

VOL. 1 ISSUE 3 · MAY 2025



# AQIM AL SALAT

CONNECTING TO THE DIVINE

## Intention

*Bismillah Al Rahman Al Rahim*

In the Name of Allah, The One Who Acts with Mercy,  
The Source of Mercy

The **intention** to act in a way pleasing to Allah is the foundation of faith and the acknowledgement of "*La ilaha illallah*", that in truth, there is no god but Allah. As a seeker on the Sufi path, Allah looks at your intention. Life becomes the school where you are given opportunities to grow, and Allah, in His infinite mercy, shows you what you need to draw closer to Him. The intention to see the Truth begins with you. In Arabic, the name of Allah, which relates to truth, is *Al Haqq* [The Truth]. You could say, "I want to be with the Truth", and then Allah opens the way. This is where the quality of your relationship with Allah starts (this is the core of your personal *Aqim al Salat*).

Every morning, refresh your intention to draw nearer to Allah. Even if your only goal is to connect with Him through your daily experiences, this intention will open worlds to you. Intend to live in appreciation of Allah, you could say, "I'm going to appreciate Allah today." After a while, you will realize, "Oh, I can take a deep breath", "Thank you, Allah". "I can taste something when I eat." "Thank you, Allah."

Prayer (*salat/namaz*) is often seen only as a ritual performed at set times, but in truth, it extends far beyond the physical act of bowing and prostrating.

In Sufism, *Aqim al Salat* (to establish a system of connection and devotion to Allah) is both a spiritual and practical way of living—an ongoing awareness of Allah in every moment.

The Qur'anic command *Aqim al Salat* is not just about performing a duty; it is about bringing presence, love, and intention into everything you do.

-Shaykh Nishaat Ahmed Siddiqi

Then you suddenly realize what a rich sensory experience we have at all times. Allah is not far away; Allah is always with you. Naturally, we are going to make mistakes, but living in the light of Allah's presence and with *taqwa* [self-vigilance] brings us back. The minute you forget your intention, turn to Allah: "O Allah, I'm with You; I'm not with my *nafs* [self; ego], I'm with You." We must remember that Allah is with us in every situation. Our part is to do our best to be with Him. When we begin to see Allah through His manifestations, it strengthens our connection.

Do you know how you realize that you've forgotten your intention? You're so stressed. Something overwhelmed you; it broke your boundaries. When you are there, that's the moment you forgot your intention. You will fail, I fail, everybody fails, but this means you saw your incompleteness, and you intend and resolve to do better next time. And this is how you keep growing. When one carries good *dzan* [assumption; thought] towards Allah, peace flows into the heart, and surrender becomes effortless.

Our time here is limited. Allah has created life that way. Within that time, we must recognize the urgency of staying connected. Intention is the tool that helps us return again and again. When you set out to do something, pause and check your heart. What does Allah want from you in this moment? **Intention** helps us shift from our *nafs* to our heart—a choice we make continually to strengthen our connection with Allah.

-MURSHIDA SHAYKHA MÜZEYYEN VARGONEN ANSARI  
& MURSHID SHAYKH TANER VARGONEN ANSARI

This article includes excerpts from *sobbets* (spiritual discourses) given on 2017/03/25; 2017/07/01; 2022/03/05 and 2024/12/18.



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