

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

Summary:

Our mission is to develop a relationship with Allah. Extracts from the writings of the Promised Messiah about the philosophy of supplication.

It is the duty of each Muslim and especially each Ahmadi Muslim that he should make it his or her life mission to develop a relationship with Allah. This is no easy task. Anyone who has tried it will bear witness that it is indeed very difficult. However, from what we can learn from the Holy Quran and the hadiths of the Holy Prophet (saw) and the writings of several saints in Islam and also the writings of Hazrat Masih Maood (as), Allah will smoothen this path for anyone who sincerely wishes to tread it. One verse of the Holy Quran says “*Wallazina Jaahadou fina lanahdeyannahoum sobolana*” meaning “those who strive to us, we guide them to our ways”. And the task that will make this path smooth is supplication to Allah. Unfortunately, most people supplicate to Allah when they are in need. However, the one who understands the importance of Allah in his life will take to supplications in time of ease and also in difficulty. Up till now I have not read of any better extract which gives us an idea of the importance of Allah than this beautiful passage from Hazrat Masih Maood (as) book where he says:

“How unfortunate, indeed, is the man who does not even know that he has a God with power over all things! Our Paradise, indeed, is our God: our highest enjoyment is in God, for we have seen Him and all beauty found in Him, This treasure is worth having, even if at the cost of one's life; and this is a jewel which should be purchased even if obtainable only by sacrificing one's entire being. O ye that are devoid, run to this spring, for it will slacken your thirst. It is the spring of life that shall save ye. What am I to do, and how am I to impress this glad tiding upon your mind, with what drum should I go crying through the streets that This is your God, so that all should hear! And with what unguent

am I to treat the people so that their ears open to hear!” (Noah’s Ark page 11).

By Allah’s grace I have read this passage several times in my life and every time I have experienced an extreme spiritual delight in its perusal. It is my hope and prayer that Allah gives to each one of you an even greater delight in reading it and that you realize that Allah should be at the center of our existence. Allah will help us to realize this when we continuously supplicate to Him for all our needs even for the laces of our shoes. So I will continue to read to you some extracts from the writings of the Promised Messiah on this important subject of supplication. Most of the extracts which I will present come from the book “Ayyaamous Sulah” which Hazrat Masih Maood (as) wrote in 1898 and which was printed in 1899. He says:

“When our soul in search for something, extends its hand with great earnestness and weeping towards the Fountainhead of grace, and, finding itself helpless, seeks light from somewhere through its reflection, this condition too is like a condition of prayer. All wisdoms have been manifested through such prayer and the key of every house of knowledge is prayer. No knowledge or insight is manifested without it. **Our thinking, our reflection and our search for the hidden objective are all parts of prayer.** The only difference is that the **prayer of those who possess insight** depends upon the manners of insight, and their soul recognizing the Fountainhead of grace extends its hand towards it with insight. The prayer of veiled ones is an effort which is manifested in reflection and thinking and the search for means. Those people who have not a connection of insight with God Almighty, nor do they believe in it, they too seek through reflection and thinking that some way of success might be indicated to their heart from the unseen, and a supplicant possessing insight also desires that God may open the way of success to him, but the veiled one who has no relationship with God Almighty does not know the Fountainhead of grace. He too, like one possessing insight, seeks help from another quarter and reflects on the means of obtaining such help, but a person possessing insight has an eye on the Fountainhead. The other one walks in darkness and does not know that whatever strikes the heart after reflection and cogitation is also from God Almighty, Who, **treating the anxiety of the anxious one as a supplication**, casts the necessary knowledge into the heart of one who

cogitates. The point of wisdom and understanding that enters the heart through reflection also comes from God and, though the person himself may not realize it, yet God Almighty knows that he is supplicating Him. In the end he is bestowed his object by God. This method of seeing light, if it is pursued with insight and with the recognition of the true Guide, is the prayer of a person of understanding; but if light is sought from an unknown source, only through reflection and cogitation without fixing one's gaze on the True Illuminer, it is only veiled prayer....”

Explaining the need to supplicate in all circumstances he says:

“He who supplicates God at the time of difficulty and distress and seeks the resolution of his difficulties from Him achieves satisfaction and **true prosperity** from God Almighty provided he carries his supplication to its limit. Even if he does not achieve the purpose of his supplication, he is bestowed some other kind of satisfaction and contentment by God Almighty and does not experience frustration. In addition, his faith is strengthened and his certainty increases. But the one who in his supplication does not turn towards God Almighty remains blind all the time and dies blind....”

He says further:

“He who supplicates with the sincerity of his soul is never truly frustrated. That prosperity which cannot be achieved through riches and authority and health, but which is in the hand of God and He bestows it in whatever shape He wills, is bestowed through perfect prayer. If God Almighty so wills, a **sincere and righteous person** in the midst of his distress achieves such delight after supplication which an emperor cannot enjoy on the imperial throne. This is true success which is bestowed in the end on those who pray.”

He also says:

“Is it not a satisfactory proof that from the beginning it has been the spiritual Divine law that, in consequence of prayer, Divine attention is attracted and satisfaction and contentment and true prosperity are bestowed? If in seeking an objective we are not in error, we achieve that objective, but if we are in error in our supplication, like the misguided child who demands from its mother a serpent or a burning brand, God Almighty bestows upon us that

which is better for us. In either case, He fosters our faith, and for true supplication we are bestowed knowledge by God Almighty in advance and our certainty increases as if we have seen God. There is a relationship between **prayer and acceptance** which has existed ever since man was created. When God Almighty addresses Himself towards the doing of a thing it is His way that some **sincere servant** of His occupies himself with prayer in restlessness, pain and distress, and devotes the whole of his resolve and attention towards the accomplishment of that objective. Then the prayers of the **mortal man** draw Divine grace from heaven and God Almighty creates such new means through which the purpose is achieved. Though such prayer is apparently offered by man, yet in truth that person is **wholly lost in God** and at the time of supplication he arrives in the presence of the One and Glorious with such a stamp of being lost in God that at that time his hand becomes the hand of God Almighty. **Such is the prayer** through which God is recognized and the existence of that Glorious One becomes known Who is hidden in thousands of veils. [**Ayyam-us-Sulh, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 14, pp. 238-239**]

Explaining the powerful effect of supplications he says:

“A foolish one thinks that prayer is a vain and useless thing, but he does not know that it is prayer in consequence of which God, the Glorious, manifests Himself to His seekers and conveys to their hearts the revelation: **“I am the All-Powerful One.”** Everyone who is hungry and thirsty for certainty should remember that for the seeker of spiritual light in this world, prayer is the only means which bestows certainty with regard to the existence of God Almighty and removes all doubts and suspicions. [**Ayyam-us-Sulh, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 14, pp. 239-240**]

Explaining four reasons why prayers have been prescribed he says:

“It is also worthy of note that the prayer which has been made obligatory upon Muslims in the Holy Word of God has been prescribed for four reasons. (1) The first is, so that by turning to God Almighty at every time and in every condition, one should be firmly established on the Unity of God, inasmuch as supplicating Him is to acknowledge that God alone bestows one's objective upon one. (2) The second is, that faith might be strengthened by the acceptance of prayer and the achievement of the

objective. (3) The third is, that if Divine favour is bestowed in any other way, knowledge and wisdom might be increased. (4) The fourth is, that if one is informed of the acceptance of prayer through a vision or revelation which is fulfilled, the understanding of the Divine might be promoted and understanding might grow into certainty and certainty into love and through love there might be deliverance from every sin and a cutting asunder from everything beside God, which is the fruit of true salvation. [Ayyam-us-Sulh, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 14, p. 242]

Explaining why five times daily we are required to pray he says:

“As we have stated already, Muslims have been urged in *Surah Fatihah* to occupy themselves with prayer and have been taught the prayer: “*Ihdenas siratal moustaqeem*” ‘Guide us in the right path.’

And it has been made obligatory that this prayer is to be offered on five occasions every day. It would therefore be a great mistake to deny the spirituality of prayer. The verdict of the Holy Qur'an is that prayer comprises a spirituality and that in consequence of prayer a grace descends which bestows the fruit of success **in diverse forms**. Thus every just person can understand that as despite the admission of determination, it is the way of Allah that in hundreds of matters effort and endeavour produce results, in the same way, the effort that is put forth in the form of prayer is not wasted. At one place in the Holy Qur'an, God Almighty has appointed it as a sign of His recognition that He hears the supplication of distressed ones, as it is said: “*ammmay yojiboul mouztarra iza da'aahou*” meaning ‘Or, who answers the distressed person when he calls upon Him?’ Al-Naml.”

He says further:

As God Almighty has appointed the acceptance of **prayer** as a sign of His existence, how can any sensible person imagine that prayer does not result in visible signs of acceptance and that it is only a formal matter which has no spirituality in it? I consider that no one having true faith can be guilty of such disrespect. God, the Glorious, says that as by the contemplation of the creation of heaven and earth, the true God is recognized; in the same way, by observing the acceptance of prayer, faith in God Almighty is created. Then if there is no spirituality in prayer and no obvious grace truly and in

fact descends in consequence of prayer, how can prayer be such a means of the recognition of God Almighty as are heaven and earth and heavenly bodies? Indeed, the Holy Qur'an shows that the best means of the recognition of God is prayer and that it is only through prayer that the complete and perfect understanding of the existence of God and His perfect attributes is obtained and that it cannot be obtained in any other way. It is prayer which, like a flash of lightning, pulls a person out of the pit of darkness and brings him into the open atmosphere of light and makes him stand before God Almighty. Through prayer thousands of the wicked are reformed and thousands of the corrupt are purified. [**Ayyam-us-Sulh, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 14, pp. 259-260**]

May Allah help each one amongst us to understand why we should pray and may He count us amongst those whose prayers are accepted. Ameen.