

Importance of Dua in Islam and Method of Supplicating

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Extract from Nuqoosh Ismat by Allama Zeeshan Haider Jawadi

Dua

“(O Prophet), Say My Lord would not care for you were it not for your prayer...” (Qur’an, Surah Al-Furqan, 2577)

“And your Lord says Call upon Me, I will answer you; surely those who are too proud for My service shall soon enter hell abased.” (Qur’an, Surah Ghafir, 4060)

“And when My servants ask you concerning Me, then surely I am very near; I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me...” (Qur’an, Surah Al-Baqarah, 2186)

“Shall I not tell about a weapon, which can protect you from the enemy and increase your livelihood It is Dua.¹

“Dua is the shield of a believer and when a door is knocked for a long time, it would be opened at last.²”

“One who is living in prosperity is more in need to supplicate than the one involved in difficulties as the former is not secure from danger of a calamity. Both should supplicate with equal sincerity.³”

“Dua is the most certain method of deflecting calamities.⁴”

“Dua can postpone death.⁵”

“One who supplicates the whole night is superior to one who prays whole night.⁶”⁷

“Dua is more effective than the sharpest spear.⁸

“Dua is a means of deflecting calamities.⁹”

“”Adopt the weapon of the prophets, known as Dua.¹⁰

Method of Supplicating

1- One should supplicate after being with Wudhu.

2- Use of perfume enhances the effectiveness of Dua.

3- Supplicate facing the Qibla.

4- Supplicate with presence of mind. Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (a.s.) says Presence of mind is one of the six essential requirements of Dua.

5- One must have a good notion about Almighty Allah that He is kind, and He would not return the supplicant empty handed.

6- Give Sadaqah before supplicating.

7- Never supplicate for an unlawful thing or cutting off of relations.

8- One must supplicate fervently. Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (a.s.) says Such a Dua is definitely fulfilled. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (a.s.) says Allah dislikes beseeching fervently before others and likes it when someone beseeches Him fervently.

9- He should mention the needs. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (a.s.) says Almighty Allah knows the needs of all, but He likes that man should also mention it.

10- One should supplicate in concealed manner. Imam Ali Al-Ridha (a.s.) is reported to have said One Dua in private is better than seventy Duas recited openly.

11- He must include others also in his supplications. Holy Prophet (S) says Include other believers in your supplications.

12- One should supplicate in congregation. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (a.s.) says When forty believers supplicate for a thing it is definitely accepted and if it is not possible for forty persons to gather, four can recite that supplication ten times each and if that is also not possible, one person can recite that supplication forty times. Another method is that one person should recite the Dua and others should say Amen.

It was the style of Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (a.s.) that he used to gather the children and ladies of the family and tell them I will supplicate and you all say 'Amen' (Even though the supplication of the Imam was not needful of Amen, this was the best method of training the followers – Jawadi)

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (a.s.) says One who recited the supplication and one who says Amen; both are considered partners of Dua.

13- One must express his humility and weakness before Almighty Allah as God has revealed to Musa (a.s.) Beseech Me in a trembling manner, place your face on the ground; prostrate before Me in the proper way and stand up and supplicate with your hands stretched and whisper confidential prayers to Me with a fearful heart.

14- Before Dua, one must recite the praise and glorification of Almighty Allah. Amirul Momineen (a.s.) says Before Dua, confess to the greatness of Almighty Allah and say 'O God who is nearer than jugular vein; one who comes between man and his heart; who is on an extremely lofty stage and who has no equal; O the best of those who bestow and the best of those who are asked. O most merciful of all.' If one supplicated through these words, there are most chances of its acceptance¹¹.

15- Recite Salawat before reciting supplication. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (a.s.) says A Dua cannot reach to the court of God if it is not accompanied with Salawat. A Dua without Salawat

continues to hover on the head of the supplicant. Recite Salawat before and after supplication, so that Almighty Allah may accept your supplication also for the sake of this Salawat, because the supplication for blessings of the Salawat cannot be rejected.

16- Recite Salawat after the supplication as well.

17- Beseech the Almighty in the name of Muhammad and Aale Muhammad (a.s.).

18- One must weep at the time of supplicating. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (a.s.) says If you need to supplicate, you must first mentioned the qualities of Almighty Allah and then recite Salawat and then weep no matter if you shed only one tear. Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (a.s.) says The best time of proximity for the servant is when he weeps in the position of prostration. Nothing is more effective than shedding tears in darkness of the night. Almighty Allah said to Isa (a.s.)

Give Me tears from your eyes and humility from your heart.

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (a.s.) said On Judgment Day except from three, all the eyes would be weeping An eye which remained safe from seeing ghair mahram; the eye which remained awake in divine obedience and the eye which shed tears for fear of God in the darkness of the night.

Ishaq Ibn Ammar said respectfully to Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (a.s.) No tears come out when I want to weep for supplications, but they fall when I remember my departed relatives; what should I do He replied First remember your relatives and when your heart becomes soft, you must supplicate, as it would be accepted at such a time.

(We should know that weeping is of no use if one does not refrain from unlawful things as mentioned in the beginning; that to weep while supplicating for health of oppressors is equal to show off and it is not humiliation. Imam Zainul Abideen (a.s.) says Weeping and shedding tears alone cannot constitute obedience of God till one does not refrain from unlawful and gives you disobedience of God, it is a false fear and is of no use 12)

19- One should confess to ones sins before supplicating as it would create fear of God and the heart would become soft and Dua would be accepted.

20- One should be absolutely attentive to Almighty Allah.

21- One should supplicate before the arrival of calamity. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) says You should recognize Almighty Allah during prosperity and He will come to your help when you are in trouble.

22- You should request brothers in faith to pray for you as the Almighty accepts the supplication of one believer for another.

23- One should supplicate with both hands raised. Holy Prophet (S) says Supplicate in a way like a beggar begs for food.

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (a.s.) says When you raise your hands to seek refuge, your palm should face Qibla and when you pray for livelihood, your palm should face the sky and if you pray against the enemy, both your hands should be higher than your head.

24- You must supplicate in favor of brothers in faith.

25- You must continue to supplicate regularly whether your supplication is answered or not; perhaps there is some divine exigency in the delay and Dua is loved by Almighty Allah thus one should never give up the most liked act.

26- After the supplication, pass both hands over the face; on the contrary one should pass them over the head and the chest as well.

27- Upon the conclusion of supplication recite As Allah willed. There is no power or strength except by Almighty Allah.

28- After supplication, one should improve his character; it should not be that later acts hinder acceptance of supplication.

29- Along with supplication, one must abandon all disobedience and unlawful acts as bad intention, internal evil, hypocrisy, delay in ritual prayer and disobedience of parents hinder acceptance of supplications.

30- One must supplicate after fulfilling rights of others. One who owes something to others cannot have his supplication answered.

31- At the time of supplicating, one wear a ring of cornelian or turquoise.

32- The text of supplication should not be incorrect as it would also leave an effect.¹³

Causes of acceptance of Supplication

Along with the above techniques one must adopt following causes also, which makes Dua most likely to be accepted. Sometimes these factors are related to place and sometimes with time and sometimes with actions. For example the best time of Dua is Friday eve, Friday, last hours of Friday; dawn, the month of Ramadhan, nights of Qadr, Arafah eve, Day of Arafah, eve of Bethat, Day of Besat, eve of Eidul Fitr and Eidul Azha, eve of Eid Ghadeer, Days of Id, first eve of Rajab, eve of 15th Shaban, eve of 15th Rajab, Day of 15 Rajab, Day of birth of Prophet, sunset, when rain is falling, from early dawn till sunrise and time of Azaan.

(Alas, if only on such meritorious occasions, instead of celebrations and sinful acts more emphasis had been laid on recitation of supplications and benefit had been derived from its blessings. But our society is far from these truths. When we become free from ancient imperialist atmosphere these realities would come to the fore¹⁴)

From the aspect of place, the best places of supplicating are Masjid, Holy Kaaba, Arafat field, Muzdalifah, tomb of Prophet, mausoleum of Imam Husayn (a.s.) and other holy tombs. From

the aspect of acts, the most effective is supplicating after ritual prayers, supplication of the patient for one who comes to visit him, Dua of an applicant in favor of one who has done a favor to him, Dua of one who is fasting, is ill, Haji, one who performs the Umrah, the oppressed, believer in need, at the time of Iftar, both good and bad supplications of parents are very much effective.¹⁵

Some supplications are not accepted

One who sits at home and prays for increase in sustenance without making any practical effort.

One who supplicates against the wife although he is having power to divorce.

One who supplicates when his creditor refuses to repay although he had the power to bring witnesses.

One who destroys the livelihood that God has given once and then he prays once more for it.

One who can change the house and prays against the neighbors.

One who is bent on committing sins and oppresses the people; usurps unlawful wealth and after all this he supplicates, such supplicants are accursed and their Dua is never fulfilled.¹⁶

After studying the above we realize why our supplications are not answered and also why supplications of Masoomen (a.s.) are never rejected and how each of their demands is fulfilled. It is another thing that they have cognition of divine exigencies and are aware of the confidentialities of God's will. They do not use this powerful weapon when it is inappropriate; they are fully aware of the proper occasion of its use and don't use it without checking where the will of God lies. That is why when we receive even the slightest discomfort, we start praying for destruction and they in spite of being surrounded by enemies continue to pray for guidance of people. We want to use supplication to show off our greatness and they intend to have Mubahila to prove the veracity of faith.

If you want to see the most important need of Dua and see the greatest cognition of the supplicant, you should see the battlefield of Karbala, where every trouble and calamity is inviting the victimized one to ill supplicate, where every sacrifice is compelling the mother to supplicate for the safety of her beloved child, and the death of every husband is persuading the widow to ill supplicate, but neither any mother prays for the well-being of her child without the permission of the Imam, nor any lady ill supplicates for one who has eliminated her child or her husband. On the contrary all displayed patience and steadfastness and supplicated only for acceptance of sacrifice and great victory and why it should not have been so; the leader of this caravan is himself cognizant of the secrets of divine exigencies who was brought up in the lap of the Prophet and who carried the corpse of his youthful son, mourned for his thirty-four year

old brother, suffered the grief of his nephews and carried away the dead bodies of his friends and companions; he presented the sacrifice of his six-year-old child, left his little daughter crying and set out for the battlefield, heard the voice of the weeping of his mother, saw his father holding a cup of Kauthar, saw his grandfather bare headed and anxious; witnessed chaos in both the worlds and despite all these calamities when he placed his head in prostration of thanks, he only said My Lord, I have fulfilled my promise, now you must also give salvation to the Ummah of my grandfather. A poet has nicely worded these circumstances

When the son of Prophet fell among the enemies, and when the moon of Zahra was concealed
behind clouds of Syrian armies and the eyes of sky began to search for Husayn
The sky asked where is the peace of the heart of the two worlds
Heavens said Husayn is engrossed in supplications.¹⁷

Notes

- 1.The Holy Prophet (S)
- 2.Amirul Momineen (a.s.)
- 3.Amirul Momineen (a.s.)
- 4.Imam Zainul Abideen (a.s.)
- 5.Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (a.s.)
- 6.Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (a.s.)
- 7.Note of the Author There is possibility of carelessness and show-off in Prayer, Dua requires sincerity and attention.
- 8.Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (a.s.)
- 9.Imam Musa Al-Kazim (a.s.)
- 10.Imam Ali Al-Ridha (a.s.)
- 11.Note of the Author These words are proof of the cognition of the servant.
- 12.Comment of the Author.
- 13.Usul Al-Kafi, Kitabud Dua, Sahifa Dua, Ahmad Ibn Fahad Hilli; Biharul Anwar, Vols. 90-91; Sharh Nahjul Balagha, Najdatud Daai etc.
- 14.Comment of the Author.
- 15.Ibid.
- 16.Miftahul Jannat, Allamah Mohsin al-Amin Aalami.
- .17.Luhoof, Maqtal, Abi Mikhnaf, etc