*PRAYER*

QUR’AN

*SuraAl-Mumin/Ayat60:*

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Your Lord has said: "Pray to Me, (and) I will answer you". Those who are too haughty to worship Me will enter Hell abased. (1)

*Sura Al-Furqan/Ayat 77:*

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Say: "My Lord would not care for you were it not for your prayer. Now that you have denied (His Message), the inescapable punishment will cleave to you." (2)

*Sura Al-Baqara / Ayat 186:*

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And when (O Messenger) My servants ask you about Me, then surely I am near: I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he prays to Me. So let them respond to My call (without hesitation), and believe and trust in Me (in the way required of them), so that they may be guided to spiritual and intellectual excellence and right conduct. (3)

(1) 40:60/The Quran with Annotated Interpretation in Modern English by Ali Unal

(2)25:77/The Quran with Annotated Interpretation in Modern English by Ali Unal

(3)2:186/The Quran with Annotated Interpretation in Modern English by Ali Unal

HADITH

1. Abu Hurairah (RA) narrated that Allah’s Messenger (SAW) said: 'In the last third of every night our Rabb (Cherisher and Sustainer) (Allah (SWT)) descends to the lowermost heaven and says; "Who is calling Me, so that I may answer him? Who is asking Me so that may I grant him? Who is seeking forgiveness from Me so that I may forgive him?."' [Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith Qudsi] (4)
2. Narrated Abu Hurairah (RA): Allah’s Messenger (SAW) talked about Friday and said: 'There is an hour on Friday and if a Muslim gets it while offering Salat (prayer) and asks something from Allah (SWT), then Allah (SWT) will definitely meet his demand.' And he (the Prophet (SAW) pointed out the shortness of that particular time with his hands.[Sahih al-Bukhari](5)
3. Narrated Ubada Bin As-Samit that Allah’s Messenger (SAW) said: 'Whomever wakes up at night and says La ilahaillallahuwahdahu la shrikalahulahulmulku, walahulhamdu, wahuwaalakullishai'inqadir. Alhamdulillahi, wasubhanallahiwa la ilahaillallahu, wallahakbir, wa la hawlawalaquwataillabillah (none has the right to be worshipped but Allah (SWT) He is the only one who has no partners. His is the kingdom and all the praises are for Allah (SWT) All the glories are for Allah (SWT) And none has the right to be worshipped but Allah (SWT) and Allah (SWT) is the most Great and there is neither might nor power except with Allah (SWT) and then says, Allahummaighfir li (O Allah! Forgive me) or invokes Allah (SWT), he will be responded to and if he makes ablution and performs Salat (prayer), his Salat (prayer) will be accepted. (6)

(4) Sahih al-Bukhari

(5) Sahih al-Bukhari

(6) Sahih al-Bukhari

 Prayer or Supplication (Dua) (7)

Faith requires prayer as a means of attainment and perfection, and our essence desperately needs it, as explained by Said Nursi:

If people say that they pray many times, yet still their prayers go unanswered, despite the assurance given in the verse, Pray to Me, I will answer you (40: 60), we should point out that an answered prayer does not necessarily mean its acceptance. There is an answer for every prayer. However, accepting a prayer and giving what is requested depends upon the All-Mighty's Wisdom. Suppose an ill child asks a doctor for a certain medicine. The doctor may give what is asked for, or prescribe something better, or nothing at all. It all depends upon how the medicine will affect the child. Similarly the All-Mighty, Who is the All-Hearing and the All-Seeing, answers His servant's prayer and changes loneliness into the pleasure of His company. But His answer does not depend on the individual's fancies; rather, according to His Wisdom, He gives what is requested, what is better, or nothing at all.

Moreover, prayer is a form of worship, and worship is rewarded mainly in the Hereafter. In essence, prayer is not performed for worldly purposes; rather, worldly purposes are the cause for prayer. For example, praying for rain is a kind of worship occasioned by the lack of rain. If rain is the prayer's only aim, the prayer is unacceptable, for it is not sincere or intended to please God. Sunset determines the time for the evening prayer, while solar and lunar eclipses occasion two particular kinds of worship. Since such eclipses are two manifestations of the Divine Majesty, the All-Mighty calls His servants to perform a form of worship particular to these occasions. The prayer recited has nothing to do with causing the eclipse to end; the time this will occur has already been established through astronomical calculations. The same argument applies to drought and other calamities, for all such events occasion certain kinds of prayer. It is at such times that we are most aware of our innate weakness, and thus feel the need to take refuge in the high Presence of the Absolutely Powerful One through prayer and supplication. If a calamity is not alleviated, despite many prayers, we should not say that our prayer has not been accepted. Rather, we should say that the time for prayer has not yet ended. God removes the calamity because of His endless Grace and Munificence. The end of that event marks the end of that special occasion for prayer.

We must pursue God's good pleasure through worship, affirm our innate poverty and weakness in our prayer, and seek refuge with Him through prayer. We must not try to interfere in His Lordship but rather let God do as He wills and rely on His Wisdom. In addition, we should not doubt His Mercy.

Every creature offers its own kind of praise and worship to God. What reaches the Court of God from the universe is, in fact, a kind of prayer.

Some creatures, like plants and animals, pray through the language of their potential, thus achieving a full form and then displaying and showing certain Divine Names (e.g., a plant's seeds grow naturally into plants, and the semen and eggs of animals grow naturally into animals.) Since they have this potential, their natural disposition to mature is, in essence, a prayer. By doing so, they affirm the manifestation of such Divine Names as the All-Sustaining and the All-Forming.

Another kind of prayer is performed in the language of natural needs. All living beings ask the Absolutely Generous One to meet their vital needs, as they cannot do so alone. Yet another kind of prayer is done in the language of complete helplessness. A living creature in straitened circumstances takes refuge in its Unseen Protector with a genuine supplication, and turns to its All-Compassionate Lord. These three kinds of prayer are always acceptable, unless somehow impeded.

The fourth type of prayer is the one engaged in by human beings. This type falls into two categories: active and by disposition; and verbal and with the heart. For example, acting in accordance with causes is an active prayer. We try to gain God's approval by complying with causes, for causes alone cannot produce the result – only God can do that. For example, plowing the soil is an active prayer, for this is nothing less than knocking at the door of the treasury of God's Compassion. Such a prayer is usually acceptable, for it is an application to the Divine Name the All-Generous. Going to a doctor is also a prayer, as it means applying to the Divine Name, the All-Healing. It is God Who heals. We should not be content with plowing the soil or going to a doctor, but should combine our activities with verbal prayers.

The second type of prayer, recited by the tongue and the heart, is the ordinary one. This means that we ask God from the heart for something we cannot reach and put it into words. The most important aspect and finest and sweetest fruit of this type of prayer is that we know that God hears us, that He is aware of the contents of our heart, that His Power extends everywhere, that He can satisfy every desire, and that He comes to our aid out of mercy for our weakness and inadequacy.

We should never abandon prayer, for it is the key to the Treasury of Compassion and the means of obtaining access to the Infinite Power. We should hold on to It and ascend to the highest rank of humanity and, as creation's most favored and superior member, include the prayer of the entire universe in our prayer.

We should say, on behalf of all beings: From You alone do we seek help (1: 5), and become a beautiful pattern for all of creation.

(7)The Risale-iNur Collection/The Words/The Twenty Third Word. 333-334

His Prayers and Supplications (8)

The Messenger always prayed to God before any action. When we look through the books of Tradition (Hadith), we find no case in which he did not pray. As mentioned earlier, prayer is a mystery of servanthood to God, and the Messenger is the foremost in servanthood. This is made clear with every repetition of the declaration of faith: "I bear witness there is no god but God; I also bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger." Note that he is called servant before Messenger. Whatever he intended to do, he referred it to God through prayer.

God is the Creator of us and whatever we do. Although we should take necessary precautions and follow precedents to accomplish things in this material world, where cause and effect has a special place, we should never forget that everything ultimately depends on God for its existence. Therefore, we must combine action and prayer. This is also required by our belief in God's Unity.

The Messenger's knowledge of God can never be equaled. As a result, he was the foremost in love of, and paradoxically, in fear of Him. He was perfectly conscious that everything depends on God for its existence and subsistence.

His supplications have been transmitted to us. When we read them, we see that they have deep meaning and accord exactly with the surrounding circumstances. They reflect profound belief, deep sincerity, absolute submission and complete confidence. Some examples are given below:

• When you go to bed, perform wudu' as you do before daily prayers and pray: "O God, hoping for (Your Mercy) and fearing (Your wrath), I submit myself to You, refer my affairs to You, and take refuge in You. There is no refuge or source of safety from Your wrath except You. I believe in the Book You sent down, and the Prophet you raised."

• Without sins, a soul is like a polished mirror or a white piece of cloth. Sins dirty the soul, and can be expunged only by repentance and asking His forgiveness. The Prophet used to pray the following, even though he was sinless: "O God, put between me and errors a distance as great as that which you have put between East and West. O God, cleanse me of my errors as a white garment is cleansed of dirt." The words used and the comparisons made in this prayer are so meaningful that their explanation could fill a whole volume.

In addition to these supplications for specific cases, the Prophet also left behind comprehensive supplications of various lengths. We present some of them here:

• God, I ask You for all good, including what is at hand and what is deferred, what I already know and what I don't know. I take refuge in You from every evil, including what is at hand and what is deferred, what I already know and what I don't know.

•God, nothing hinders what You grant, nor is anything granted that You hinder. No wealthy one can do us good, as wealth belongs to You.

• God, whatever prayer I have said, let it be for whomever You have mercy, and whatever curse I have called down, let it be for whomever You have cursed. Surely You are my Guardian in this world and the Hereafter. Make me die as a Muslim, and include me among the righteous.

• God, I seek refuge in You from all knowledge that gives no benefit, from a heart that does not fear You, from an unsatisfied soul, and from prayer that cannot be answered.

Prayer was a fundamental part of the Prophet's life. All the supplications quoted, together with many, have become keys in the hands of such great saints as Abu Hasan al-Shadhili, Ahmad al-Badawi, Ahmad al-Rifa'i, and 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, who used them to knock on the door of God's Mercy

(8)byFethullahGülen on 14 June 2006. Posted in His Prayers and Supplications