

Paper: ISLAMIC STUDIES

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QUESTION 2

Explain the concept of Salah.
How it impacts the social, moral and spiritual life of an individual.

A. INTRODUCTION:

In Islam, worships make the core of religious responsibilities towards Allah Mighty and provide believers with a set of channels to establish connection with Him. In Islam, Muslims have been obligated a set of formal worships, which are five in total and equip a person to achieve Allah's blessings and cleanse himself from worldly evils. Salah (Prayer) is one of the most important worships which a Muslim is required to perform five times a day.

B. CONCEPT OF SALAT:

a) Concept of Worship

In Islam, Worship of Allah is

one of the primary responsibilities and obligations for a Muslim.

In Arabic, worship is called **Ibadat**. **Ibadat** is derived from word 'Abd' which means 'submission'. So, worship demands a complete submission and surrender of a believer before Almighty Allah. According to religious scholar Syed Abul Ala Maudoodi, "set of formal worship is prescribed to man so to equip him of necessary tools to work for Allah."

b) Concept of Salat

Salat is one of the basic and primary p worships which is obligated by Allah for Muslims. Salat means prayer or dua through which a person connects with his Lord. Obligated in Islam in 10th year of Prophethood during Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) flight to Heavens and meeting with Allah on the night of Miraj, Salat is obligated five times a during specified time segments in a day. Every Muslim, from the age of adolescent to elderly; irrespective of gender, is mandated to perform Salat, while exemptions and relaxations are provided under conditions including travel, menstruation

and illness.

**Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)
said:**

"Salat is the pillar
of religion."

C) Importance of Salat:

In Islam, Salat holds a centerstage, and a great emphasis has been laid by Allah Almighty in Quran and by Prophet (PBUH) during his teachings on establishing this worship. ^{Unlike} ~~Before~~ other worships like Hajj and Zakat, which demand financial soundness to be made obligation, Namaz is a physical worship and is mandatory for every Muslim to perform. It creates a bridge to connect a believer with his Lord and seeks his support, guidance and strength. Moreover, it is the basic distinction between a Muslim and an apostate.

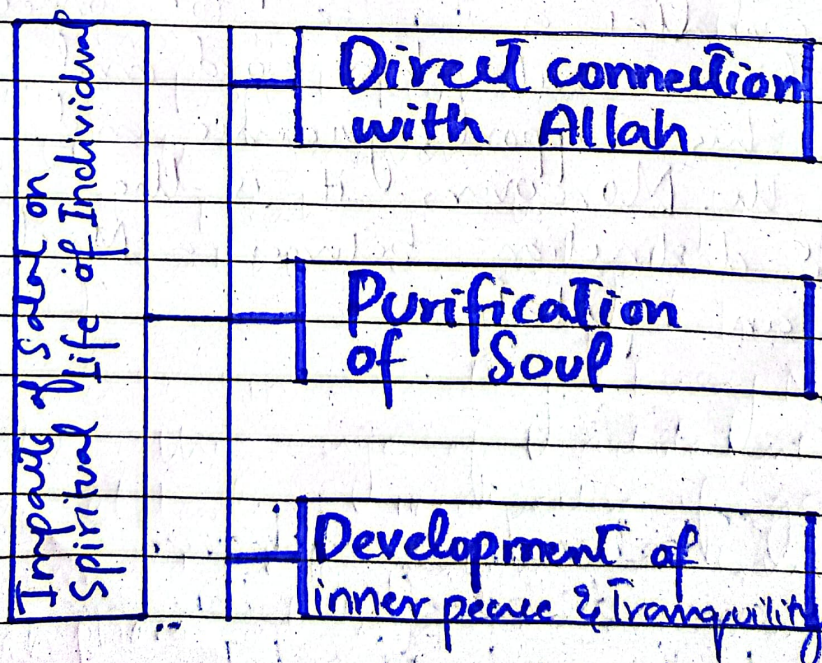
Prophet Muhammad said:

"Between a believer
and disbelief is the
abandonment of Salat"

C. Impacts of Salat on Individual

In Islam, every worship obligated on Muslims have numerous benefits and are not merely a spiritual connection between a believer and God. Likewise, Salat is not only a physical worship that has to be performed by a Muslim but also offers wide ranging prospects in uplifting spiritual, moral and social elements in and of individual and the society. This helps in establishing a pure, respectful and equitable order in a society.

I. Spiritual impacts of Salat



i) Direct connection with Allah

Salat is a source and medium of direct dialogue between a believer and Allah Almighty. A person can communicate his feeling and desires to The Creator and helps in achieving Taqwa.

In a Hadeeth-i-Qudsi, **Allah** says:

“I have divided prayer between myself and the believer in two halves. And the believer shall get what he asks.”

ii) Purification of Soul

By establishing a link between an individual and the Almighty Allah, Salat purifies the soul of worldly temptations, desires, and gratifications. In order to achieve the Lord's affection, man purges himself of illegitimate desires and not only becomes a **momin** but also a good human. **Allah** says:

“Indeed, Salat refrains from shameful and unjust deeds”
(Al-Quran)

iii) Development of inner peace and tranquility

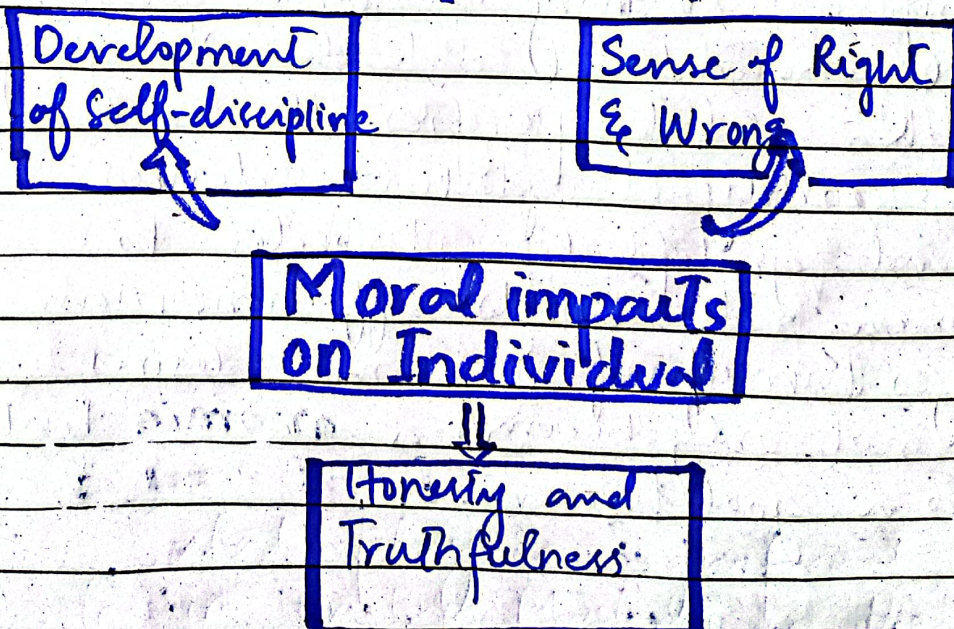
Through Salat, a believer achieves inner peace, tranquility and contentment, knowing that Allah Almighty is the greatest refuge and He will help him through thick and thin. This elevates a person's belief in divine help and man does not fall in the trap of disappointment.

Allah says:

“In the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest”

(Al-Quran)

II. Moral impacts of Salat



i) Development of self-discipline:

Salat helps a person to elevate his moral self by instilling discipline and time management. Five daily prayers educate a man to understand the value of time in daily affairs. This develops a moral responsibility towards worship, work and family.

According to **Ibn Taymmiah:**

“Prayer is a training of both the body and the soul.”

ii) Develops the sense of right and wrong:

Salat help a person in developing a strong sense of right and wrong and the strengthens one's self-accountability. In order to achieve Allah's benevolence, man strives to embrace good and refrain from wrong.

Allah says:

“Salat refrains from shameful and unjust deeds.”
(Al-Qur'an)

iii) Honesty and Truthfulness

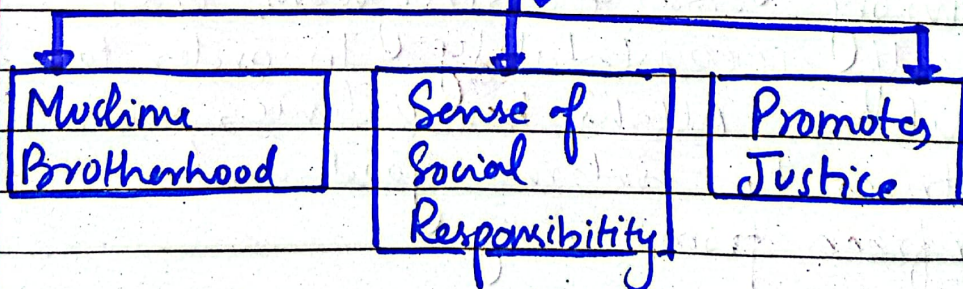
When a man establishes a strong spiritual connection with Allah Almighty, he knows that God is ever watchful and is even aware of his intentions. This encourages a man to develop the morals of honesty and truthfulness as a cornerstone in one's life.

“Worships train a person to embrace honesty and truthfulness and reject tyranny and oppression”

(Abul Mawdoodi)

III Social Impacts of Salat

Social Impacts of Salat on Individual



i) Promotes Muslim Brotherhood

Salat play a significant role in uniting Muslims in the

Bond of brotherhood. Through emphasizing the importance of congregational prayers in mosques, it provides people with the opportunity to come closer to each other and build strong community.

Prophet (PBUH) said:

“Congregational prayer is 27 times more superior than a prayer offered alone.”

ii) Sense of Social Responsibility

By forming a sense of community and brotherhood among Muslims, Salat further encourages them to share social responsibility towards others.

Prophet (PBUH) said:

“No one can be a true believer if his stomach is full while his neighbour goes hungry.”

iii) Promotes Justice :

Salat helps a society by in developing a just order by instilling the very element in individuals at grassroot level. Through this fundamental prayer, individuals realize the importance of justice and accountability in society or in this world as it would be the basis of salvation in the hereafter.

Prophet said:

"Everyone of you is a shepherd and everyone is responsible for his flock. Rulers would be asked about the people."

D. Conclusion:

In short, Salat is the fundamental of obligatory prayers prescribed in Islam and help an individual in establishing strong bond with Allah Almighty. This bond helps a man in elevating his spiritual, moral and social standards in life.

Prophet (PBUH) asserted:

"Salat is the cordness of my eyes."