

**Tazkiyah Halaqa**  
**The Rituals 15 – Session 15**  
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## Transcription

Last week I was off, so this is the second formal session since we came back after the summer. And I'm trying to do somewhat of a review of the topics that I shared over the course of the series of Ramadan and also during the sessions that I gave sporadically over the last three years or so. And the goal is for those who are attending for the first time or this is new to them, that they have an understanding of what it is that this is about, what you're here to learn, what you're here to think about, and how to kind of hold yourself accountable as you go along. Every person needs these three in their lives. If they're a Muslim, they have to have.

a maslak e'tiqadi; they have to have some way of understanding God and themselves, and mindset or perspective of the world, and why they're here and where they're going. That's your mu'taqad; you have to have that. Everyone has that by the way; non-Muslims have that. Even if they say they're atheists, that's an understanding; that's a maslak e'tiqadi. Atheism is a maslak; it's a way of understanding things, right? The answer is just I just don't care or nothing, which is fine, whatever you want, but it is a way of understanding things. No one can get away from having this. You have to have all three in life; it's a part of being alive. It's just whether you choose to formally identify them to appropriately acknowledge them and follow up with them, that's up to you.

But all of us have this; we all have a way of understanding the world. We all have a madhhab fiqh, whether we know it or not, whether it's a proper one or not. We all have a way of worshipping God and serving our purpose. We all have a way of doing it. Either you do it correctly or you do it incorrectly; you do it based on understanding, or you do it based on whatever people in your village do, or whatever your father does, or whatever you saw people or maybe you just do anything. But you all have a madhhab fiqh. I'm just asking you to do it appropriately, meaning actually choose something that is proper, that is strong, that you can understand, you can study, and then you can follow later on in life, and you can worship Allah subhanahu wa ta ala in a way that is systematic and has some essence and substance to it.

The third one is the mashrab suluki. We all have to have some way of approaching our ethicality, our morality, and our spirituality. And in Islam, these are all terms that you can use almost interchangeably. Because in our deen, we don't really differentiate. For us, the word spirituality is not just the highs that you get through drugs or a high that you get through music. Spirituality is satisfaction of holding yourself to an ethical standard that you are honest about. And this is an important part of being a human being. And in Islam, it is the third pillar, or it's the third bucket of what it means to be Muslim. So you have your mu'taqad, you understand what it is that you stand for and who you are.

You have a way of worshipping, and then you have a way of understanding your ethicality and holding yourself accountable to that. Because no one can hold you accountable to your morals. Only you can. The law will try, and the law will fail. It always will. I mean, without the law, there would be chaos. Obviously, you need it. But no one can really hold you. No

one can hold you to a standard of your intentions, of why you're doing what you're doing, and the excellence that you're using. For example, when you're doing it, or the purpose for why you're doing it. Only you can. Because you can easily lie. And I have no way around it. I have no way to prove what you thought or felt at the moment of It's very difficult to do that.

And the categories of tazkiyah are four: comprehension, connection, rituals, and exercises. What this session has historically been, has been focused purely on the comprehensive piece. I mean, just talking about. understanding abstract concepts, which is what tazkiyah is in general. It's understanding the definitions of things that are not tangible or things that are not physical. So, talk about, for example, humbleness, or this is not something that you can go buy a kilo of. It's not something that I can draw for you. This is just an understanding of life that we have to properly define so we can hold ourselves to. And these abstract concepts can be sometimes dry, and, but at the same time, they are issues that the human nefe is intrigued by.

Your mind and heart are intrigued by these, and ideas are what define you at the end. It's really the ideas. that you decide that you're going to embrace and take upon yourself. Don't underestimate the importance of having strong ideas. So that's what we've been talking about for the majority of these sessions, just the comprehension piece. Tazkiyah has three other parts. It has the connection piece, it has the rituals, and it has the exercises. I'm going to try; my goal is to try and mix it up a little bit so that we can cover different aspects of tazkiyah growth and not just focus on the comprehension piece. So today, we're going to start with the second piece. We're going to start with it. We're going to talk a little bit about the third one.

we're going to talk a little bit about rituals. We're going to spend the next two to three weeks talking about how to start to perfect your rituals. Because one of the goals of tazkiyah, one of the goals is for you to actually worship Allah Subh how He wants you to worship Him. To perfect your salah and your siyam and your hajj, and your do them well. Do them the way they're supposed to be done so that they have the proper impact upon you and they have the proper impact upon society. And you get the proper reward for them. Or what's the point of doing something if you're going to do it and there's no reward and there's no benefit for you. and no benefit for society, then why are we doing this?

How do you convince yourself of doing something that is absolutely empty? There's no purpose to be served with it. You're not benefiting, no one else is, and God is not interested in it at all. He's not looking at it. And the example of that is going to be salah, which we're going to start with this week and talk about. If you're praying, if you're doing salah and you're not benefiting, and the world around you doesn't benefit, and Allah is not accepting your salah, then what was that? What was that minute and a half or two minutes that was invested in? Why on earth would you be doing this? And there's a lot of other examples, obviously, in our deen. But we start with the most important one, which is salah.

I did go over these rules last week; some of them I'm going to remind you of them every time we sit here for the next few weeks so that you have clarity on them. There are four rules of tazkiyah. The first one is that everything we say here is about you. About you and only you. Please do not project any of this upon any human being. No one. Not even your children. Not even no one. Just about you. You have to do this for a while. You have to do this for a couple of years, where you do not project anything that you hear upon anyone but yourself. until you understand it to the point where, if you're going to help someone else,

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you're going to do it the appropriate manner in the appropriate manner, in the appropriate way, in a fashion that's actually going to help them, not help you.

Because it's very satisfying when you come to someone to give them a piece of information that they don't have, that is going to blow their mind and make them feel bad about themselves and make you look like you know what you're talking about. That's very fulfilling to you. And if anything I say to you here allows you to fulfill yourself by talking to someone else who doesn't know as much, then I have failed in suhah of you. So this is not about anyone else aside from you. Number two, you have to commit to the daily words.

Committing to something that you don't have to commit to, committing to a certain amount of invocation of Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala that you don't have to do, that is put in a certain way, is character building and there are lessons that we will learn from it. Once I come to the point of, once you've committed to it, I can start commenting on it. So the daily word, which is istighfar a hundred times, and salah al nabi alayhi salam a hundred times, and la ilaha illallah a hundred times, which takes altogether maybe ten minutes, and then you recite surah al-fatiha, surah al-ikhlas three times, al-falaq, al-naas. That's it. It's not very long. It's not very complicated. You do it twice: once in the early part of the day, once in the lower and the later portion of the day.

We do do this on Friday nights after isha. If you want to come just so you can learn how to do it, then you're welcome to actually come and do that. Number three is the contemplation contemplative piece. You have to perform some degree of contemplation. If you listen to things that are being explained to you and you refuse to perform any degree of deep thinking regarding it, then it will not really sink in and you will not benefit from it. And it will just turn into another lecture. Tazkiyah is not really lectures like a lot of other Islamic systems are just lectures; you just listen. Tazkiyah, I know you have to take what's being said. You have to spend some time and think about it.

It's actually designed in a way where I am not taking a topic and and talking about every aspect of it. I am leaving it open specifically, purposefully, so that you have to contemplate because if you figure out more aspects of this topic, then it will mean be more meaningful to you. If everything is spoon-fed, you lose interest. One of the pitfalls of modern education. in general is just when you're always being lectured at told things You lose interest because there's no there's no stimulation not being stimulated It used like people who figured out mathematical equations or things in physics and chemistry They were they were given challenges difficulties something they need to do So and that and that basically stimulated their curiosity and their and their curiosity Their critical thinking so we started they started to try different things and that's why they came up with these equations

They're not smarter than you They just learn things in a different way and you are at a disadvantage Because you're not given the opportunity to learn things that way you're not given the opportunity to figure out how to calculate the length of the of a third any part of a triangle yet You're just told memorize this equation This is how you do it So that's not stimulating for you So it does get very similar if I if I spoon-feed every single aspect you will get bored and you won't really learn it So when I give a topic it is it is by by design a little bit missing like it's knuckles It's not full take it think about it yourself You will conclude most of these things on your own and that and that's important for you to kind of do that.

If you don't do that, then you're just waiting for then your problems are always gonna be the same. Now, every time, imagine if you need to ask someone every time you have an ethical or spiritual struggle. Then, you're gonna be in trouble because what if you have no

one to ask? My job is not to give you answers to questions. My job is to give you a way of thought, a thought process, a method, so that you can figure out answers to your own questions as you go along appropriately, in a way that is aligned with a loss of Congress teaching, aligned with ethicality and morality, and aligned with what is beneficial for you. And that is something you have to learn by but by contemplating and thinking deeply and trying to conclude things on your own and then my job is to kind of help figure give you a little tips here and there as we as we move along.

So the contemplation piece, with intensity, is absolutely important. It's how the Prophet alaihe salam became a prophet. It's how, it's what allowed him to reach the highs that he reached in his life. I mean, so because he was someone who engaged in deep thought and reflection. And number four, the fourth rule is exercises. Whenever you're given an exercise, you have to try it, even if you don't want to, even you think it's stupid even you think can't it's it's silly you still have to try it because if you're not willing to get to put yourself in a position where you're uncomfortable to observe how you're going to respond and overcome maybe that reflex or response they're not gonna grow like you have to be able to put yourself in in those positions and be willing to try something.

And people are very resistant to this is probably the most resistant piece where I'm not gonna do that. Why aren't you gonna do that? Did you ever ask yourself why you're not gonna do that? See this is the question that I'm trying to get you to gauge. Why do you not want to do what I'm asking you to do. If you think that there is a rational answer from your perspective, me you know because because you but you're wrong. It's just your nest doesn't want to do it, and it's very clear on that. So you're confused. You don't know if you don't want to do it or your nest doesn't want to do it. You don't even you don't even know the difference between the two. So you think that it's you, but it's not.

Because any exercise that we give is going to be just a good deed, a good deed of some sort. So, I mean, ethically, morally, and I mean, rationally, it'll make sense to do, but you just don't want to do it. And that is what you have to figure out why don't you want to do something if you're not willing to ask yourself those questions and go down that rabbit hole a little to figure out why you don't want to do something where does that desire of not doing this or doing it come from and how do you deal with it and can you differentiate between what's your rational logical spirit your mind your club who you are what that wants and what the nest that is the result of the mixing of your spirit and the body and your body and what that way you can't differentiate between those two then you're gonna continuously be lost not sure exactly who's responding here who's getting upset who is in desire.

And then you can't, you can never figure out your intentions. You can never figure out if you like something. Do you like it for the right reason or just like it because there's something in it for you, or there's some some game that you have, you have basically lied to yourself about. You haven't, you notice anymore? These intricacies of life are really important; they make a big difference as you age, as you go along. And I can guarantee you that the sum of all of your decisions at the end of your life will be a reflection of what degree of understanding of these things that you have. And that's and that's and that goes without Johnny. There's no exception to that rule. We talked about the principles.

I'm not gonna daily focuses is what I want you. I mean if you had didn't hear the last lecture, go back to it because I go through these things. But daily, these are the daily things you, the daily focuses. Those are the rules. The rules, I mean, are things that were going to happen, I mean, in general, in different ways. Daily focuses, these are the daily stuff I want

you to have in the back of your mind. You're always thinking about a son, a son not in terms of excellent but a son as in spirituality. There's always a second layer to everything. and where your mind was and where your heart was and what the purpose was. There's always, for everything that you do, doesn't matter even eating.

Everything that you do, there's always a second layer. Remember that at all times. You are, you have to question yourself. The Ubudiyyah question, تحقق من معاني العبودية. As the scholars would say, meaning you're asking yourself, am I a good abd to Allah Subhanahu? Is this behavior, are these decisions, the way I'm living my life, is this a reflection of someone who sees himself as a servant of God, or am I something different? Because you have to define yourself in life, and this definition is. most important محمد عليه الصلاة والسلام هو عبد الله ورسوله. That's how that's his pride, and that's the goal of his existence. He never wanted to be anything more. He didn't be anything more. You are not trying to be anything more either. Neither am I.

We're Ibadillah, Subhanahu wa. And that Ubudiyyah, that servicership to Allah Subhanahu, has to be questioned, and you have to remind yourself of that every day. Because you will find that many times you will just behave in ways where that's not how a good abd to Allah Subhanahu wa ta ala would ever behave. No servant, no true servant of Allah would actually speak that way or behave that. way And if you're not in the habit of questioning that, then you will forget it, and it's hard. These four have to become reflexes. They have to become second nature to you daily. You're always thinking about Ihsan, thinking about spirituality, thinking about your Ubudiyyah, thinking about your intentions. Whether your intentions are good, whether the reason you did what you did was the right reason for it, or was some other reason, that intention that you inserted there.

You'll never be perfect with your intentions. But the loss in life is if you give up on that. You just stop asking the question. You don't care anymore. You're going to do it with no care. No, you always have to care. And yes, it's an uphill battle, and you're going to lose a lot of them. But you're going to keep on asking that question. You're always going to try to make your intentions a little bit better, even if it's millimetric, even if it's almost not even any tangible. You have to try. And then the fourth one is that you have to contemplate the concept of accepting of. You have to ask yourself when it comes to a deed: you have to ask, is this deed a reflection of service to Allah ﷻ?

What is the spirituality regarding it? What's the intention before it? And was it accepted after it's? These questions have to be basically second nature to you. If you have them, then this will be, this is a guarantee that you will continuously grow and get better, whether you're listening to me or you're not, or you're listening to someone else or you're not listening to anyone. These questions, on their own, will help you grow. So make sure you ask, because what's the point of doing a deed if it's not accepted? What is the point? If all of your deeds are pending, not one of them is, as far as you know. As far as you know, inshallah, Allah ﷻ accepts all of your deeds, inshallah, everything. But you don't know, and neither do I.

All of them are pending, all of them. Listen to this every single one there's not even one that I can swear by. If I had one, I could swear by I close this laptop and I leave, and I never see any of you guys ever again because I don't care. I took care of myself, I'm fine, I don't need to. But the reason I do this is because I don't know, so I have to keep on pushing until inshallah one of these deeds is accepted. Because I don't know, and I wouldn't dare act like I did. And if I showed Allah ﷻ any indication that I'm happy with what I've done

so far, then actually that may be a reason for Him to reject all of my deeds, so I wouldn't even dare to try and do that.

And you have to feel the same way. But that requires an ongoing questioning of ourselves. Are you going to pray Isha in maybe 10 minutes? At the end, we prayed Isha great. In the masjid, Imam recited a nice surah. All that, was it accepted? We don't know. We don't know. But you have to ask, did I do everything I could to make sure it's accepted? These are the questions you have to ask yourself. All right, so the rest of the aspects I talked about last week, I'm not going to go into. I'm going to go into what I wanted to talk about today. So today we're going to start talking about one of the third category. We're going to start with the And I'll make some slides for it.

I haven't made slides for it yet. I will. Next week, inshallah, you'll have some. We're going to start with Salah, which is by far the most important ritual that we have. We're going to spend quite a bit of time on it. Probably the majority of this course or this series will be talking about Siyam, Hajj, and Zakah, which are very important, but they do come in second place after Salah. Salah is the one act of worship that you do daily multiple times all throughout your life. If you want to do the math on it, it's not that difficult. It adds up to around 150, 000 Salahs in your life, right? That's if you're only doing Fardh. If you do a bit more than that, it's beyond. It's not an infinite number of Salawat.

by the way, It's not infinite. It's actually not that much. At the end, the number is not that high, and those salawat are going to be the basis of acceptance of anything else. Like before, if you talk about any other good deed that you did, any other dedication that you have, ask you about that first. If it was done well, then Allah Subh anaHu Wa Ta A la is willing to look at everything else. If that was not done well, then the rest of it doesn't matter to him. Because if there's no connection with Allah Subh anaHu Wa Ta A, if you actually didn't care to honor that relationship with Allah Subh anaHu Wa Ta A, then the good deeds that you did, you didn't. do for him.

You did it for some other reason, for someone else. So go and see whoever it is you did it for, and ask them to take care of you. Because if you want Allah Subh anaHu Wa Ta A la to take care of you, then you have to do what you do for him. And one of the main indications that what you did in your life was for the sake of Allah Subh anaHu Wa Ta A, aside from the intention, the momentary intention before doing it, is whether you had a relationship with Allah Subh anaHu Wa Ta. To begin with, the relationship with Allah, which in Arabic relationship is the silah, right? Which is where salah is taken from in terms of the root of the word. Without that. piece it doesn't really work.

So this is why salah was designed. It's why Allah Subh anaHu Wa Ta A la asked it for. He does not benefit from Subh anaHu Wa Ta A la; he does not get stronger, he does not get wiser, he is not more popular with it. It doesn't offer him anything. Subh anaHu Wa Ta A It offers you everything that you need in your life. And in salah, up to within Islam, up to maybe the last couple of a few hundred years, it was not seen as a burden. It was seen, Islam, as a fuel. It was a spiritual fuel. It strengthened you, it protected you, put you in a better mood, put you in a better position. Muslims today see salah as a burden, something extra that they have to do No.

If you keep on seeing it that way, then you're at a big disadvantage. Because salah is not seen that way. And we talked about this in Surat Al Muzzammil when I did Tafsir of Wahhab **فَمِ اللَّيْلِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا**. Why **إِنَّا سَأَلْنَاكَ الْقَوْلَ تَقِيلاً**? Pray a lot at night. Why? Because we're going to put upon you, we're going to cast upon you a heavy burden. It's going to be a heavy burden. You're

not going to be able to carry it if you don't stand and you build a relationship with Me, Subhanahu wa ta'ala. Building that relationship with Allah, Subhanahu wa ta'ala, is what salah is. And what we're going to do over the course of this next few weeks is talk about why salah is designed the way it is. Like why it is that we move in certain ways and why we say certain things. And tips to improve how you're going.

To get your salah to a better position, you have to perform; you have to walk down the path of tazkiyah for a while. And you have to work on the diseases of the heart. And you have to rid yourself from a number of And you have to get yourself into a better position from a self-value and a humbleness perspective. And you have to have a certain degree of ikhlas and get rid of And you have to have a certain understanding of. There's a number of concepts that you have to understand in order for salah to improve. But in the meantime, because we can't wait that long, we can't wait forever for all these things to be learned.

I will offer a number of fixes, some minor changes that, if you offer for each salah, then this will start to improve your salah on its own. And you will go from maybe a mediocre approach to this ritual to something a little bit more meaningful and has a little bit more substance to it. So we'll start out with the The first one, and this shouldn't come as a surprise: the first thing you have to focus on is the wudu itself. The wudu itself, which is the key or the condition for salah, you have to give that a certain degree of. And you have to treat it with the intention that it was designed to have to begin with. Wudu is your key to being able to pray.

It's a tahara, it's a reflection or a symbol of. Even though you may not be pure on the inside, you're taking a moment to purify yourself on the outside with the hope that that purity is going to be reflected on the inside. Because everything in Islam has, especially rituals and commands, when you're doing something, it's supposed to reflect a spiritual essence. It's supposed to reflect a spiritual status. The way you look on the outside is supposed to help you reflect that on the inside. So, for example, when you go to hajj, you dress and you just wear two pieces of because that's a very humble look. There's equality with everyone around you; they're all dressed the same. That is supposed to reflect spiritually on the inside. You're supposed to feel that way as well.

Now, you may not, but that's your problem. It's not the problem of the ritual itself. The ritual was designed to put you in a physical status or a physical position that is clear what the purpose of it is, so that you may reflect that spiritually upon yourself. But we stopped doing that because we grew up in Islam. So, for example, for us, salah is just a reflex. Once the Allahu Akbar goes up, even the tongue just knows exactly what to say. You don't have to think of anything. You just go right through it. You're done with it. You broke the world record. You're good to go. So it happens; the reason being is because we're so used to it.

But really, when salah was, what I'm going to try and do for you for these few sessions is to have you imagine it being. I want you to imagine if you knew nothing about it and you were amongst the first group that watched the Prophet ﷺ perform it for the first time. Because the Prophet ﷺ was taught salah by Jibreel the second day, the second day of his prophecy. So the first day of his prophecy he was given iqra bismi rabbika ladhee khalaq. And obviously it was a panic for him. He wasn't sure what this was. He figured out what it was. The next day Jibreel came back and taught him how to make wudu and taught him how to make salah. This is the first thing he learned from Sayyidina Jibreel.

And then Jibreel, by the way, basically ghosted him for quite some time. It was a few months before he came back. He was just given, here, learn. Here, go ahead. He gave him

Surah al Muzzammil, Muddathir, Qalam, Surah al Fatiha. And then he's gone. And now the Prophet ﷺ has to learn how to perform this. But this ritual served as the basis the root of what our community our was going to develop for itself in terms of its closeness to Allah ﷻ. We are a nation that's very connected to Allah. We're very connected to our Creator. We don't speak to Him on Sundays or on Saturdays; we speak to Allah ﷻ every single day, multiple times. Multiple times by design.

I want you to think about this: if you were to speak to a non-Muslim, someone who's non-Muslim talking to you, and they're observing you, they'll say you're a very spiritual person. You pray five times; you talk to your Lord five times a day. I ask you, do you feel spiritual? And most people say I don't feel spiritual. But you understand that someone's watching you like, oh, this is a very spiritual person. I swear to God, he wakes up at like five in the morning. Like, wakes up and he goes in. This is insane! This guy is so spiritual. And you're like, I don't feel spiritual at all. Well, why is it? Because this ritual, unfortunately, has been like, we've sucked the life out of it. We've sucked the life out of it.

All that's left of it is just the And that is a big problem. It's a big problem. It's one of the reasons that you don't enjoy your One of the reasons that people don't enjoy being Muslim. They're not making any progress. It's because there's an important part. of being Muslim, that's been taken out. Like we've removed, it's a shell of what it once was. Fixing it is not difficult; it just requires a little bit of finesse, a little bit of tazkiyah basically, a little bit of self-control, and some practical steps in terms of how to do it. But I tell you that everything I teach in tazkiyah, the end goal, in my opinion, one of the end goals is for your salah to become better.

Everything, like every single word I will talk about in tazkiyah anywhere, one of the goals of it is that your salah becomes better. We're trying to help you. Your wurd that you do is absolutely for your salah to become better. Because the word what is it? It's dhikr, Quran, and then dua at the end. What is salah? That's all salah is. I'm trying to get you to here's an example: It's not actually salah. Do it! Learn how to get better. Because we can't do these things practically, we have to run with a certain way. So the first thing that you have to think about in salah, the first tip, is that when you perform wudu before your salah, perform it appropriately.

Don't perform it while watching a video on YouTube video, or you know by reading something or talking on the phone. No, no! When it's time for wudu, just stop and make wudu. Remind yourself that you may not have the dirt. on the outside, like you may not sometimes you're making wudu, and there's nothing. Like there's nothing to clean. It's clean. It's been clean for a while. But this is not what it's reflecting. This is a spiritual preparation so that you may stand in front of the king of kings, subhanahu wa ta'ala, and speak to him. So it's reflecting a spiritual cleansing that you're trying to do. Just give yourself a second during wudu to think about that. Before, I'm not asking you to just think about that, just for a moment during wudu.

I'll allow everyone to leave by 9:10. This session starting next week will start promptly after Salatul Isha. So people will pray their Salatul Isha and then do their Sunnah, and either leave or stay to listen, or go up front for the Qur'an program. It's whatever they want to do. But we'll start after Isha. Isha is going to quickly, exhilaratingly going back to 8 o'clock. So next week will be 8:15, the week after will be 8:05, the week after will be 7:55, and then we'll just be running basically from 8 to 9 again. But to avoid this delay in the middle with Salatul Isha, because it makes it difficult to kind of continue, we'll start after Salatul Isha starting next week.

So next week maybe a little bit later, like we'll finish maybe a little bit later around maybe 9. 20 or so, but the weeks after, we'll go back to 8 to 9, inshallah. So, the first piece that I want you to, and these are exercises. When we're talking about the rituals, we're talking about exercise. You have to try this throughout the week. You have to put in a little bit of extra effort where every time you make wudu, take a moment and remember what exactly it is that you are performing here. Because you may not have, you may not be standing there making wudu because your feet and hands and face are actually filthy. They may be totally clean, cleaner than most people. But the reason that you're doing this is it's a reflection of a pursuit.

It's a reflection of a pursuit of purity that you are performing within your life, that you are performing physically, and that is being reflected spiritually as well. You're trying to have, just like your limbs are clean, now the water is cleaning them physically; you are trying to do the same with your inner limbs, with everything within your life. And that without that purity, you are not permitted to stand in front of Allah. The Prophet ﷺ has a narration. It has some questions of authenticity, but most scholars are okay with it because the meaning is acceptable to them. And it is that when the abd makes wudu, that his khataya his Sins will fall with the water that is dripping.

Now, if you study the madhhab of Imam Abu Hanifa, Abu Hanifa, his early opinion on water that someone made wudu with is that it was najis. And this is a very outlandish opinion that even the Hanafi madhhab didn't continue with later on. But his initial opinion was that the water that someone makes wudu with that's dropping is najis; you don't touch it. And the reason that he did this, and this is what the scholars have said, is that Abu Hanifa may karamati that he used to see the sins falling. So he couldn't help it; he was seeing sins, and the water is disgusting. He's like, no, no, you can't use. this for anything. It's filled with the filth of the dhunub.

And because of this understanding that, of course, he had and, of course, those who came later continued to have, is that when you are performing wudu, this is what's happening. You are trying to cleanse yourself so that you meet Allah ﷻ without a bad record. Because it's not appropriate to go to meet the King ﷻ and your record is tarnished, and you're filled with sin, and you're not. You want to try and meet him ﷻ to the best of your ability, as pure as possible, so that, inshallah, what you're asking for is there. So that's the first one. I'm going to give you two things to perform per. week or else this will take a year.

So per week, two things that you need to focus on, and hopefully, if you add them up by the end of five, six weeks, you'll have a good number. Two, before you pray, this is before we even start. Before you make takbir al haram, take a moment, just pause for maybe 10 seconds. Just pause for around 10 to 15 seconds and just remind yourself of what it is that you're It's easy because of the fluidity of this and the habit and the quickness of life and the fast lane that you're living in, that you make wudu, and Allah ﷻ, which is fine. But I'm asking you, just before you start salah, just 10 seconds, just calm yourself for a moment Just see if you can bring your heart down a little bit and just remind yourself what it is that you're doing here.

Why is this important and who it is that you're speaking to and the significance of this? I'm not going to give you props in terms of what to think. You figure it out. You figure out what works for you in terms of – but just give yourself a 10 second pause before salah. This is by far the most important of all of the tips that I'm going to give you, and it's the one that's least followed by everyone who is offered to them. But learn to do it. Just learn before you

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perform your salah, before you – if you put your hands up, put it down again. Take a. What is this? Where am I? Where am I? Just what was happening right now before you start?

If you do that, you put yourself in a much different mindset. You can't have your salah a continuation of what was happening before. If you're thinking of something, you can't start your salah and continue to think about the same thing. You can't just continue to do what you were doing internally. You can't continue to do what you were doing before salah into salah. No, salah has to be a timeout. Now usually, what I do in these sessions is I let you go try. You fail, you come back and you tell me things, and I tell you what to do. This has not been working for the last three. So I'm losing hope in it. So I'm going to tell you what's going to You're going to go. It's not going to work for you.

You're not going to do it. And then you're going to say, I can't seem to stop my thought process, and you're going to complain about that. And some of you will figure out a way to do it, and some of you won't. A way to do this is I have a specific note in my Apple Notes that is just salah notes. Before I start salah, there's like maybe 15 things I'm thinking about all at once. I write them down so I don't forget any of them, and now I don't have to think about these anymore. I don't have to worry about forgetting. about them I don't have to worry about nope I'll just pick up from where I left off.

Because if you're extremely, extremely preoccupied with a thought, or there's a problem that you're trying to deal with, or there's something that's bothering you, make notes of it. Just so that you can afford to completely forget about it for the next five, ten minutes. The Prophet ﷺ, one of the reasons that he would use that, that we all famously arihna biha, grant us ease, is because he used, like Salah to him, was a few minutes a day where he didn't have to think about anything else. He didn't have to worry about al-Rum and Fars and mushriki Quraysh and the munafiqeen and the people who needed wealth and the poor and the sick. He didn't have to worry about any of that. He could just stand there and speak to Allah ﷻ for a few minutes. It was a very nice refuge for him. He enjoyed being there. Why? Because he could afford So because we don't do that, we just bring it in

back into the plane, do your stuff; it'll get there because the plane knows exactly where it's going. This is not what Salah is supposed to be. It was never designed to be that way, which is why it's not working. So one of the most important tips is to take a moment before Salah and calm down. It's hard to do because it's life. Life is going on. You're continuing with all these issues, especially Dhuhr and Asr. You're at work. You have to be able to time out. If there's something really important that you cannot afford not to finish, thinking about sometimes I will sit down for five, six minutes and just finish what it is I need to finish. Let's finish it. Let's finish this bloody idea so I can go ahead, run through the whole scenario.

We're done. Good. Now we can do it. If you can't stop a thought, then you can go ahead and give yourself a few minutes before you start your Salah. But in general, learn to be able to pause. Just take a time, a mental time out so you don't have to think. about it. If you think about whatever it is that is bothering you, you think about it in Salah, in the form of a discussion with Allah about it. Instead of something that, don't disconnect it from God. If you're disconnecting it from Allah, as if He has nothing to do with it, no, no, this is a problem. No, I'll take care of this. What? No, no, I'm fine. What do you mean? Who else are you going to talk to about any problem that you have?

If there's any problem that you have that you don't think is worth talking to Allah about, then you've misunderstood this relationship. Everything is worth talking to Allah about.

Everything. So when I say take a mental pause from it I mean take a mental pause from trying to solve it yourself and dwelling over it. You can carry it with you into Salah, but you're carrying it with you into Salah as in Ya Rabb I don't know what to do. Ya Rabb give me some solution. Help me it's bothering me. That's a different approach. That's a whole different thing. But that requires this little mental pause. Because you're transitioning your mind, you're going from that's why when we start Salah you're going to throw, you're going to do that movement that symbolizes one way or the other of something being thrown behind.

No matter how you do Takbeer whether you do it. Shafi i Hanbali or Hanafi, it doesn't make a difference. The movement is very similar. Something is being, even though the actual movement is not throwing, you're putting your hands out. We'll talk about this next week, inshallah. But there is within it some degree of symbolism of something being thrown behind, as if to, I'll put that behind me for now. I can afford for the next five minutes not to think about this. It'll be there when I'm done. I can go back to it later. And if you find that your brain will keep on worrying about it, take some notes. Make a note. That way it's there; you can always go back to it when you're done. And enter Salah. with a different.

Don't continue your thought thread and your thought process into Salah. No, you have to stop it. And that requires a ten-second pause, just so you can get yourself into a gear. Just gear yourself into something a little bit different. Two minutes, very much worth doing. These are the two first tips for Salah. Try to prefer them as much as possible this week, at least in your Fardh. If you can't do it in your Sunnah, no problem, at least in your Fardh, because that's the one. I don't want to say I don't care about your Sunnah because that's rude, but I do care about your Fardh. It's your Fardh that actually matters, it's your Fardh that you're going to be asked about Yawm al Qiyam; it's the one that all of this is going to be held accountable for.

So we have to make sure that we're doing it appropriately. So when you're performing a Fardh Salah, make sure that it's a reminder of why you're doing this because, logically, you may not be needing Wudu. You're at work, you're very clean; you've been clean since the morning. What you did does not basically bring filth upon your arms or your hair or your feet, but you're doing it because it symbolizes a certain degree of purity that you're pursuing in your life. And it's reflected spiritually. And then right before Salah just 10 seconds. And even if you go like this, and you're almost saying Allah but it's okay, go back again. You'll make a mistake and sometimes you'll do Takbeer. Salim, go back.

Give yourself 10 seconds so that you can kind of just redirect focus a bit, get yourself into the right mindset, and then how long is Salah? Salah is a couple of minutes, a few minutes. The longest Salah is going to be three and a half minutes, four minutes; it doesn't go beyond that honestly. If you're praying alone, if you're praying in Salah in Jama at, then Jama at is easy. We'll talk about Jama at. Jama at is easy. The reason we pray Jama at is because it's easy. You Don't have to worry about a lot of the things I will tell you here. Jama'at is very easy for you to find khushu and clarity because there's a lot of things taken care of for you. You can just focus on other things.

Half of Salah is not even your responsibility. You just focus on other stuff. But this is for at least the prayers you pray alone. The tips I'm going to give you over the next few weeks are going to be specifically just to serve that purpose. So those are two tips I want you to take some time and perform. I'm not telling you to pause so that you can voice out your niyyah. If you do that, then good for you. But that's not the goal. The goal of it is for you to

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take a moment and just realize and recognize that you have to slow down and you have to put aside what it is that you were thinking about beforehand so that this is meaningful.

And if that requires a few adjustments where you take a note or you take a minute before you start praying, you get rid of a thought, meaning you think about it and it's done. Or you adjust the way that you're going to approach it and you bring it with you in Salah in a way that you are asking Allah for ease. Whatever works for you is fine, but you have to find something. If your life continues normally into Salah, then Salah becomes a burden. It's a hindrance. If you're trying to live life and now I have to do these movements and I can't look and talk to anybody, yeah, it's a hindrance. It's actually quite difficult because you're trying to live your life, you're trying to solve your problems, talk to this person, text that person, fix this issue, and this Salah is now a hindrance.

It's not allowing you to do any of these things. So if you continue your life into Salah normally, then yes, Salah becomes a burden. It's impossible because it's absolutely how are you going to perform all these tasks? How are you going to text when you're praying? How are you going to speak to someone when you're praying. How are you going to think about things properly when your tongue is saying something different? It's very difficult. So I feel bad; I empathize with you. This must be very difficult to pray five times a day if that's what you're doing. But that's not what Salah is supposed to be to begin with. That's not what it was supposed to be ever. This is a flaw in how we're approaching it.

And you are very capable as a human being to have pauses. Yeah, and you do it all the time. You run into friends; you can't bring your thought process and all of your masayib to your friends. You have to put them aside and give salams and hugs, and how Are you doing a chat for a few minutes? Your problems are still there. Once you walk away, you have to go back to them, and you work with them, but you don't bring them. If you bring them to, if you bring that to every gathering, you'll have no friends. You'll have no friends. You fight with your wife, and then you go to your friends, and you talk, and you bring the same problem that you had before. Your friends will not ask you to come anymore.

They don't want you. They don't want your problems with you. Come, leave your problems at Figure it out. It's none of my business. I don't care. You're here to do something different, so we learn as social beings. to differentiate and to disconnect and to, you know, deal with this problem here and then here have a different. So we do this all the time. So it's not like I'm asking you to do something that's impossible to do. It's just whether you want to do it or not. That's a whole different story, and you're gonna find your nafs doesn't want to do it because your nafs doesn't see any value to salah to begin with. Your nafs sees value to talking with friends. It sees value to going out for lunch.

It sees value to that stuff. It likes that stuff. Salah to the nafs means nothing. So they tell it, okay, we're gonna do the same thing. Just like when you go up to Our friends and we start chatting; we leave all of our problems, don't think about them for a few minutes, and we just talk to them about other stuff. We're gonna do this now. It's like, no, this is not worth anything. So you're gonna say, no, no, it is. We shall not keep it. This is not up to you. This is a hundred percent worth it, and you know you've been the problem. You'll be a shame on you for allowing me to live this long with not treating this the way I should have treated it. This is exactly what's happening.

Your nafs decides what's valuable and what's not. What's valuable, it allows you to. What's not valuable, it will make it absolutely impossible. So this pause is just a, you're just giving yourself an advantage that no, no, no we're not gonna do this. We're not gonna enter this

appropriately. You will find if you do this over the course of a week that your salah, on its own, without me giving you any other tips, will improve just naturally. It'll improve, it'll slow down, come a little bit better. You'll feel a bit more calm after you do it. You'll be less rushed and you'll be less anxious as it happens, and you'll delay it less. Like you'll be like, ah, how many hours do I have? Another hour? How much time do I have?

You won't do that as much, because it's just you've learned, but this takes time. So take a full week. We'll come back Tuesday. I'll offer you another two tips. Try to keep up with these small tips. Try to do them throughout the week. If you don't and you decide to try all the tips at the end, I'll bet my house that you are going to fail. Like, I will easily, if I could bet, I would bet all of my savings that you're gonna fail and I'll become rich and I don't have to come and listen to small messages anymore. Go be in a bigger one; it'll be easier because it's impossible. You cannot make big changes. Go back to the principles of Tezkiah. The first one is graduality.

You have to make small baby step changes if you want to actually your nerves. cannot handle radical change. It'll break it. You don't want to break it. Breaking it means your spirit is broken as well. Like, you have to just bend it slowly until it comes into the shape that you want it to be. And bending means you have to be gradual. So, you take a week, make a small change, another week, another small change. Sometimes, after two, three weeks, I'll give a pause. I'll give you a week off. We won't talk about anything. Just go, just focus on the stuff and see if you can get them done. But the idea is the consistency. It's consistency. What causes this thing to fail is when you lack consistency, meaning you try for a bit and then you give up No, no.

Just hold on to it. It'll change your will. And I'm giving you this. I'll end with this. The example I give you is when you're raising a child. All it's about is whose will is going to win. It's whose willpower. That's all it is. He thinks he can outstand you. The kid thinks he has more willpower, so he can complain longer than your patience is. Fine, take it. Just go away before I throw you out of the The idea is just his willpower. So if you can outlast him, then he will change his. So it's a battle of wills. That's all it is. So if you lose your temper, you slap, he won because he outlasted you. His will outlasted yours. and you lost your temper. So that's one, nothing.

Even though you slapped him, but he won. So outlasting his will, that's all it is. And you are very capable of outlasting the will of a child easily. And that's how you change behavior. How do you get them to change behavior? Nope, we're going to do it this way. And they're making... Nope, we're going to do it this way. And you just stick to it until they do it. It takes time, but it eventually happens. It's the only way to raise a Absolutely no difference than when you're dealing with your No difference at all. At all. Because we are all just overgrown children. None of us have changed that much. We think. we have but we haven't. And that's the trick to all of this.

Deep down inside, I'm the same five-year-old brat that I always was. And nothing has changed about me at all. Just grayer, bigger, fatter, but nothing else. Inside, exactly the same. So it's just a power of wills. Do I have more willpower than the five-year-old brat inside, or not? If I do, I can get it to do what I want. If not, then I will continue to serve its purpose. But I've learned very well how to make it seem as if it's not. It's not his will. And how to beautify it and rationalize it, and convince others that I'm doing it for the right reason. Because I've picked up skills in life that allow. me to do that just like you have. We all have. And it does get just learning that.

OK, let's cut it out. Let's cut it out and actually start making decisions that are based on rationale, based on morality, based on goodness, based on riba lillah subh, which is not what the nafs cares for. And that requires you to outlast it a little bit with small, gradual changes. So take these changes and apply them over the course of a and add to them as we go along. And inshallah, you'll find a difference. And I'll make sure that at the end of each session, I offer some time for people to ask questions or to share their experience with it. And we'll offer people some space to talk. Jazakumullah khair. SubhanAllah wa bihamdik. Shukran. La ilaha illa anta, wasallamu alayk. Wasallamu ala sayyidina Muhammad wa ala aalihi wasallam. Jazakumullah khair. Barakallahu feekum. See you next week, Inshaallah. Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.

**Video Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=78YGmvETrOA>