



Connecting to Allah with Du'a

By Imam Muhammad Magid with Samuel Ross

In the Qur'an, God says: "Verily we have created man into toil and struggle" (90:4). Daily we face challenges, such as earning a living, raising children, and maintaining our sense of connection with Allah subhanu wa ta'ala. Sometimes in the chaos, we can become overwhelmed, run down emotionally, anxious, frustrated, and even depressed. What can we do if this happens to regain a sense of peace in our lives and to return to the state of comfort and happiness from which we feel alienated?

One of the most powerful God-given tools for reconnecting with Him is du'a or supplication. In the Qur'an, He says: "Call upon me and I will answer you" (40:60). Each of us then has a direct line of communication, and for each of us God can be our greatest friend. He never abandons us, is always there for support and remains closer to us than our jugular vein. (50:16) He is never stingy with His time, nor does He require appointments. He does not look at how rich or poor we are. Just reflect on the comfort we receive when, during tribulation, a friend or family member visits us, extends a loving embrace, listens thoughtfully to our difficulties, or offers their time to ease our sorrows. All this can be ours when we connect to God.

Like a telephone call that depends upon the quality of the connecting wire or signal, the quality of our du'a depends upon the purity of our hearts, for it is with our hearts that we connect to God. We must begin our du'a by first summoning in our hearts an unshakeable belief in Him, knowing that He hears all of our words and knows all our thoughts and feelings. We must know with confidence that He responds to our requests, though on a timetable utterly His own. We must also understand that His response can come in a variety of ways and need not be predictable, for in His infinite knowledge, He knows what is best for us while we know not. He might choose to grant us our request in this life, but He might also delay it until the life to come, substitute something in its place, or avert a calamity that was headed our way.

Consider for example the scenario of the teenager who beseeches his parents for a bicycle. The parents may decide that what would be better would be a new car even though it may be a year or more before they could give it to him. God can do much the same with us. Or consider the case of an employee who asks his boss for a raise. His boss might respond, "Did you know that we actually raised your salary three months ago?" Befuddled, the man inquires, "How come I didn't see it?" The boss says, "Did you check your bank account?" Upon checking it, the man finds several thousand dollars credited to his account. All of us have such a

“checking account” with God, filled with our good deeds and waiting to be assessed on the Day of Judgment. But not being able to see the balance, we might not realize when He has converted our du’as into “deposits”.

We should also enter a state of humility. We can do this by selecting words that remind us of our own total state of privation. We must see that before God we are nothing and that He is our sole source of provision. We should emulate Musa (‘alayhi as-salaam) when he prayed, “O my Lord! I am in desperate need of whatever good You send down to me” (28:24), and Zakariya (‘alayhi as-salaam) when he said, “O God, my bones are weak and my hair is gray...so give me, from You, a child” (19:4-5). Another way to increase in humility is to repent for all previous sins. Not only does this call attention to our own shortcomings but it also clears our way back to Him for if we already owe debts it is difficult to ask for new favors. All of this helps to soften our hearts and, thereby, open our windows unto the breezes of Divine mercy.

Next, we should commence our du’a with glorification of God’s attributes. Selecting a few of His ninety-nine names can help us to build momentum and concentration. This is akin to hearing the virtues of an expert extolled; the more we hear an expert praised, the more we long to speak with him or her. Let us then reintroduce God to ourselves in a way that causes us to grow in trust, to recall that He is the One most capable of fulfilling our needs, and to ascend in ever higher spirals of excitement, urgency, and sincerity.

In terms of the actual supplication itself, there are several times that are more excellent than others for making du’a. God says that during the last third of the night, He will inquire if any of his servants is seeking His bounty or asking forgiveness and, if so, He will grant it. Other excellent times include the time between the adhan and iqama, the day of Jumuaa (Friday), while on a journey, and when in sujuud. The Prophet said that sujuud is the closest position one can have to God. On the night of Laylat al-Qadr, always during the last ten nights but not necessarily the 27th of Ramadan, God has promised to accept all du’a.

A few words of caution are in order: We should avoid making negative du’a that ask for unlawful things or injustice upon others. If someone has wronged us, we should ask God to guide him or her and protect us, not to punish him or her. We must also remember that du’a alone is insufficient to change our situation. Even after the Prophet made du’a for the conversion of the people of Taif he continued the hard work of making da’wah. Our supplication should always be seen as supplement and not a substitute to our own efforts.

We look forward to incorporating your feedback and questions into our future columns. Please send all correspondence to: foodforthespirit@isna.net. Please also visit us at our website where you can download this and previous columns at: <http://www.isna.net/foodforthespirit>

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Below are some du'a we can perform to connect with Allah. Please feel free to cut them out and use them in your car, home, office, etc.:

- ⊕ “O God, I seek refuge in you from all worries, and from sadness, and from helplessness, laziness, cowardice, overwhelming financial difficulties, and the oppression of men.”
- ⊕ “O God, I ask You by Your power and by Your knowledge, because You know and I know not, because You are able and I am not able, if this thing is good for me in this life and the life to come then make it easy and possible, and if it is not good for me in this life and the life to come then make it difficult.” Then finish by mentioning the specific thing.
- ⊕ “O God, I feel helpless so give me help” (54:10).
- ⊕ “O God, calamity has seized me and You are the Most Merciful. Release me from it” (21:83).