

TARK AS-SALAH
(ABANDONING SALAH)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, most Kind, most Merciful



Surat al-Muddaththir 74:40-43

فِي جَنَّاتٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ عَنِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ
مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِي سَقَرٍ
قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ

[They will be] in [heavenly] gardens, questioning the sinners: 'What led you into hell?' They will answer: 'We were not of those who prayed.'

Learning Objectives

- To define the term *tark as-salah*
- To evaluate why abandoning *salah* is considered such a grave sin in Islam
- To explain at least three consequences of abandoning *salah*

Key Words

تَرَكَ ^{Tark}
to leave; to abandon

الْكَبَائِرُ ^{Al-kaba'ir}
major sins

قَضَاءُ ^{Qadha'}
to perform, to complete;
making up for a wajib act that
was not performed when it
should have been



Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a) says:

Salah is a pillar of faith, it is like the centre-pole of a tent. As far as it is fulfilled, the ropes and pegs remain firm. But when this centre-pole does not remain straight or is broken, the other ropes and pegs also loosen from their places and the tent collapses.



Rasulullah (s) has described someone who does not pray as being close to disbelief:

The divide between a believer and disbelief is the abandonment of *salah*.



REMEMBER...



Salah is *wajib* on every Muslim. There are six different types of *wajib salah* in Islam, out of which the five daily *salahs* are one type. The five daily *salahs* are the only *wajib salah* that must be performed on a daily basis. Can you recall what the other *wajib salahs* are in Islam, and when they become *wajib*?



DID YOU KNOW?

Rasulullah (s) has said:

“The name of one who forsakes his *salah* intentionally is written on the door of hell through which he shall [eventually] enter.”

What is *tark as-salah*?

Tark as-salah means to abandon *salah*. *Tarik as-salah* is a person who abandons the *salah*. It refers to people who accept that *salah* is *wajib* but do not pray some or any of the *wajib salahs*. *Tark as-salah* is considered a major sin (*al-kaba'ir*) in Islam.

A person who totally rejects the *salah* as a *wajib* act is referred to as *munkir us-salah*. Such a person would be considered a *kafir* because of rejecting the *nubuwwah* of Rasulullah (s) and the validity of the Qur'an.

To understand the graveness of the consequences of *tark as-salah* and why it is considered a major sin, consider the following analogy.

Suppose you enrol in a school, but you do not attend any of the lessons. The school will tell you that a necessary part of being a student at this school is that you turn up for class! You cannot be a student and choose not to turn up. They will give you a choice: either come to class or be expelled.

Similarly, *salah* is a necessary part of Islam. You cannot be a Muslim and choose not to pray.

The *ayat* of the Holy Qur'an at the beginning of this lesson highlight this point very clearly. The believers will be in heaven and they will look towards those in hell, and will ask them what led them to hell. Those in hell will reply that it was because they did not pray.



ACTIVITY...

Read verses [74:40-47] and list the four things that led the sinners to hell.



A person came to Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a) and asked him why people who omit *salah* are called *kafir* but those who commit grave sins such as drinking alcohol or committing adultery are not.

The Imam replied that adultery and other such sins are committed when a person is overcome by their desire, but *salah* is omitted because the person considered it insignificant. The one who commits adultery does so to derive pleasure, but one who leaves *salah* does not get any pleasure.

Similarly, abandoning other *wajibat* does not carry the same kind of grave consequence as abandoning *salah*. Someone may avoid *hajj* and *khum*s because they are miserly, or they may not fast out of concern for their health or because the idea of hunger and thirst deters them. But as far as *salah* is concerned, a person abandons it because they consider religion and religious duties as insignificant, and they attach no importance to it; this amounts to denial of Allah!



FIQH FACTS

RULE 1370

If for any reason, whether intentionally or unintentionally, a person misses a *salah*, they should ask forgiveness from Allah and try and make it up and offer it as soon as possible (the sooner the better), and avoid delaying it unnecessarily. This is known as *qadha salah*. *Qadha salah* have to also be offered for *salahs* that were performed incorrectly.

If one's father has not performed his *salahs* and he could have made them up, in the event that he did not fail to perform them due to outright disobedience, then based on obligatory precaution, after the father's death his eldest son must either perform them himself or hire someone to perform them. The *qadha salahs* of one's mother are not *wajib* on him to perform, although it is better that he does.



ACTIVITY...

As a class, discuss:

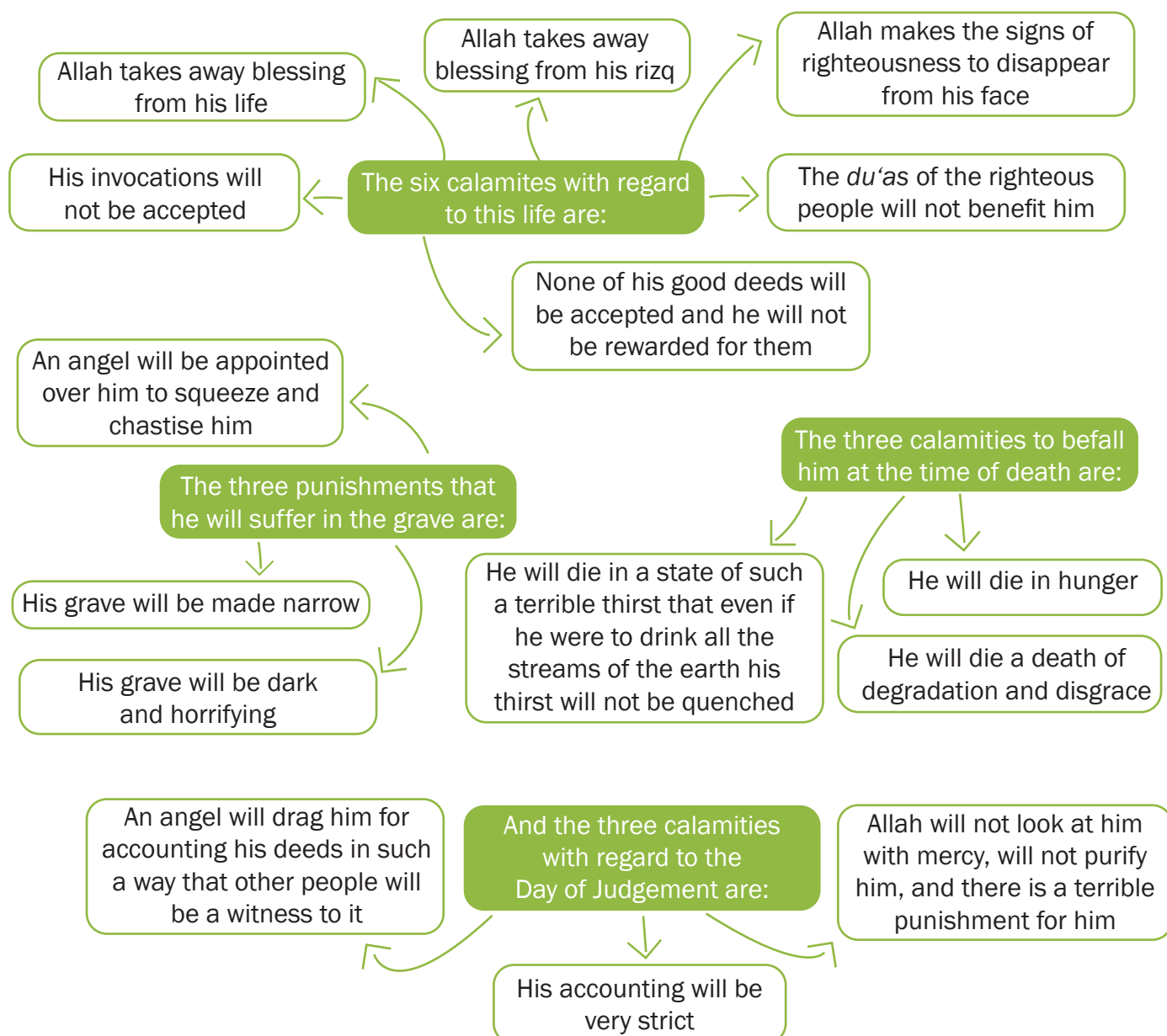
- Reasons why you think some people do not pray, even though they believe in Allah
- Ways you can help people overcome their reluctance to pray.

Consequences of abandoning *salah*

There is another very powerful and thought provoking *hadith* from Rasulullah (s) on the gravity of the sin of not praying. Rasulullah (s) says that a person who neglects *salah* and is lazy in its fulfilment is punished with 15 calamities by Allah. Of these,



The 15 calamities





ACTIVITY...

Materials

- One cup of water
- One to two cups of corn-starch
- Mixing bowl

Preparation

1. Pour one cup of corn-starch into the mixing bowl
2. Now slowly pour the water onto the corn-starch, mixing slowly as you go
3. Keep adding more water until the mixture becomes thick (and hardens when you tap on it). Add more corn-starch if it gets too runny, and more water if it becomes too thick
4. Take a blob of the mixture and roll it with your hands into a ball
5. Now stop the rolling and see what happens

Reflection

- What happened to the corn-starch when you stopped rolling it?
- What parallel can you draw between this experiment and what happens to Muslims when they stop praying?



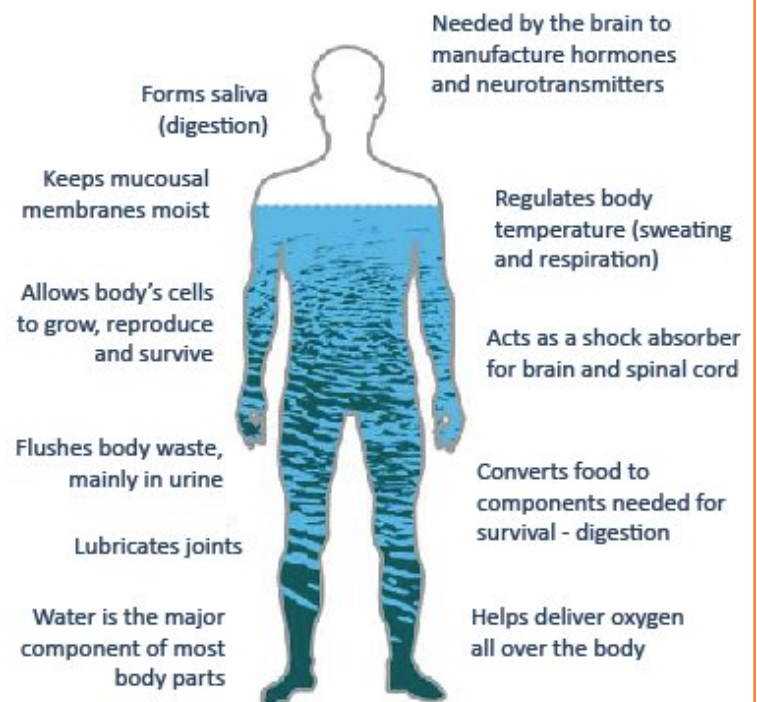
HIGHER LEVEL



Human beings are made of two distinct parts: body and soul. Both of these parts need nourishment and exercise in order to survive.

- The body needs food and water to survive, and exercise to grow strong and healthy. A human can go for more than three weeks without food. However, it can only survive an average of 3-4 days without water.

What Does Water do for You?



- Similarly, the soul also needs **constant** nourishment so that it does not die, and spiritual exercise to help it grow strong and closer to Allah. The *ibadah* that Allah has asked us to perform is this nourishment and spiritual exercise for our souls. Without it, our souls die.

List 5 ways in which you can nourish your body, and 5 ways in which you can nourish your soul.





Faith in Action

Reciting the last *ayah* of *Surat al-Kahf* before you go to bed with the intention of waking up for *fajr salah* serves as an alarm clock. It is narrated from Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a) that:

“No man has ever recited that last *ayah* of *Surat al-Kahf*, except that he wakes up at any hour he wishes.”

Memorise this *ayah* and practice reciting it before you go to bed at night with the intention of waking up for *fajr salah* on time.

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا

Say: 'I am just a human being like you. It has been revealed to me that your God is the One God. So whoever expects to meet his Lord, let him act righteously, and not associate anyone with the worship of his Lord.' [Surat al-Kahf, 18:110]

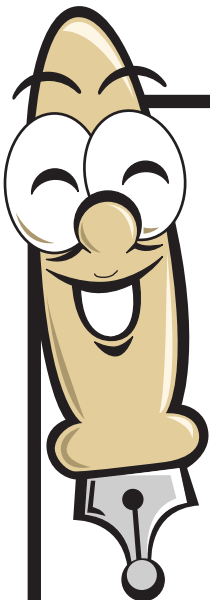


1 What does the term *tark as-salah* mean?

2 Why is *tark as-salah* considered a major sin in Islam?

3 List two consequences of abandoning *salah* that befall someone in this world and two in the Hereafter.

4 What does the term *qadha* mean?



KEY POINTS

- 1 *Tark as-salah* means to abandon *salah*.
- 2 It is considered a major sin in Islam because denying *salah* is equivalent to denying Rasulullah (s) and the message of the Qur'an.
- 3 Abandoning *salah* has grave consequences in this life, at the time of death, in the grave, and on the Day of Judgement.
- 4 It is *wajib* to offer *qadha* for any *salah* that has been missed, either intentionally or unintentionally.