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AQIM AL SALAT

CONNECTING TO THE DIVINE

Talking to Allah

Bismillah Al Rahman Al Rahim

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

Allah calls us to speak to Him in the Quran: "And your *Rab* [Lord] has said, "Appeal to Me and I will respond to you" [Ghafir: 60].

When we pray, we are communicating with Allah. Saying 'Ya Allah [O Allah], please help me' acknowledges His Presence. As you call on Allah's name, those frequencies settle over you, and your heart is activated. Allah's Most Beautiful Names bring qualities into you, and talking to Allah helps you grow into the state of communication He wants us to have, our own personal *Aqim al Salat*.

Since Allah sees us and knows our situation, why should we pray or make supplications? When we pray, we acknowledge that we are not the source of power, Allah is. Through prayer, we recognize that Allah is God and acknowledge our need for Him. Through prayer, we express gratitude, *Shukran Ya Allah* [Thank You, O Allah], and seek forgiveness. In the Qur'an, Allah reminds us: 'The *Asma-ul Husna* [Most Beautiful Names] belong to Allah. So, call on Him by them' [Al A'raf: 180].

One way we can live this reality is by calling on Allah through His Most Beautiful Names in our daily activities. For example, when helping and taking care of people, say *Ya Muqit* [O Caring One]. You are talking to Allah, asking for that connection, and because Allah is *Mujib* [Responsive], He may grant it if He sees fit. Make it a daily practice to talk to Allah each day.

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

Start your day as if Allah is your best friend and say, 'O Allah, this is what is happening,' and lay your worries at Allah's feet. Not only in trouble but at other times too: 'O Allah, today I don't feel connected, please help me.' This is an opportunity Allah gives us to talk to Him, because He loves you and created you for His Zat [essence].

As Sufis, we choose *tasawwuf* [spiritual cleansing], a path of purifying the heart. This is why we engage in our daily practices and contemplations: to establish our own personal *Aqim al Salat*. What we seek is a sure connection to Allah, a heart fully connected. But how do we know if the messages we receive from Allah are clear and in line with what He wants us to do? The answer is to speak to Allah and open your heart. This close conversation with Allah is not limited to prayer alone; it extends into every moment and aspect of life. Let your communication transition between Allah and the devotee.

Allah says in the Qur'an that He is the Lord of *darajat* [levels]. Allah is present in everything, in every position, and at every level. For example, when you are speaking to your spouse, Allah is present in that level of communication; when you are speaking to your child, it is at that level; and when you are speaking even to an ant, it is at that level. Allah transitions His manifestation to meet each being at their level. This means you are always in contact with Allah, everywhere, in many ways. When you see this, that you are in contact with Allah, say *Hu, Hu* [Genderless third person pronoun that refers to Allah; He/She/It], which conveys: "I recognize You alone, Allah." Recognizing Allah in every level of life naturally brings us into an open and flowing relationship with Him. This world is not paradise, but it becomes paradise when every moment is spent in conversation with Allah. In each experience, Allah gives proof: 'I hear you. I see you. I am with you.' Keep talking to Allah, opening your heart to Him, and let this living connection guide and comfort you in every moment, reminding you that Allah is always near, in your heart and in all of creation.

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

This article includes excerpts from spiritual discourses (*Sohbets*) given on:
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