

# Turning to God

Lesson 3: Connecting to God through  
Supplication

# Dua

- The term دعاء is typically translated as “supplication” or “prayer”
- The reality is that there is no word in the English language that can accurately capture the profound meaning and implications of this word.
- We will use the term “dua” throughout this lesson and gradually expound and deepen our understanding of this act.

# Dua

- Our objectives are to shed light on the essence of dua, the different types of dua, and how we can increase the possibility of having our duas answered by God.
- There are many verses in the Quran which allude to the practice of dua but for the sake of brevity, we will examine a few verses which highlight its significance to spiritual growth.

# Dua

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي  
سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ

*“And your Lord has said, ‘Call upon Me, I will respond to you’. Indeed those who refuse to worship Me will enter the hellfire while they are humiliated.” Quran 40:60*

# Dua

- Before we discuss the message of this verse, we must reflect on the One who is delivering this message.
- The verse begins by saying “Your Lord has said”
- The attribute of God’s ربوبية is invoked as a precursor to the discussion on dua

# Dua

- What is the meaning of the word رَبّ؟

وَتَرَى الْأَرْضَ هَامِدَةً فَإِذَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا الْمَاءَ اهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَّتْ

“And you see the earth barren, but when We send down the rain it stirs and grows.” Quran

22:5

# Dua

- Thus, one of the meanings of the word رَب is that God is the one who facilitates your growth. Not only is He your Creator but He is also the One who sustains you and nurtures you.
- The verse begins with وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ and thus what will follow has a bearing on your spiritual growth.

# Dua

- Note that the verse mentions, "call me!" not necessarily "ask me!"
- We usually associate dua with asking but it does not necessarily involve a request.
- The most important thing is to be able to communicate and be connected to our Lord.
- Not only can we not survive without God, but we cannot survive without being connected to Him.



# Dua

- Suppose God is there, but He says, "I don't want to talk or listen to you or have anything to do with you." As God's servants, we cannot survive without His mercy and grace.
- The example of the parent and child. The greatest punishment for a child is to be ignored by the parents.

# Dua

- Similarly, for a person who realizes their total dependence on God, it would be a severe punishment if God did not pay attention to Him.
- In the famous Dua Kumayl, Imam Ali alludes to this when he says:

# Dua

يَا إِلَهِي وَسَيِّدِي وَمَوْلَايَ وَرَبِّي ، صَبَرْتُ عَلَىٰ عَذَابِكَ ، فَكَيْفَ أَصْبِرُ  
عَلَىٰ فِرَاقِكَ ،

“O my God, my master, my Lord, I can patiently [endure] your punishment but how can I be patient with your separation.”

# Dua

وَنَادُوا يَا مَالِكُ لِيَقْضِ عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكَ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ مَّا كُنْتُمْ

*“And they will call, “O Malik, let your Lord put an end to us!” He will say, “Indeed, you will remain.” Quran 43:77*

# Dua

- Going back to Surah 40 verse 60, notice that God says “call upon Me’ without placing any restrictions or conditions.
- He has made Himself readily available to us as though He is in need and we are independent.

# Dua

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ  
وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَأَنَّهُ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ

*“O you who believe, respond to God and to the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life. And know that God intervenes between a man and his heart and that to Him you will be gathered.” Quran 8:24*

# Dua

- Unfortunately, we set different conditions for our response to God's call; we say, "I will become a practicing Muslim after I finish my university, after I marry, after I have children, or after I get a stable job. Let me now enjoy myself a little bit and then later when I get old, I'll accept."

# Dua

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ

*“...Indeed those who refuse to worship Me will enter the hellfire while they are humiliated.”*

*Quran 40:60*



# Dua

- What is the relation between worshipping God and calling Him?”
- The verse began by addressing the topic of dua but ends with the topic of worship.
- According to above-mentioned verse, calling upon God is worshipping Him. This idea has been stated in Islamic traditions as well:

# Dua

الدُّعَاءُ مَخُّ الْعِبَادَةِ

“Dua is the essence of worship.” – The Holy Prophet (saw)

# Dua

أَفْضَلُ الْعِبَادَةِ الدُّعَاءُ ، فَإِذَا أَدْنَى اللَّهُ لِلْعَبْدِ فِي الدُّعَاءِ فَتَحَ لَهُ بَابَ  
الرَّحْمَةِ ، إِنَّهُ لَنْ يَهْلِكَ مَعَ الدُّعَاءِ أَحَدٌ

'The best worship is dua, for when God gives permission to His servant to supplicate, He opens for him the door of mercy. Surely the one who supplicates will never be destroyed.'" - The Holy Prophet (saw)

# Dua

- Upon understanding the meaning of dua, we see that worshipping God is not possible without dua.
- The above verse tells us also about the fate of those who refuse to worship God out of arrogance:

# Dua

سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ

“They shall soon enter hellfire in humiliation.”

Quran 40:60

# Dua

- Their arrogance in the Hereafter manifests itself in humiliation
- the Hereafter is where the hidden realities become manifest and the reality of arrogance before God is nothing but meanness and dishonor.
- There is humiliation in believing you are independent when in reality you are fully dependent on God.

# Dua

قُلْ مَا يَعْـبَأُ بِكُمْ رَبِّي لَوْلَا دُعَاؤُكُمْ

*“Say, my Lord would not care for you were it not for your supplication.” Quran 25:77*

# Dua

- Although God pays attention in this world to everyone, believers and non-believers, regarding their physical needs, if one seeks the attention, support, care, and guidance of God for his spiritual growth, he has no way other than resorting to dua.



# Dua

فِيمَا أَوْحَى اللَّهُ إِلَى مُوسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ : يَا مُوسَى ، سَلْنِي كُلَّ مَا  
تَحْتَاجُ إِلَيْهِ ، حَتَّى عَلَفَ شَاتِكَ ، وَمِلْحَ عَجِينِكَ

“God revealed to Prophet Moses (a.s) , 'O  
Moses, ask Me for every single thing that you  
need, even the grass for your sheep to graze and  
the salt for your bread.”

# Dua

لَا تُحَقِّرُوا صَغِيرًا مِنْ حَوَائِجِكُمْ ؛ فَإِنَّ أَحَبَّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى  
أَسْأَلُهُمْ .

“Do not deem the smallest of your needs as insignificant, for verily the most beloved of the believers with Allah is the one who asks [Him] the most.”- Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a.s)

# Dua

عَلَيْكُمْ بِسِلَاحِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ . فَقِيلَ : وَمَا سِلَاحُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ؟ قَالَ : الدُّعَاءُ

Imam Ali ibn Musa al-Rida (a.s) said, 'I urge you to use the weapon of the prophets', upon which he was asked, 'What is the weapon of the prophets?', to which he replied, 'Dua.'

# Dua

الدُّعَاءُ سِلَاحُ الْمُؤْمِنِ

“Dua is the weapon of the believer.”- The Holy Prophet (saw)

# Dua

- Why do we need a weapon?
- Because we are all involved in a battle with Satan and the carnal soul, which is our worst enemy;
- This is a weapon which is easy to acquire and use. One must appreciate that God has given him the ability to make dua any time, free of charge.

# Dua

وَمَا تِلْكَ بِيَمِينِكَ يَا مُوسَى قَالَ هِيَ عَصَايَ أَتَوَكَّأُ عَلَيْهَا وَأَهُشُّ بِهَا عَلَى غَنَمِي وَلِيَ فِيهَا مَآرِبُ أُخْرَى

*“And what is that in your right hand, O Moses?  
He said, “It is my staff; I lean upon it, and I bring  
down leaves for my sheep and I have therein  
other uses.” Quran 20:17-18*

# Dua

- God asks Moses a simple question that could have been answered with a single word. Moses, however gives a lengthy answer in order to prolong the pleasure of speaking to God.
- Are we like Prophet Moses? Do we find joy in speaking to God?

# Dua

قُلِ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوْ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَنَ أَيًّا مَا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ

*Say, "Call upon God or call upon the Beneficent. Whichever [name] you call - to Him belong the most beautiful names." Quran 17:110*



# Dua

- This verse indicates that even invoking any of the names of God qualifies as a dua.
- The essence of dua is to communicate with God even if you are not making any requests.
- Dua is the practice of all of creation

# Dua

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مِنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالطَّيْرُ صَافَّاتٍ كُلِّ  
قَدْ عَلِمَ صَلَاتَهُ وَتَسْبِيحَهُ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ

*“Do you not see that God is glorified by whomever is within the heavens and the earth and [by] the birds with wings spread [in flight]? Each [of them] has known his prayer and glorification], and God knows well what they do.” Quran 24:41*

# Dua

إن الله يحب السائل اللحوح

“Indeed God loves those who ask [Him} persistently.”- The Holy Prophet (saw)

# Dua

- What happens to the human being when they become the object of God's love.
- God loves all human beings but He dislikes what they do when they sin. Thus, God loves us with reservations
- When we obey Him, He offers us a special kind of love whereby He loves us and what we do.

# Dua

ما تقرب إلي عبدي بأحب إلي مما افترضته عليه.. ولا يزال عبدي يتقرب إلي بالنوافل، حتى أحبه.. فإذا أحببته كنت سمعه الذي يسمع به، وبصره الذي يبصر به، ويده التي يبطش بها

“My servants cannot seek nearness to Me through anything more beloved to Me than what I have made obligatory on him. Then through the performance of the recommended acts he continuously attains nearness to Me until I love him.

# Dua

- “When I love him, I will be the ear with which he hears, the eyes with which he sees, and the hand with which he strikes. If he calls upon Me, I will answer and if he makes a request, I will grant it.”- Hadith Qudsi