



Islamic Religious Council of Singapore

Friday Sermon

14 September 2018 / 4 Muharram 1440

Observing the Meaning Behind Supplications in Prayer

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ، وَأَمَرَنَا
بِالتَّقْوَى وَاخْلُقِ الْكَرِيمِ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا
شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، اللَّهُمَّ
صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.
أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ، وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا
وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

Blessed Friday Jama'ah,

Let us increase our taqwa in Allah s.w.t. Let us extend our gratitude to Him, for it is with His will that we are still able to perform our obligations on this earth. We pray that with the onset of the new year, Allah increases our faith and acts of worship.

Beloved brothers,

Last week, we looked at the role of du'a (supplication) in the life of a believer, and how du'a can help us achieve inner peace. Today, allow me to direct your attention to another form of worship prescribed and described in the Quran as an effective means to ask for Allah's assistance. Allah s.w.t. mentions in the Quran:

وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

Which means: *“And seek help through patience and prayer, and indeed, it is difficult except for the humbly submissive (to Allah).”* [Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 45]

Subhanallah, observe the lessons contained within this verse! Imam Al-Qurtubi states in his tafsir that when Allah s.w.t. highlights the act of praying above all other forms of worship, it is a sure sign of its importance and potent potential in a mukmin's life, especially when accompanied with stout patience and firm resolution. Through prayer, a mukmin increases his prospects of attaining Allah's aid, navigating his way out of difficult situations, and finding solutions to the trials in his life, whatever they may be.

Such is the way of Rasulullah s.a.w., as narrated to us by Imam Abu Dawud, that the Prophet s.a.w. would stand and pray whenever he found himself facing difficulty.

Let us ponder upon the verse that was revealed by Allah s.w.t. to our Prophet s.a.w. when he was faced with numerous trials during the early days of Islam:

وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ يَضِيقُ صَدْرُكَ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾ فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَكُنْ مِنَ السَّاجِدِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾ وَأَعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ ﴿٩٩﴾

Which means: *“And We already know that your heart is distressed at what they say. So exalt Allah with praise of your Lord and be of those who prostrate (to Him). And worship your Lord until there comes to you certainty.”* [Surah Al-Hijr, verses 97-99]

Brothers,

Let us thus ask ourselves: What kind of prayer should we perform so that Allah s.w.t. may guide us through life’s trials and tribulations? The answer is clear: A prayer that is filled with humility, remembrance of Allah s.w.t. and awareness of what we recite during prayer.

My brothers, do we assume that prayer is simply a sequence of various motions and recitations? How many of us realize that

every line we recite in every posture of our prayer is in actuality a form of du'a and zikr?

When we perform ruku', we bow down as a sign of reverence and respect. As such, it is appropriate that the zikr we recite praises and glorifies Allah s.w.t. During sujud or prostration, we place our foreheads on the ground assuming a position of servitude and humility. In this instance, we praise Allah's exaltedness over us by reciting the zikr during sujud. Similarly, when we sit on our heels, it is an act comparable to kneeling, an act of a servant who is asking favours from his master. Hence when we sit in between two prostrations, we are essentially asking Allah s.w.t. for His forgiveness, grace, mercy and blessings.

My brothers, when we ponder upon the meaning behind every zikr and supplication we recite in our prayer, we will experience khusyu', focus and closeness to Allah s.w.t., which thus adds meaning and beauty to our prayer. The sweetness that we experience will in turn, strengthen our conviction and grant us peace and increase our faith.

These are all evidence to show that prayer is not just simply a collation of chants and motions. When we know what we are reciting, we will realise the true meaning of prayer – that is, we are facing and communicating with our Creator s.w.t.

Rasulullah s.a.w. mentions which means: *“When any one of you stands to pray, he is communicating with his Lord.”* [Hadith reported by Imam Al-Bukhari & Muslim]

My dear brothers,

Let us also be reminded to be conscious of Allah s.w.t. as we go about our daily activities. Our remembrance of Allah s.w.t. is not only limited to prayer; nor is it restricted within the confines of a mosque. It extends to include every moment and every circumstance of our being. Simply look at the hadiths of the Prophet and you will find many supplications taught by Rasulullah s.a.w. to his companions for every occasion; supplications that we can practice in our daily lives.

We pray that our iman and faith will be strengthened by understanding the various supplications and zikr that we recite in prayer. Let us strive to be Muslims who devoutly perform acts of worship and earnestly seek closeness to Allah s.w.t. May we be compassionate and humble Muslims who live amiably with others in our community. Amin, Ya Rabbal ‘Alamin.

بَارَكَ اللهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ
الآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، وَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ
الْعَلِيمُ، أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ
الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ فَيَا
فَوْزَ الْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ وَيَا نَجَاةَ التَّائِبِينَ.