereupon affirms : "This reward has been conferred upon you by virtue of your sons' petitions of mercy on your behalf".

Etiquettes on Eclipse of Sun or Moon¹

1. When the sun or the moon is eclipsed, do engage yourself in the remembrance of God. Offer prayers to Him. Praise Him, and give charity. As a blessing for these pious deeds, God puts off all trials and calamities. Ḥadīrat Mughīrah b. Sho'bah (God be pleased with him) relates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "The sun and the moon are the two signs of God. They do not go under eclipse on the birth or death of anyone. Do call for the grace of God, offer prayers to Him, worship Him when you see the sun or the moon in eclipse and continue to offer devotions to the Almighty until the eclipse clears off". *(Bukhārī, Muslim)*
2. When the sun is under eclipse, offer prayers in a congregation in the mosque. However, do not announce the prayer-call, nor say 'Iqāmat'. Call the people together by some other means. When the moon is in eclipse, offer supererogatory prayers (Nawāfil). Do not assemble a congregation.
3. When the sun is eclipsed, say two 'Rak'ahs' of supplementary prayers (Nafī) in a congregation and recite long from the Holy Qur'ān and continue your prayers until the sun is clear. Recite the Holy Qur'ān loudly during the

(1) The eclipses of the sun and the moon are called 'Kusuf'. Khusuf only denotes 'eclipse of the moon'. However, when an antonym of 'Khusuf' is used or 'Khusuf' is coupled with 'Kusuf', it refers only to the 'eclipse of the sun'.

prayers. In the days of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) once the sun came under eclipse. The same day Hadrat Ibrahim (God be pleased with him), the infant son of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) expired. The people began to say to each other that since Hadrat Ibrahim, the son of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has passed away, the sun has gone under eclipse. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) assembled the people in a congregation and led them in prayer consisting of two Rak'ahs. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) engaged in long recitation of the Holy Qur'an in the course of this prayer and read through the whole of 'Surah al-Baqarah'. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) then observed to the people: "The sun and the moon are the two Signs of God. They do not go into eclipse on the birth or death of anyone. O People! Whenever such an event occurs, do engage in devotion to God. Offer prayers to Him, praise Him, hymn His greatness and oneness. Say prayers and give charity".

(*Bukhāri, Muslim*)

Hadrat 'Abdul-Rahman b. Samurah (God be pleased with him) relates: "During the propitious days of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) the sun went into an eclipse once. I was at that time practising archery outside Medinah. I at once flung away the arrows to see what would the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) do at the occurrence of this event. So I went to the presence of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was occupied in offering praises to God and repeating His Attributes and uttering¹ Takbir and Tehlil and observing prayers and making supplications with his hands raised

1. Takbir stands for *Allah-o-Akbar* while Tehlil stands for *La Ilaha ill-Allah*.

to the Heavens. Then the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) offered prayer consisting of two Rak'ahs and recited two long Surahs of the Qur'ān in the course of the prayers and continued to offer devotions till the sun cleared off the eclipse".

The illustrious companions (God be pleased with them) also used to offer prayers during 'Kusūf' and 'Khusūf'. Hadrat 'Abdullah b. Zubair (God be pleased with him) offered prayers on the appearance of an eclipse in Medinah. Similarly, on another occasion when an eclipse appeared Hadrat 'Abdullah b. 'Abbas (God be pleased with him) assembled the people and offered a prayer in congregation.

4. In the course of the prayer on the occasion of an eclipse of the sun, recite Surah *'Ankabūt* after Surah *Fatiha* in the first Rak'ah and recite Surah *al-Room* in the second Rak'ah. It is propitious to recite these Surahs, but not obligatory. Surahs other than those mentioned above may also be recited.
5. If the women wish to join the congregation for prayer on the occasion of an eclipse of the sun and the facility for including them in the congregation exists, do let them join. Persuade the children also to join prayers so that faith in one God takes firm roots in their hearts in their early years and no other notions derogatory to the belief in one God may infiltrate their minds.
6. If the eclipse of the sun occurs during those hours in which the saying of prayers is forbidden i.e., the hours of sunrise, sunset and the declining hours of the day, avoid offering 'Namaz'. Do offer praises to God however and give charity to the poor and the destitute. If the eclipse continues even after the hour of sunrise or the declining hour of the day have passed, then say prayers also in addition to performing the above-mentioned deeds.

Etiquettes of Ramadan

1. Start preparing your mind from the month of Sha‘ban for according a befitting reception to Ramadan. Keep fasts frequently before the fifteenth of Sha‘ban. Hadrat ‘Ā’isha (God be pleased with her) relates: “The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to keep fasts more often in Sha‘ban than in any other month”.
2. Make an effort to sight the Ramadan moon with full attention and eagerness and say this prayer on sighting the moon :

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ
وَالْإِسْلَامُ ، وَالتَّوْفِيقِ لِمَا تُحِبُّ وَتَرْضَى . رَبَّنَا وَ
رَبِّكَ اللَّهُ .

Allahu akbar Allahumma ahillahu ‘alainā bil-amni wal-imāni was-sālamati wal-Islami wat-taufiqi limā tuhibbu wa tardā rabbunā wa rabbukallah.

‘ God is the greatest ! O God ! Do make the appearance of this moon a token of peace, faith, salvation and Islam (obedience) for us. Do make this moon arise as a favour to us so that we may perform deeds which conform to Thy Will and are dear to Thee. Our Lord and thy Lord is God !”

And say the same prayer on sighting the moon of each month. (Tirmidhi, Ibn Hibban, etc.)

3. Do take special interest in offering devotions during the month of Ramadan. In addition to obligatory prayers, make it a point to observe supererogatory prayers (Nawāfil) also. Make a firm resolve to win the maximum favour of God. God has reserved His special favours and blessings for this great and propitious month. On the final day of Sha'ban, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in a discourse on the blessings of the month of Ramadan affirmed :

“O people ! A great and blessed month is going to set in on you. Each night of this month is better than a thousand months. God has made fasting obligatory during this month and has ordained Tarāvīh as a supplementary prayer. Any man who performs a good deed during this month of his own free volition will receive a reward equal to the reward for obligatory deeds performed during other months. And any man who performs a single obligatory act during this month, he shall receive a reward equal to the reward of seventy obligatory acts during other months”.

4. Keep fasts whole of the month with deep eagerness and zeal. Even if you can't observe fast due to some serious illness or for any other reason permissible in shariah, strictly avoid eating before others out of respect for the sanctity of Ramadan. To all intents and purposes, you must appear as if you are fasting.
5. Make it a point to recite the Holy Qur'ān. The month of Ramadan has a special connexion with the Holy Qur'ān. The Holy Qur'ān was revealed in this month and the other Divine Books also descended in the same month. Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) received scriptures on the first or the third day of this month. 'Zabūr' descended on Ḥaḍrat Dāwūd (peace be upon him) on the twelfth or

eighteenth day of this month. Torah was revealed to Ḥadrat Mūsa (peace be upon him) on the sixth day of this propitious month. On the twelfth or thirteenth day of the same blessed month, the Bible was transmitted to Ḥadrat 'Isa (peace be upon him). Hence recite Qur'ān as many times as possible in the course of this month. Ḥadrat Gabriel (peace be upon him) used to recite the Holy Qur'ān to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and also heard recitation of the Qur'ān from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) every year during the month of Ramadan. In the final year of the Holy Prophet's earthly life (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Ḥadrat Gabriel (peace be upon him) completed the whole text of the Qur'ān twice during the month of Ramadan.

6. Try to recite the Qur'ān distinctly and with understanding. Along with frequent recitation, be careful to grasp the meaning of the Holy Qur'ān with a clear impact of its message on your mind and heart.
7. During 'Tarāvīh' do listen to the recitation of the whole text of the Qur'ān. The Holy Prophet used to listen to the whole text of the Holy Qur'ān at least once during Ramadan.
8. Say 'Tarāvīh' prayers with humility, eagerness and devotion. Do not just complete the number of Rak'ahs in a mechanical fashion. Offer prayers with understanding and devotion so that your life may be influenced by the propitious influence of the Namāz and your devotion to God may become firm and deep. Do offer Tahajjud prayers also by the favour of God.
9. Give charity and spend whatever you can in the way of Allah. Look after the needs of the poor, the widows and the orphans and arrange provisions for them for 'Sahrī' and 'Iftarī'. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed: "This is a month of

Mawasat"¹. Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (God be pleased with him) reports: "The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was by nature generous and munificent, but his munificence (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) knew no bounds during the month of Ramadan. When Hadrat Gabriel (peace be upon him) visited the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) each night and recited the Holy Qur'an to the Prophet and heard the recitation of the Holy Book from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), during that period the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) became even more generous than the blowing wind".

10. Do offer maximum rakats of supplementary prayers during 'Shab Qadr,² and recite the Holy Qur'an. The importance of this night is affirmed by the fact that the Holy Qur'an was revealed during this night. The Holy Qur'an says:

Lo! We revealed it in the Night of Power. And do you understand what the Night of Power is! The Night of Power is better than a thousand months. The angels and the spirits descend therein, by the permission of their Lord with all decrees. (That night is) Peace until the rising of dawn.

The traditions record that 'Shab Qadr' is one among the odd nights in the last week of Ramadan. Say this prayer during this night:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوفٌ تَحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي .

(حصن حصين)

- (1) The word 'Mawasat' means to show sympathy to the poor and the needy. Sympathy means offering financial help to the poor or expressing your sympathy in conversation. Be nice in your speech and behaviour towards them. Provide all facilities to your employees and give them financial support.
2. Laila-tul Qadr i.e., the night when the decisions for the whole year are announced and the destiny is shaped.

Allahumma innaka 'afuwun tuhibb-ul-'afwa fa'fu anni.

(Hisn Hasien)

“God ! Forgiveness is Thy Greatest Attribute, for thou likost to forgive. So forgive me”.

Hadrat Anas (God be pleased with him) relates that once in the month of Ramadan, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: “A month has come upon you people in which there is one night which is better than a thousand months. The person who misses offering devotions in the course of this night deprives himself of all the bliss. And only that person remains deprived of the Grace and Blessings of this month who really deserves deprivation”. *(Ibn Majah)*

11. Observe I'tikaf in the last week of the month of Ramadan. The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to perform I'tikaf during the last ten days of Ramadan.

Hadrat 'A'isha (God be pleased with her) reports: “When the last week of Ramadan approached, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to keep awake during most part of the nights and devoted himself to worship. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also decreed the female of the household to remain awake and engaged himself in the worship of God with full zeal and perfect devotion”.

12. Show utmost tenderness and affection to people in the month of Ramadan. Provide maximum facilities to your employees and supply their needs with extreme liberality. Deal with members of your household with kindness and generosity.
13. Say the maximum rakats of prayers with humility, zeal and devotion. It is related in '*Durr Manthur*' that when the Holy Month of Ramadan came, the pattern of the Holy Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) life underwent a change. The number of the rakats

of supererogative prayers offered by him (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) increased. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed deeper humility in prayers and appeared totally overcome with fear of God.

The traditions record : "In the month of Ramadan, God ordains the heaven supporting angels to give up their supplications and say 'Āmin (So be it !)' after the prayers of the fasting persons".

14. Pay 'Sadaqa Fitr' (charity ordained before Eid prayers and at the end of Ramadan) with a willing heart and give it away before saying 'Eid prayer. If possible, pay it well before the 'Eid so that the needy and destitute may also buy necessary provisions for the 'Eid and go to the 'Idgah with everybody else and join in the festivities of the 'Eid. It is reported in the traditions that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) made the payment of 'Sadaqa Fitr' obligatory for his followers for two reasons: first, as an atonement for any improper or licentious deed that the fasting people may have committed unconsciously in the period of their fast; and secondly, 'Sadaqa Fitr' is to be paid to make provisions of food for the poor and the indigent to afford them to enjoy the auspicious Eid day. (Abū Dawūd)

15. Besides practicing maximum possible piety yourself in the holy days of Ramadan, persuade others also with fervour, zeal, tenderness and tact to do acts of piety, so that the fear of God, love of piety and goodness may reign supreme over all and the society, as a whole, may derive the greatest benefit from the limitless blessings of the holy month of Ramadan.

Etiquettes of Fasting

1. Keeping in view the great reward and great blessings of Fasting, make arrangement for observing fasts with full zeal and complete earnestness. No other form of worship can serve as an alternative to Fasting. For this reason, God made Fasting obligatory for every Ummah (Followers of a Prophet). God affirms :

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى
الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

Yā-ayyuhalladhina Amanū kutiba ‘alaikum usiyamu kamā kutiba ‘alalladhina min qablikum la‘allakum tattaqun.

“O ye who believe! Prescribed for you is fasting, as it was prescribed for those before you so that you may become God-fearing”.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) elucidated this sublime objective of Fasting as follows :

“A person who does not renounce false speech and practising falsehood while he fasts, God cares not for his abstinence from food or drink”. (Bukhari)

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) further observed :

“The person who fasts with a perfect sense of devotion to faith and ‘Ihtisab’¹ (sense of accountability), God will pardon all the sins which he may have committed in his previous life”. (Bukhari)

2. Observe all fasts of Ramadan with full care and miss any fast save in case of severe illness or on the ground of some religious excuse. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed :

“Anyone who misses a single fast during Ramadan except in case of severe illness or on ground of religious excuse cannot make amends for this offence by keeping fasts on all the remaining days of his life.”

(Tirmidhi)

3. Keep yourself busy in your daily occupation and be active and cheerful in work so as to avoid hypocrisy and false appearances during fasting. Do not show weakness or lethargy in your behaviour during the fast. Hadrat Abu Huraira (God be pleased with him) remarked : “When a man observes fasts he ought to anoint himself with oil as usual so that the effects of fasting do not show off”.
4. Make your best efforts to avoid all forms of evil during the fast, because the very objective of the fast is to purge the life of man of all evil and make it righteous. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed :

“Fast serves as a shield. When any of you is in a state of fasting, he should take care not to utter any evil speech by his tongue or to start an affray. In case someone starts railing at him or is inclined to start a fight with him, the man who is fasting should reflect that he is in a state of fasting. (how can he reciprocate offensive language ?)

(Bukhari, Muslim)

1. The term ‘Ihtisab’ means that the fast should be observed only to please God and to win reward in the eternal world and to avoid all evils which violate the spirit of fasting.

5. Covet the great reward for fasting as reported in the Traditions. Offer a prayer to God especially near the hour of Iftar (breaking the fast). "O God! Be gracious to accept my fast and grant me that favour and reward which you have promised". The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed: Those who observe fasts will enter Paradise through a special gateway. The name of this gate is 'Riyyan'¹. When the entire number of all those who observe fasts have gone in, the gate will be closed and no one will be allowed to enter it afterwards".

(*Bukhari*)

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also observed: "On the Day of Judgement, Fast will intercede with God and say: "O Creator! I restrained this man from eating, drinking and taking other pleasures during the day. O God! be gracious to accept my intercession on behalf of this man". And God shall grant this petition".

(*Mishkat*)

In addition, the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "Any prayer which a fasting person offers at the hour of Iftar (time of breaking the fast) is granted and is never refused."

(*Tirmidhi*)

6. Bear the hardships of the fast in good cheer. Do not degrade the sanctity of the fast by complaining of the pangs of hunger or thirst or weakness.
7. If you are unable to observe fast during a journey or because of severe illness, you can forgo it, but atone for it on other days. The Holy Qur'an affirms:

وَمَنْ كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ .

«البقرة—١٨٥»

1. 'Riyyan' means 'that which irrigates'. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed: "Those who enter the Gateway of 'Riyyan' will never more feel thirst".

Waman kāna marīdan au 'alā safarin fa 'id datun min ayyamin ukhara. (2 : 185)

“But whosoever among you is sick or on a journey (he is required to observe fast instead of these days) the same number of other days”.

Ḥadīrat Anas (God be pleased with him) reports : “On occasions when we went on journeys with the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), some of the companions observed fast and other did not. However, neither those who had kept fast criticised those who had missed the fast nor the latter objected to the fasting of the former”. (Bukhari)

8. Avoid back-biting and casting an evil eye strictly during the fast. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed :

“The person who keeps fast is in fact offering devotion to God from morning till evening unless, of course, he backbites against someone. When he indulges in backbiting, his fast is broken.” (Ad-Dailmi)

9. Earn a lawful living. No devotion of the body fed on illicit earnings is admissible. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed : “The body fed on illicit earnings is a proper fuel for Hell-Fire.” (Bukhari)

10. Do eat ‘Sahri’ meal. This alleviates the hardship of fasting as well as safeguards against weakness and lethargy. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed : “Do eat the ‘Sahri’ meal, for the eating of ‘Sahri’ meal entails blessing”. (Bukhari)

Moreover, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : “Eating of ‘Sahri’ meal entails blessing. Take a few draughts of water, if nothing else. The angels of God send peace and blessings upon those who eat the ‘Sahri’ meal.” (Ahmad)

Furthermore, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed :

“Take some rest at noon and get some ease in the night prayers. Eat Sahri meal to obtain nourishment during fast in the day time.” (*Ibn Majah*). ‘Sahih Muslim’ records : “The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : “The only difference between our fasting and the fasting observed by other people of the Book is that we begin the fast by eating the Sahri meal.”

11. Do not delay in ending the fast after sunset, for the main objective of fasting is to inculcate the spirit of submission rather than abstinence from food and drink. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed :

“The Muslims will remain in good condition if they hasten to Iftar (meal taken at sunset to end the fast)”.
(*Bukhari*)

12. Say this prayer at the time of Iftar :

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ صُمْتُ وَعَلَى رِزْقِكَ أَفْطَرْتُ . «مسلم»

Allahumma laka sumtu wa 'ala rizqika aftartu.

(*Muslim*)

“O Allah ! it is for thee that I observe fast and it is with Thine blessing that I break it.

After ending the fast, say this prayer :

ذَهَبَ الظَّمَاُ وَأَبْتَلتِ العُرُوقُ وَثَبَتِ الأَجْرُ انشاءً الله .

«ابوداؤد»

Dhahab-az-zam'u wabtallatil 'urūqu wa thabat-al ajru inshā Allah.

(*Abu-Daud*)

No more was the thirst, moistened were the veins and reward became due. If the Lord so Willed.

13. When you perform Iftar (ending the fast) at the house of somebody else, say this prayer :

أَفْطَرَ عِنْدَكُمْ الصَّائِمُونَ وَ أَكَلَ طَعَامَكُمْ الْإِبْرَارُ وَ صَلَّتْ
عَلَيْكُمْ الْمَلَائِكَةُ . «ابوداؤد»

Aftara 'indakum-us-sa' imūna wa akala taāmakum-ul-abrāru wa sallat 'alaikum-ul-mala'ikatu. (Abu-Daud)

“May it please God that the fasting people may perform Iftar at your house and pious people may enjoy the hospitality of food provided by you ! May the angels invoke blessings upon you by their prayers !”

14. Do arrange Iftar parties. This act entails a high reward. The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed :

“Any man who supplies meal to a fasting person to perform Iftar, God shall pardon his sins in reward for this act and grant him salvation from Hell-Fire. The man who supplies meal for Iftar to a fasting person will receive an equal reward with him. The reward of the fasting person will not, however, be curtailed.” The people submitted : “O Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon you) ! Where shall all of us find the wherewithal to make provision for the Iftar of a fasting person and to feed him”. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : “It is enough to feed a fasting person at Iftar with a date or some quantity of milk or even supply him a single draught of water for Iftar”.

(Ibn Khuzaima)

Etiquettes of Zakat and Sadaqat

1. Give away in the way of God with the sole motive of winning the favour of God. Do not waste your virtuous deed by keeping in view some ulterior purpose or motive. Do not expect the beneficiaries of your deed to offer thanks to you or acknowledge your favour or testify to your magnanimity. The true believers anticipate reward for their deeds from God only. The Holy Qur'an expresses the sentiments of the true believers in these words :

إِنَّمَا نَطْعِمُكُمْ لَوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكْرًا.

«الدھر - ۹»

*Innama nut'imukum liwajhillāhi lā nuridu minkum
jazaan wa lā shakura. (76 : 9)*

- “We feed you for the sake of Allah only. We wish for no reward nor thanks from you”.
2. Avoid display, ostentation and showing off. Hypocrisy destroys the virtue of the best of deeds.
 3. Pay Zakat openly, so that others may also be induced to perform their duty. However, offer other Sadaqat (charitable acts) secretly so as to promote feelings of deep sincerity in your heart. Deeds performed with true sincerity are of great value in the eyes of God. On the Day of Judgement in that terrible field where there will be no shade, God shall keep under the shadow of heaven that man who spends in the way of God in such

extreme secrecy that the left hand does not know what the right hand has spent." (Bukhari)

4. After expending in the way of God avoid reminding the beneficiaries of the favours you have done to them nor cause them any distress. To administer shocks to the self-respect of the indigent and poor, to injure their feelings by reminding them of favours done to them and to expect that they should acknowledge their obligation to you, that they should always humbly bow to you and regard you as their superiors—such sentiments when you have given away charity in the way of God, are wicked and despicable. The heart of the true believers should be free of such notions. God ordains :

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَبْطُلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَى
كَالَّذِي يُنْفِقُ مَالَهُ رِثَاءَ النَّاسِ .

Ya ayyuhalladh'na āmanu lā tubtilu sadaqatikum bilmanni wal adha kalladhi yunfiqu malahu ri'aannāsi.

Ye who believe ! Render not vain your alms giving by reproach and injury like him who spendeth his wealth only to be seen of men".

5. Do not take pride or assume an air of arrogance after expending in the way of God. Do not advertise your magnanimity among the people. You should rather tremble at the thought whether your sacrifice has been accepted by God or not. God ordains :

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَا آتَوْا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ رَاجِعُونَ .

Walladhina yutuna ma ataw qulubuhum wajilatun annahum ila rabbihim raji'un.

And those who give what they give while their hearts are full of fear that to their Lord they shall return.

6. Show tenderness to the poor and destitute. Do not rebuke them, nor try to rule over them nor show off your superiority over them. In case you have nothing to give to a supplicant, excuse yourself with extreme humility and politeness, so that he may depart silently invoking blessings upon you even without receiving anything from you. The Holy Qur'an says :

وَأَمَّا تَعْرِضْنَ عَنْهُمْ ابْتِغَاءَ رَحْمَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكَ تَرْجُوهَا فَقُلْ لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَيْسُورًا . «بني اسرائيل—٢٨»

Wa Imma tu'ridanna annahumub tighā'a rahmatin min rabbika tarjuhā faqul-lahum qaulam maisurā.

(17 : 28)

“But if you turn away from them seeking means from thy Lord, for which thou hopest, then speak unto them a reasonable word”.

And God also ordains :

وَأَمَّا السَّائِلَ فَلَا تَنْهَرْ .

Wa-ammās-sā'ila falā tanhar.

“Therefor the beggar drive not away”.

7. Spend in the way of God liberally with eagerness. Do not spend with a stingy or grudging heart, nor consider it an oppressive fine. Only those people deserve grace and success who forswear miserliness, narrow-mindedness and stinginess.
8. Spend only 'Halal' (earned by righteous means) goods in the way of God. God accepts only those goods which are pure and have been earned through righteous means. How can a believer who is eager to spend in the way of

God bear that his lawfully earned goods should be mixed with illicit gains ? God ordains :

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا انْفِقُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ .

Yaayyuhalladhina āmanu anfiqū min tayyibāti mā kasabtum.

“Ye who believe ! Spend of the good things that you have earned”.

9. Give away the best goods in the way of God. God ordains :

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ . «آل عمران ٩٢»

Lantanā lulbirra hattā tunfiqū mimmā tuhibbūn. (3 : 92)

“You shall never attain righteousness until you expend of that which you love”.

Goods given away as Sadaqa (charity) are being accumulated for the benefit of eternal life in the Hereafter. How can a believer bear the thought of defective goods for his everlasting life.

10. If you are liable to pay the Zakat (poor-due), do not delay the payment. Pay it at once after careful accounting so that, God forbid, nothing remains due in your account.
11. Pay the Zakat (poor-due) under a collective system and spend it under the collective system. Where Muslim governments do not exist, the Muslim citizens can form parties and create a Baitul Mal for the receipt and expenditure of Zakat (poor-due).

Etiquettes of Performing Hajj

1. Do not delay or keep putting off the performance of Hajj. Whenever God bestows enough means on you for the fulfilment of this interesting obligation set out for Hajj at the earliest opportunity. You do not know how much longer life will last, so why should you keep putting off the performance of this duty from one year to the next. The Holy Qur'an affirms :

وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا وَمَنْ

كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ .

Walillahi 'alannāsi hijjul baiti manistataā ilaihi sabila wa man kafara fainnallaha ghaniyyun 'anil'ālamīn.

“And the people owe this duty to God that whoever has the means to journey to His House should make a pilgrimage to it. And whoever refuses to obey this command should know that God needs no favour from any one in the world”.

A greater ruination and deprivation of man cannot be imagined than that God should thus openly proclaim His indifference and disconcern to man.

The Traditions relate : “The person who makes up his mind to go on the pilgrimage should make haste to perform this obligation. It is possible that he may be taken ill ; or his she-camel may get lost, or perhaps an

event occurs which makes it impossible for him to go to the Hajj".
(Ibn Majah)

The implication is that when means are available a person should not evade the performance of this duty without sufficient reason, for one never knows if these means, freedom and facility will still be available to him in the near future, and, God forbid, the man may remain deprived of the blessing of performing the Hajj for ever. May God save every believer from this deprivation! The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has reprimanded such persons in very strict terms. The Tradition records that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed :

"A man who is not prevented by illness or genuine need or is free from the restraints of a tyrannical and despotic ruler and yet does not perform the Hajj may die a Jew or a Christian for aught we care."

(Sunan Kubra, Vol. 4)

Hadrat 'Umar (God be pleased with him) was heard as saying : "I wish to impose jizya on those who, despite having means, do not perform the Hajj, for they are not Muslims, they are not Muslims at all".

2. Go on a pilgrimage to the House of God and perform Hajj to please God alone. Do not stain this pure objective with any worldly motives or interests. The Holy Qur'an affirms :

وَلَا تُمْنِنِ الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامِ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَ

رِضْوَانًا . وَالْمَائِدَةَ ٢

Wa la āmmīn-al-baital harama yabtaghuna fadlan mir rabbihim wa ridhwānā.
(5 : 2)

"And hinder not those who are proceeding to the Sacred House seeking the graces and pleasure of Allah."

وَاتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ . وَالْبَقْرَةَ ١٩٦

Wa atimmul hajja wal-umrata lillah. (2 : 196)

“And complete the Hajj and ‘Umrah for Allah’s (sake)”

And the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed : “The reward for the performance of ‘*Hajj Mabruur*¹ is certainly no less than admission to Paradise”.

3. Do not circulate the news of your going to the pilgrimage. Keep your departure for Hajj and your return a private matter. Avoid strictly all those customs and ceremonies which smack of ostentation or display. Even though the real test of righteousness and acceptability of a deed is that it should be performed with the sole intention of pleasing God, and that the motive of the act should be free from all taint of any extraneous desire, but this point should be especially borne in mind in the case of Hajj, for Hajj is the last resort for effecting a spiritual revolution and the purification of soul and the moral conduct of man. The ‘spiritual patient’ who is not successfully cured by this efficacious treatment has no hope of healing by any other means.
4. Even if you have no wherewithal to proceed to the pilgrimage, you should cherish the desire to view the House of God, to offer ‘salam’ (peace and blessing) on the Mausoleum of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and keep the Ibrahimi sentiments of sacrifice which are produced in the souls of the believer by Hajj ever afresh in your heart. The heart which is devoid of these sentiments is not that of a true believer but resembles to a desolate ruin. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed :

1. ‘*Hajj Mabruur* refers to the pilgrimage performed with all the proper rules and conditions in order to earn the pleasure of God.

Those who go to perform Hajj or 'Umrah are the special guests of God. Their prayers are granted by God and if they supplicate for mercy, He forgives them".

(Tabrani)

5. Take the best provisions with you when you go for Hajj. The best provision in this case is fear of God. In this journey of righteousness, the man who avoids transgressing the Commands of God and who reaps the maximum benefit of the blessings of pilgrimage is the one who fears God under all circumstances, and has a burning zeal to win the favour of God. The Holy Qur'an says :

وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ .

Wa tazawwadu fa-inna khairazzadit-taqwa. (2 : 197)

"And take provisions for the journey (to perform Hajj) for verily the best provision is the fear of Allah."

6. Having resolved to go to Hajj, start making preparations with single-minded devotion. Keep the date of the Hajj constantly in view. Reflect upon each article of the obligation of pilgrimage. Try to realise the feelings which God intends to promote in the heart of the believer through the observance of these articles of the obligation of Hajj. Like a conscious and knowledgeable believer, observe all the articles of Hajj with full awareness and imbibe the realities contained in the articles of Hajj and endeavour to bring about a righteous revolution in your life in conformity with these realities. It is for this reason that God has ordained the performance of Hajj obligatory for the believers. God ordains :

وَأَذْكُرُوهُ كَمَا هَدَاكُمْ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمَنِ

الضَّالِّينَ . «البقره—١٩٨»

*Wadhkurūhu kam-nadākum wa inkuntum min qablihi
lamin-addāllin.* (2 : 198)

“And remember Him as He has guided you and verily prior to it you were of those gone astray”.

For this purpose, deeply reflect upon those portions of the Holy Qur'an which describe the reality, importance and the sentiments created by the performance of Hajj. A careful study of the Traditions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and those books which deal with the date of the Hajj and discuss the articles of Hajj will also prove useful in this respect.

7. Memorise the propitious prayers which should be offered during the Hajj. These may be found in the Books of Traditions. And in the words of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) beg not from God than what the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) himself had asked for.
8. Protect your Hajj from all unpropitious motives or actions. Beware lest your Hajj should become like the Hajj of those who will get no share in the Hereafter, because the latter group shuts its eyes from the rewards of the eternal world and begs exclusively for worldly bliss. When they reach the House of God, they offer the following prayer :

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَاقٍ .

«البقره—٢٠٠»

*Rabbanā aatina fid-dunya wa ma lahu fil akhirati min
khalāq.* (2 : 200)

“Our Lord, give to us in this world. And for such there shall be no portion in the Hereafter”.

Make a plea to God for grace and success in both worlds by means of the Hajj and pray to God in these words : “Creator, I have come to Thy Presence to suppli-

cate for success and the fulfilment of my righteous desires in both this life and the life Hereafter". Keep saying this prayer also :

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ

النَّارِ . (البقره ٢٠١)

*Rabbanā aatina fid-dunya hasanatan wa fil-aakhirati
hasanatan wa qinā 'adhāban-nār.* (2 : 201)

“God ! Grant us goodness in this world and good in the Hereafter (also) and protect us from the agony of Fire”.

9. During Hajj avoid transgression of God's commands with extreme sensitivity. The journey to perform the Hajj is in fact a passage to the House of God. You are the guests of God there. You have gone there to renew your covenant of devotion to God. By putting your hand on the 'Hajar Aswad' you are in fact taking a pledge of faith and bondage and when you kiss the stone, you kiss the emblem of submission to God. You proclaim your fidelity by chanting repeated Takbir (praises) and Tahlil (La ilaha illa Ilah) of God. Imagine, then, that in such an atmosphere how disgusting would be the commission of even a minor vice or the blemish of a small transgression. God has warned His servants who present themselves in His Court in these words :

وَلَا فُسُوقَ .

Wa lā fusūqa.

“There should be no ungodliness”.

10. During Hajj keep away from all sorts of quarrels. In the course of the journey when there is a rush of people everywhere, when you suffer discomforts, when there is a

clash of interests at every step, when feelings are injured every moment, it is the duty of the guest of God to display large-heartedness and self-sacrifice and show toleration, liberality and kindness to everybody. Abstain from rebuking your servant even.

وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ .

Wa lā jidāla fil Hajj.

“And there should be no quarrels”.

11. Safeguard against sexual matters and continue to be vigilant against carnal sentiments in the course of Hajj. In the course of the journey when there is a greater possibility of provocation of sexual passion or of eyes going astray, you should become more alert against the evil promptings of your passions and the devil and try to protect your piety at all costs. In case you are accompanied by your spouse, you should not only avoid indulgence in sexual relationship with her, but also shun all that can stir up sexual passion. In order to warn the pilgrims, God ordains :

الْحَجُّ اشْهُرٌ مَعْلُومَاتٌ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ .

Alhajju ash-hurrun m'alūmātu faman farada fihinnal-hajja falā rafatha.

The pilgrimage is (in) the well-known month, and whosoever is minded to perform the pilgrimage (let him remember that) there is (to be) no lewdness”. (2 : 197)

And the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed :

“Any man who comes here to perform Hajj in the House of God and keeps away from immoral and sexual affairs and has not indulged in ungodly acts returns in that state of purity and innocence in which he was born from the womb of his mother”. (Bukhari, Muslim)

12. Pay full reverence to the symbols of God. The word 'Sha'irah' refers to the symbol appointed by God to remind and bring home to the people some spiritual or meaningful reality. 'Sha'air' is the plural of the above word. All things associated with the Hajj serve as symbols to bring home to you of some reality about devotion to Allah. You should rever them all. The Holy Qur'an affirms :

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحِلُّوا شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ وَلَا الشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ
وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا الْقَلَائِدَ وَلَا أَمِينَ الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامِ يَبْتَغُونَ
فَضْلًا مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَانًا .

*Ya-ayyuhalladhina amanu la tuhillu sha' airallah
wa lashshahral harama wa lalhadya walalqalā'ida wa la
āmmīna-l-baital harama yabtaghūna fadlam-mirabbihim
wa ridwānā.*

O ye who believe! Profane not Allah's emblems nor the Sacred Month nor the offsprings nor the garlands nor those repairing to the Sacred House, seeking the grace and pleasure of Allah.

'Sura Hajj' affirms :

وَمَنْ يُعْظِمِ شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّهَا مِنْ تَقْوَى الْقُلُوبِ .

*Wa man yu'azzim sha'airallahī fa-innahā min taqwal
qulūb.*

And whoso observe the sanctity of what have been ordained as Symbols of Allah, do so because of the piety of the hearts.

13. Perform the articles of Hajj with utmost humility and adopt an attitude of destitution and helplessness before God, for above all God likes the virtues of humility,

modesty and poverty in man. Someone enquired from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), "Who is a Haji"? The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "The person who has dishevelled hair and is covered with dust all over".

14. Say *Talbiḥ* with a loud voice after tying the 'Ihram', after each prayer, while ascending a height or descending a slope, on joining a caravan and on waking up each morning. The words of the *Talbiḥ* are as follows :

لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ لَبَّيْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ لَبَّيْكَ إِنْ الْحَمْدُ
وَالنِّعْمَةُ لَكَ وَالْمُلْكُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ . «مشكوة»

*Labbaika Allahumma labbaika labbaika la sharika laka
labbaika inna-l-hamda wa-n-ni'mata laka walmulka la
sharika laka.* (Mishkat)

Here I am O Lord. Here I am, Here I am. No partner hast Thou. Here I am. Behold unto Thee belong the Praise and the Bounty ; and also the Sovereignty. No partner hast Thou.

15. On arrival at the plain of 'Arafat', say the maximum number of prayers for mercy and offer penitence. The Holy Qur'an affirms :

ثُمَّ أٰفِضُوا مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ النَّاسُ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ . «البقره»

*Thumma afidhu min haithu afadhannasu wastaghfirullah.
Innallaha Ghafoor-ur-rahim.* (Al-Baqarah)

"Then hasten onward from the place whence the multitude hasteneth onward and ask forgiveness of Allah. Verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful".

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed :

“The day of ‘Arafa is the best of all days in the view of God. On this day, the Lord of the Heavens especially turns His attention towards the world and expresses His Pride before the angels on the humility and misery of His pilgrims. God observes to the angels : “O angels, look ! my servants stand before me in the sun in a helpless state. They have gathered here from afar and the hope of begetting My Mercy has drawn them to this place, although they have not yet seen the agony of punishment.” After expressing His pride, God then ordains that these people have been granted salvation from the torments of Hell. On no other occasion are such a greater number of men granted salvation as on the day of ‘Arafa.

(Ibn Hibban)

16. On reaching Mina, offer sacrifice with the same passionate zeal and devotion to God with which the friend of God, Hadrat Ibrahim (peace be upon him) had placed the knife on the neck of his dear son Hadrat Isma'il (peace be upon him). Imbibe these feelings of sacrifices and let them be embedded in your mind and heart so that you may be willing to offer sacrifice in every field of life and your practical life reflects an image of :

ان صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ لَا
شَرِيكَ لَهُ . (الانعام)

Inna salāti wa nusukī wa mahyaya wa mamātī lillahi rabbilalamīna lā sharīka lahu.

Verily my prayer, and my sacrifice, and my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the worlds”. (Al-An'am)

17. Occupy yourself continuously in the remembrance of God in the days of Hajj and never let the memory of God fade

from your heart. Remembrance of God is the essence of all worship. God affirms :

وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْدُودَاتٍ .

Wadhkurullaha fl ayyamin m'adudātin. (2 : 203)

“Remember Allah during appointed days”. Further God observes :

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ مَنَاسِكَكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا .

Fa-idhā qadaitum manasikakum fadhkurullaha kadhikrikum abaa'kum au ashadda dhikrā.

“And when you have completed your devotion then remember Allah as ye remember your fathers or with more lively remembrance”.

The main purpose of the articles of Hajj is that during the days of Hajj, you should keep yourself completely absorbed in the commemoration of God and the memory of God should so permeate through your soul that the mundane activities and struggles of life may not succeed in turning your thoughts away from the memory of God. In the days of paganism, people used to laud the memory of their ancestors and made loud boasts about them after performing the articles of Hajj. God ordained that these days should be spent in the remembrance of God and in acknowledging His grandeur alone Who is truly Great.

18. Perform circumambulation of God's House with feelings of great love and devotion. God ordains :

“And you should circumambulate the House of God”.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has affirmed :

“Each day God confers a hundred and twenty favours on His pilgrims. Sixty blessings are showered upon those who circumambulate the House of God ; forty blessings are bestowed upon those who offers prayers in House of God ; and twenty blessings are conferred upon such as only keep gazing at the Ka’ba (*Baihaqi*). Furthermore, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed :

“He who has performed fifty circumambulations of the Baitullah (House of God) is purged of all his sins and is transformed into that state of innocence in which he was on the day of his delivery from the womb of his mother”.

(*Tirmidhi*)