Tahiyatul Wudu - Ablution Greeting Prayer

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Wudu (Ablution) is an obligatory requirement for prayer and for touching the Holy Qur'an. If it is performed properly and with care, it carries lots of reward (swab) from Allah, the Most High. Since Wudu qualifies a faithful to say prayer, he/she should say two rakaats of prayer by way of thanks giving after performing Wudu. This prayer is called "Salatul Tahiyatul Wudu."

Our Revered Imam Syed Muhammad, the Promised Mahdi[pbuh] who was the Divinely Guided perfect follower of our beloved Prophet Muhammad[pbuh], used to offer this prayer immediately after performing ablution. He commanded his followers to offer this prayer. He named the one who failed to offer this prayer without a valid excuse, as a miser in the matter of faith (Bakheel-e-Deen).

Hence, the reason that we Mahdavis all over the world, offer this prayer with so much care and devotion. The prostration (Sajda) at the end of the prayer is particularly offered with an earnest solicitation for forgiveness of our sins.There is a large number of sound traditions of the Prophet[pbuh] of Allah which promise immense rewards for this prayer. A few of them are given below.

In a tradition from Hazrat Ali[RZ], he reported that once Hazrat Abu Bakr[RZ] told him (and what he told was true), that: *"I heard the Messenger of Allah[pbuh] saying that there is no man who commits a sin and then stands up and purifies himself (takes ablution and then performs prayer) and seeks forgiveness of Allah, then he is forgiven by Allah."*

Then he[pbuh] recited the following verse from the Holy Qur'an:

"And those who have committed a shameful deed or
Have sinned against themselves,
Remember Allah and pray
That their sins may be forgiven;
For who but Allah alone forgive sins,
And do not knowingly persist in doing whatever (wrong)
They might have done."

(Ale-Im'ran, 3:135)

The above tradition is quoted in *Tirmidhi, Ibn-Maja* and *Mishkatul Masaabeeh*.

Abdul Haq Muhaddis of Delhi writes in *Ashi'atul Lumu'at*, a commentary on Mishkat that this prayer is called *Salatul Istegfaar* (Forgiveness – seeking prayer) also.

From Humran[RZ], freed slave of Hazrath Osman[RZ], it has been reported in a long tradition that he observed Osman[RZ] performing Wudu. Then he said that the Apostle[pbuh] of God said that whoever performed Wudu, following my (method of) Wudu and thereafter said two

raka-ats of salath (prayer) without diverting his attention (from Allah) in both the raka'ats, all his earlier sins are forgiven. (Saheeh Muslim – Book of Purification)

Bukhari & Muslim relate from Abu Hurayrah[RZ] that at a dawn prayer, the Prophet[pbuh] said to Bila[lRZ], "Bilal tell me by which of your acts in Islam, you are most hopeful of salvation, for I have heard the footfall of your sandals in paradise." Bilal[RZ] replied, *" I have done nothing, I am more hopeful because I do not perform ablution at any time of the night or day without praying with that ablution whatever has been destined for me to pray."*

Abdul Haq Muhaddis of Delhi writes that in this tradition merit of a prayer is mentioned which is called *"Tahyatul Wudu".* This is proved from another tradition reported by Buraydah[RZ]. It is given below:

"And from Buraydah[RZ], it is reported that the messenger[pbuh] of Allah called Bilal[RZ] in the morning and then said, on account of what, you walk ahead of me in the paradise, for whenever I enter the paradise, I hear your footfall ahead of me. He said, "O Messenger of Allah! I never give out call to prayer (Azan) except saying two raka'ats of prayer and whenever my wudu is broken, I take a (fresh) wudu very soon and in my view, saying two Raka'ats of this prayer is a duty of mine towards Allah."

Then the Messenger[pbuh] of Allah said: *"that is on account of these (two Raka'ats) of your prayer."* (Tirmidhi, Mishkat)

Some Muslim scholars say that Salath is superior to Wudu and therefore, there is no meaning in offering a Salath by way of thanks-giving for a Wudu and calling it Tahyatal-Wudu. This view is not correct. In fact, there can be no comparison between the two because they are two different functions altogether. Wudu has its own significance and its own reward so also Salath has its own. Wudu is a condition – precedent for every Salath enjoined by the Holy Qur'an. The Prophet[pbuh] said that there can be no Salath without purification (Wudu). Further, the Prophet[pbuh] said "no Salath would be acceptable from anyone of you who has lost his Wudu unless he takes Wudu (a fresh)." (Saheeh Muslim)

Prophet[pbuh] also said that Wudu is "Shatrul-I'maan" (half of the faith). Prophet[pbuh] also said that when a servant of Allah takes an ablution and washes his hands, sins are washed away from his hands and when he washes his face, all the sins are washed away from his face and when he washes his arms and brushes his head (Masah), all the sins are washed away from his arms and his head. When he washes his feet, all the sins are washed away from his feet.

Once the Prophet[pbuh] was asked how would he identify the persons belonging to his Ummah (on the day of resurrection) whom he never saw. The Prophet[pbuh] replied that he[pbuh] will identify them from the signs of Wudu. Their faces, hands and feet would be shining on account of their practice of taking Wudu. (Sunan Ibn Maja).

There are several other traditions of the Prophet[pbuh] promising great rewards for Wudu in the life hereafter. In view of these bounties, a short prayer of just two Raka'ats of Tahiyatal-Wudu (immediately after taking Wudu) seems to be the most befitting expression of a servant's gratitude to his Lord.

It may be remembered that this brief prayer serves the purpose of thanks-giving, repentance and seeking forgiveness.

Our beloved Imam[pbuh] always used to offer this prayer. We offer this prayer in the way he[pbuh] used to offer. In the first Raka'at, read verse 135 of Al-Imran and verse 110 of An-Nisa in the second Raka'at. Both the verses give expression of our humble and earnest repentance seeking forgiveness of our Lord. After the Salaam on the both sides, we go into prostration supplicating again for forgiveness of our sins. The prostration is called "supplicating prostration" (Sajdah-e-Munajat).

Please remember that we (Mahdavis) do not raise our hands for praying (Du'a) after every obligatory Fard Salath. We prefer prostration due to the following reasons:

1. Allah has commanded us to call Him humbly and secretly:

"(O mankind!) Call upon your Lord humbly and in secret. Lo! He loveth not aggressors." (Al-A'raf, 7:55)

2. Further, it is ordained that:

"...But prostrate thyself and draw near to Allah." (Al-Alaq, 96:19)

3. Abu Hurairah [RZ] reported that the Prophet[pbuh] said that:

" a subject becomes closest to his Lord while he is prostrating. So supplicate more and more while prostrating." (Sunan Abu Dawood)

4. In a tradition narrated by Ibn Abbas [RZ] the Prophet[pbuh] of Allah said that:

"try hard to supplicate while prostrating for there is hope that your prayer may be heard."

It is evident from the brief discussion above that the Wudu (ablution) and the short prayer of Tahiyatal Wudu (Wudu greeting prayer) together hold immense reward for the performer.

If Wudu cleans the exposed parts of our body, the Wudu greeting prayer ensures inner-purification, preparing us for the subsequent Sunnah and Fard (obligatory) prayers.