THE SOUL OF
SALĀH AND DU’Ā
IN ISLAM

by

Moulana Kalamazad Mohammed

Essequibo Ahmadiyya Organisation Lahore

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This book is printed in memory of the Late Bibi Mariam Baksh of Essequibo Coast, Guyana. She made a significant impact on the lives of all those with whom she came into contact with.

Her children and grandchildren believe that it was her prayers that give her such a distinction among others and they hope this booklet would help to inspire the love of prayers into the hearts of all its readers.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All praise and thanks to Allah, Most High, for inspiring me to produce this little token of love and appreciation for Him with the hope that it will be of benefit to all His servants whose hearts are pining for peace and tranquillity that can only come from nearness to Him, the Source of all Peace.

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May Allah bless you all.

**Kalamazad Mohammed, Imam**

Fireburn Jama’at
Uquire Road, Fireburn, Freeport
Trinidad, West Indies
Tel. No. 868 673 3171

10 July, 1996
Bibi Mariam Baksh (1928-2001)

Short Biography of

She was born on June 3, 1928 at the home of her parents, the Late Ali Namaz and the Late Jainab (Mrs. Butcher), of Danielstown, Essequibo Coast.
She attended St. Agnes Anglican School at Danielstown. She was married on April 6, 1941 at age 13 to Meahammad Yasin Baksh of Better Hope.

Ten of her children are alive. She bore three at Better Hope: Salima, Mohamed Yusuf and Farouk. She then moved with her husband and family to Better Success where she bore the rest of her children: Alim, Thamzudeen, Shaban, Shadaad, Carima, Mansoor and Fazlu. After the tragic death of her husband in 1984, she moved to Walton Hall.

She was well known as a social worker and an Islamic teacher. She was the main organiser for the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam (Lahore) in Essequibo.

She played an important part in many Muslim funerals on the Essequibo Coast. She was always prepared and she was always present to bath the dead and prepare the burial clothing among the Muslim women before Janaza. Every religious function (wedding, aqeeqah, funeral, Qur’an Shareef, Jehad Meeting, Jalsa) was enhanced by her presence. She was known and respected by Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

She was famous for singing religious songs and no function was complete without her presentation. Even at the ‘Wake’ of non-Muslims, she was sometimes requested to make renditions. On such occasions, she sung the appropriate nazm “Dila Ghafil Noho Ik Dam Yeh Dunya Chore Jaana Hai.

She was popular as a teacher for the ladies in many Jama’ats and she struggled for the rights of women (especially for them to be permitted to attend mosques).
Among the numerous Ladies and other groups she was instrumental in forming are:
1. The First Ladies Organisation at Maria's Delight at Khairaati Home
2. Roshan Sitara at the Maqtab at La Resource.
3. Anna Regina
4. Richmond
5. Airy Hall
6. Charity-New Road
7. The forceful Essequibo Ahmadiyya Organisation Lahore

She was instrumental in securing the land, getting the approval of the plan, raising and collecting of funds for the construction of the Mosque at Charity on the Essequibo Coast.

She participated in numerous International Conventions. Among those abroad she attended as a Member of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore (Guyana) were those held in:
1. Trinidad - 1983
2. Suriname 1989 and 1999

She was a great hostess and among the international Scholars whom she affiliated herself with were:
5. Moulana Tufail 6. Mr. Wallace D. Muhammad
7. Dr. Saeed Ahmad 8. Dr. Nazeerul Islam
11. Moulana Kalamazad 12. Mr. Nazir Ahmad

III
She is remembered as a Sister, Mother, Grandmother, Great Grandmother, Farmer, Counsellor, Undertaker, Trader, Match-Maker, Seine maker, Fish supplier, Teacher, Organiser and Imam.

She was the main contact person of the Essequibo Ahmadiyya Organisation Lahore and her extended family - both local and abroad.

The fatal Heart Attack struck two days after a hectic weekend of a Fund raising Barbecue at Hot & Cold lake and a day after a talk at the Amerindian Mission in Mashabo on the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). She returned to her maker on March 14, 2001 submitting to His will.

A comprehensive account of her busy life would be too voluminous to include here. It should be enough to say that every day of her long life was full and she was a true Muslim who was foremost in service to humanity.

(Publishers)
In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. We praise Him and ask for blessings on His noble Prophet and on His servant, the Promised Messiah.

INTRODUCTION

Every religion teaches the importance of prayer and no prophet ever came to the world without enjoining on his people strict adherence to prayer. However, in spite of this, many people, especially in this modern age, are unaware of the essence or the soul of prayer; that is, how to pray in such a way that our soul may make a connection with its Lord and Master. It is not an idle boast to say that if this connection were made, many of our problems - personal and social - would seem less intractable than they appear at present and what seems like darkness will be turned into light.

Or like darkness in the deep sea - there covers him a wave, above which is a wave, above which is a cloud - (layers of) darkness one above another - when he holds out his hand, he is almost unable to see it. And to whom Allah gives not light, he has no light (24:40).

While it is true that Islam gives minute details on how to perform salah, that is, formal prayer, the emphasis in this compilation is placed on the state or attitude of our soul when we pray.

For the sake of convenience, prayer is divided into salah (that is, formal prayer) and du’a (that is, informal prayer), but we will discover when we peruse the following excerpts that salah, in the words of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, is really "du’a at the highest level."
It is our sincere hope that readers may ponder over these pieces and inculcate in their hearts the attitude that Allah, Most High, wants us to exhibit whenever we glorify Him and make petitions to Him.

We begin first with selections from the Holy Qur’an and the Hadith on salah and du’a followed by a translation of a dars-ul Qur’an (Qur’anic lesson) by Nasir Ahmad Faruqi on the importance of prayer. To conclude, we present from the writings of Hazrat Mirza selections designed to kindle in our hearts the true attitude to salah and du’a so that our souls may find delight in fulfilling the purpose for which we were created. Also included is a summary of points for consideration regarding du’a.

**SELECTIONS FROM THE HOLY QUR’AN ON SALAH**

So when you have finished the prayer, remember Allah standing and sitting and reclining. But when you are secure from danger, keep up (regular) prayer. Prayer indeed has been enjoined on the believers at fixed times (4:103).

Thee do we serve and Thee do we beseech for help (1:4).

Recite that which has been revealed to thee of the Book and keep up prayer. Surely prayer keeps (one) away from indecency and evil; and certainly the remembrance of Allah is the greatest (force). And Allah knows what you do (29:45).

Keep up prayer from the declining of the sun till the darkness of the night, and the recital of the Qur’an at dawn. Surely the recital of the Qur’an at dawn is witnessed. And during a part of the night, keep awake by it, beyond what is incumbent on thee; maybe
thy Lord will raise thee to a position of great glory (17:78-79). And keep up prayer at the two ends of the day and in the first hours of the night. Surely good deeds take away evil deeds. This is a reminder for the mindful (11:114).

And enjoin prayer on thy people, and steadily adhere to it. We ask not of thee a sustenance. We provide for thee. And the (good) end is for guarding against evil (20:132).

Surely I am Allah, there is no god but I, so serve Me, and keep up prayer for My remembrance (20:14).

So bear patiently what they say, and celebrate the praise of thy Lord before the rising of the sun and before its setting, and glorify (Him) during the hours of the night and parts of the day that thou mayest be well pleased (20:130).

And seek assistance through patience and prayer, and this is hard except for the humble ones, who know that they will meet their Lord and that to Him they will return (2:45-46).

Successful indeed are the believers, who are humble in their prayers (23:1-2).

Guard the prayers and the most excellent prayer and stand up truly obedient to Allah (2:238).

SELECTIONS FROM THE HOLY QUR’AN ON DU’A

Call on your Lord humbly and in secret. Surely He loves not the transgressors. And make not mischief in the earth after its reformation, and call on Him, fearing and hoping. Surely the mercy of
Allah is nigh to the doers of good (7:55-56).

And when My servants ask thee concerning Me, surely I am nigh. I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me, so they should hear My call and believe in Me that they may walk in the right way (2:186).

And your Lord says: Pray to Me, I will answer you. Those who disdain My service will enter hell, abased (40:60).

To Him is due the true prayer. And those to whom they pray besides Him give them no answer, but (they are) like one who stretches forth his two hands towards water that it may reach his mouth, but it will not reach it. And the prayer of the disbelievers is only wasted (13:14).

My Lord, make me keep up prayer and from my offspring (too), our Lord, and accept my prayer. Our Lord, grant me protection and my parents and the believers on the day when the reckoning comes to pass (14:40-41).

Say: My Lord would not care for you, were it not for your prayer (du’a) (25:77).

Or, Who answers the distressed one when he calls upon Him and removes the evil, and will make you successors in the earth? Is there a god with Allah? Little is it that you mind! (27:62).

Man tires not of praying for good, but, if evil touch him, he is despairing, hopeless. And if We make him taste mercy from Us after distress has touched him, he says: This is due to me, and I think not that the Hour will come to pass; and if I am sent back to My Lord, I shall have sure good with Him. So We shall certainly inform those who disbelieve of what they do, and We shall make them taste of hard chastisement. And when We show favour to
man, he turns away and withdraws himself; but when evil touches him, he is full of lengthy supplications (41:49-51).

SELECTIONS FROM THE HADITH ON SALAH

(Taken from Mishkat al-Masâbih; translated into English by Robson.)

Ibn Mas’ud said: I asked the Prophet which action is dearest to God and he replied, “Prayer at its proper time” (p. 114-115).

Jabir reported God’s messenger as saying: “What lies between a man and infidelity is the abandonment of prayer” (p. 115).

Abu Dharr said that the Prophet went out in wintertime when the leaves were falling and took two branches of a tree whose leaves began to fall. He then addressed Abu Dharr who replied: “At your service, messenger of God.” He said: “A Muslim observes prayer for God’s sake and his sins fall from him as these leaves fall from this tree” (p. 116).

Abu Huraira reported God’s messenger as saying: “Angels take turns among you by night and by day, and they all assemble at the dawn and the afternoon prayers. Those who spend the night among you then ascend, and their Lord asks them, yet He is best informed about them. How did you leave My servants? They reply, ‘We left them while they were praying, and we came to them while they were praying’” (p. 127).

Abu Huraira reported God’s messenger as saying: “No prayer is more burdensome to the hypocrites than the dawn and the evening prayer; but if they know what blessing lies in them, they would come to them even if they had to crawl to do so” (p. 128).
SELECTIONS FROM THE **HADITH ON DU’A**

(Taken from *Mishkat al-Masabih*, Robson.)

Abu Huraira reported God’s messenger as saying: “When one of you makes supplication he must not say: ‘O God, forgive me if Thou wilt,’ but must be definite and cherish a great desire, for nothing which God gives is burdensome to Him” (p. 471).

Abu Huraira reported God’s messenger as saying: “A servant is granted an answer provided he does not ask for anything sinful or for breaking ties of relationship, and provided he does not demand an answer quickly.” On being asked what demanding an answer quickly meant, God’s messenger replied: “It is when he says he has prayed and prayed and does not think he will be answered, so he grows weary in such circumstances and gives up supplication” (p. 471-472).

An-Nu-man b. Bashir reported God’s messenger as saying: “Supplication is worship.” He then recited: “And your Lord said, *If you call on Me I will answer you*” (p. 472).

Anas reported God’s messenger as saying: “Supplication is the pith of worship” (p. 472).

Abu Huraira reported God’s messenger as saying: “Nothing is more honourable in God’s sight than supplication” (p. 472).

Salman al-Farisi reported God’s messenger as saying: “Nothing but supplication averts the decree, and nothing but righteousness increases life” (p. 472).

Ibn ‘Umar reported God’s messenger as saying: “Supplication is beneficial regarding things which have happened and things which have not happened, so devote yourselves to supplication, serv-
Jabir reported God’s messenger as saying: “No one offers a supplication without God bringing him what he asks or keeping away from him a like amount of evil, provided he does not ask for something sinful or for breaking ties of relationship” (p. 473).

Ibn Mas’ud reported God’s messenger as saying: “Ask God for some of His bounty, for God likes to be asked, and the most excellent worship is expectation of relief” (p. 473).

Abu Huraira reported God’s messenger as saying: “God will be angry with those who do not make requests of Him” (p. 473).

Ibn ‘Umar reported God’s messenger as saying: “If the gate of supplication is opened for any of you, the gates of mercy will be opened for him, and God is not asked for anything He likes so much as to be asked for security” (p. 473).

Abu Huraira reported God’s messenger as saying: “Supplicate God when you are assured of being answered, and know that God does not answer a supplication which comes from a careless and inattentive heart” (p. 473).

Malik b. Yasar reported God’s messenger as saying: “When you make requests of God, do so with the palms of your hands and not the backs upward.” In the version of Ibn ‘Abbas he said: “When you make requests of God, do so with the palms of your hands and not the backs upward, and when you are finished wipe your faces with them” (p. 473).

Salman reported God’s messenger as saying: ‘Your Lord is munificent and generous, and is ashamed to turn away empty the hands of a servant when he raises them to Him” (p. 473).
Anas reported God’s messenger as saying: “Let one of you ask his Lord for all that he needs, even for the thong of his sandal when it is cut” (p. 474).

NASIR AHMAD FARUQUI’S DARS-UL QUR’AN

I seek refuge in Allah from Satan, the accursed.
In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Who believe in the Unseen and keep up prayer and spend out of what We have given them (2:3).

Some explanation has been given before concerning Allah’s keeping Himself hidden behind a veil and the wisdom of having belief in the Unseen. As Allah, Most High, because of this wise reason, is concealed from the physical eye, man is apt to forget Him. So, in order to keep Him constantly present in our minds, salah has been instituted. Accordingly, in a later chapter of the Holy Qur’an, we find:

And keep up prayer for My remembrance (20:14).

In order to remember Allah at all times, there are a few basic points for consideration. Firstly, Allah is everywhere and not only in the masjid (mosque) or the mandir (temple) or the church or the heavens. That is why the Holy Qur’an says:

He is with you wherever you may be (57:4).

Therefore, salah can be performed anywhere. It is true that to perform salah, especially the fard (compulsory prayer), in congregation is more excellent and more blessed, and so having a masjid is an important requisite so that people may gather at a
fixed place and make their petitions and supplications to Allah, Most High. But if the need arises, congregational prayer can be held anywhere, and if there is no available congregation, then salah can be observed by one person alone - in a house, in a field, while riding, on a journey, and if it is not possible to stand, then one can perform prayer while sitting, or by gestures while lying down. As a matter of fact, salah can be fulfilled even on the battlefield. In short, salah reminds man, first of all, that Allah is with him everywhere, and so it ought it to be, otherwise how can man receive protection and assistance or have his difficulties removed? Can God really be One Who is confined to a particular place in the form of an idol or in the shape of a man? How can such a being be God if He does not watch over His creation every moment - and we are talking especially about human beings here, so that He can protect them, act as their Provider and Rabb (Sustainer) and come to their aid? Furthermore, it was also necessary that Allah should be watching every second over every creature of His in order to nourish and foster it, and especially so in the case of man, who is His khalifah (vicegerent), so that He could see how man was fulfilling his responsibilities and what deeds he was performing, for the effects of actions, whether good or bad, are immediately being recorded. Therefore, for the following reasons, it was also necessary that Allah should be listening to the words of man.

Firstly, because man is accountable not only for his actions, but for his words, too. Secondly, if man should desire to make a petition to the Supreme Being, then he should be heard and God should not be (may Allah forbid!) like an idol or a dead human being, who, regardless of how many godly attributes he may have displayed in the past, cannot now hear nor see. Finally, it was also extremely important that Allah, Most High, should know the secrets of man’s heart, because man, by concealing the secrets of his heart, practises great deceit and even causes injury.
Again, all actions, whether good or bad, are based on the intention with which they are performed and whose motives are concealed in the breast. A murderer cuts a person’s throat and so, too, does a surgeon; but as their intentions are as far apart as the heavens and the earth, the murderer is therefore hanged, but the surgeon, in addition to fees, receives praise and thanks even if his operation, through Divine decree, may not have been successful. How can that God Who created man’s heart, which is in his breast, be unaware of what is hidden in it?

All these matters the Holy Qur’an makes plain by repeated mention of the attributes of Allah; that is, \textit{As-Sami’u} (the Hearer), \textit{Al-Basir} (the Seer) and \textit{‘Alimun bi dhatis-sudur} (Knower of what is in the hearts). And \textit{salah} further reminds us of these attributes and reinforces our faith in them, for in \textit{salah} we stand humbly, with folded arms, in the presence of Allah and bow down and make prostration to Him.

Therefore, Allah is continuously seeing us. Furthermore, part of \textit{salah} is read in a loud voice and the greater part is said silently in the heart, because Allah, Most High, hears the words of man and He also knows those which he expresses silently in his heart. \textit{Salah} five times a day not only reminds man of the existence of Allah but also keeps his faith fresh and alive. But more than that, it also reminds man of that intimate connection that exists between himself and Allah and solidifies his faith in Him. \textit{Salah} lifts the veil from the Unseen and that is why immediately after faith in the Unseen we find mentioned; \textit{yuqiminas-salāh} (they keep up prayer).

Remember, in the Holy Qur’an, the command is always given to “establish prayer” and never to “read prayers.” As a matter of fact, on the one occasion when “reading prayer” is mentioned, it comes by way of censure:
So woe to the praying ones. who are unmindful of their prayer! Who do good to be see, and refrain from acts of kindness! (107:4-7).

The meaning of the above is that such people do say their prayers but they are ignorant of the true meaning of salah. The proof of this is that their salah is only a form of show and is not from their hearts, for in their hearts dwells not Allah, but the idol of wealth. That is why they forbid the doing of good deeds, and love and compassion for the creation of Allah do not take root.

As I have mentioned, the salah that is repeatedly mentioned in the Holy Qur’an by way of praise is that salah which is kept firmly established. One meaning of this, (the experience of which we all share), is that as soon as man begins to perform his salah, Satan tries in every possible way to lead him in all possible directions except that of turning steadfastly to Allah. When the salah of such a man loses focus, then, instead of standing upright, it begins “to fall down.” So, whenever the prayer of the believer begins to “fall,” he “takes it up” and sets it erect once more. Besides causing loss of concentration, Satan begins to insinuate evil thoughts into the heart of man and even arouses doubt so that the believer’s salah is not kept upright. But, in spite of these temptations, when the believer perseveres in his salah, there arises in it that delight which is found in a sumptuous meal.

According to Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani, reward comes from the very fact that in order to establish salah, man has to labour a mighty labouring; that is, make every effort and face many a difficulty. He was then asked that if, after a man has transcended this stage and has been blessed with presence of mind, whether his reward has been cut off. He replied that salah then becomes a gift from Allah, Most High, and its reward is that pleasure and peace which he begins to savour in salah.
This is why the Holy Prophet (sas), when asking Bilal to call the adhan, said, “O Bilal, make provision for our peace and comfort.” Elsewhere, he also said, “The coolness of my eyes lies in salah.”

Among the requirements for establishing salah are the following points:

1. Ensure bodily purification. That is, ablution, bath and general bodily cleanliness. The commands regarding these are found in 5:6, 7:13 and 74:4 of the Holy Qur’an.

2. Perform salah at the appointed times as it is said, Prayer indeed has been enjoined on the believers at fixed times (4:103).

However, when travelling, or, in times of war, or, through force of other circumstances, permission is given to combine salah.

3. Be regular in salah and do not indulge in it now and then. The Holy Qur’an says: Those who are constant in their prayer (70:23).

4. Constantly guard your salah. That is, whether on a journey or in illness, or in times of war, or in any difficulty, we should never forsake salah, as it is said in the Holy Qur’an: And those who keep a guard over their prayer (70:34).

5. Concentrate hard in prayer. That is, man must be fully conscious of what he is saying and in Whose presence he speaks. He must also be aware of his own powerlessness and helplessness and perform salah with due regard. Then, in his heart will be born that humility and meekness which the Holy Qur’an commends: Those who are humble in their prayers (23:2).
6. Avoid distractions.

7. Do not perform salah for show or ostentation. The Holy Qur’an warns against those who do good to be seen (4:6).

8. Let there be no sluggishness or laziness in the performance of salah, for in reference to the hypocrites, the Holy Qur’an says, They come not to prayer except as lazy people (9:54).

9. As far as possible, perform salah (at least the compulsory part) in congregation, as we are commanded in the Holy Qur’an: Bow down with those who bow down (2:43).

10. Do not rush through the salah and then lift your hands in lengthy supplications for that vitiates the prayer and reduces the effect of the supplication. The Arabic word for prayer is salah and the meaning of it is du’a (supplication). So, the whole of salah is du’a. Therefore, keep up prayer with full presence of mind and with humility and with the proper etiquette, and whatever supplication arises in your heart, make it in salah, especially in sajdah (prostration), for that is the proper way and it was also the practice of the Holy Prophet (sas).

The person who rushes through his salah and after taslim lifts his hands in prolonged supplication(s) is like the person who has gone to the court of a ruler or king, but instead of making his petition there, he comes outside and begins to scream at the top of his voice in his endeavour to speak to the ruler or emperor.

Remember, that to be given an audience with the King of Kings, that is, Allah, Most High, five times a day, is a supreme honour and a great opportunity for man to be able to please the Best of all Judges Who is the Master of his entire being, his whole life and also of the Hereafter. That Supreme Dispenser of blessings
becomes the Friend of the believer, as the Holy Qur‘an repeatedly mentions that Allah is the Friend (or Patron or Helper) of the faithful. In this world, if someone has a high-ranking officer as a friend or he frequents his home, then see how proud and boastful he is of this. So, if a man has the opportunity to obtain an audience with the Emperor and Master of the heavens and the earth, or if he is privileged to obtain the honour of His friendship, and he does not benefit from it, then who can be more unfortunate than he?

I am now going to present an extremely important purpose of salah that the Holy Qur‘an has taught us and which is found in no other revealed book or religion, and that is, just as the human body is in need of sustenance without which it cannot be healthy or grow and thrive or even remain alive, in the same way, the soul of man needs sustenance without which it cannot be healthy or grow or remain alive. And that spiritual sustenance is obtained through salah. The body for whose nourishment we eat and drink day and night will, in the final analysis, die and be placed in the earth. But the ever-living thing, and the one which will give man his next life, is the human soul. So the sustenance, health, growth and life of the soul are extremely important necessities of man, and salah is the source of these provisions. That is why salah is so heavily emphasised in the Holy Qur‘an and the Hadith (and why it is the foremost pillar of Islam). So, if the soul of man is sound and steadily thriving and increasing in strength and is fully alive, then for him there is no greater blessing.

Let us now examine the words the Holy Qur‘an uses to divulge this secret. In the last section of Surah Ta.Ha it is written:

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\text{And strain not thine eyes toward that which We have provided different classes of them, (of) the splendour of this world’s life, that We may try them thereby. And the sustenance of thy Lord is more abiding. And enjoin prayer on}
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thy people and steadily adhere to it. We ask not of thee a sustenance. We provide for thee. And the (good) end is for guarding against evil (20:131-132).

So perfect is the diction and eloquence of the Holy Qur’an that it illuminates the most important and complicated of questions in the plainest and simplest of words. The following is a summary of the important points contained in the two verses mentioned above:

1. Allah. Most High, has created different classes of men. This point is made in another place thus: See how We have made some of them to excel others (17:21). That is, see how (in this world) We have made some people to excel others so that this world’s business can be carried out harmoniously.

2. Each class is given different kinds of provisions of this world, but each one is tested in proportion to what it is given. The attraction of the splendour of this life is so compelling that man makes it his raison d’etre, although the life of this world is only for a few days. If not today, then tomorrow he will have to leave everything behind and move on. Besides regret at having to leave the things to which his heart was attached, when he enters the next life he will discover that such a man who had not acquired Allah’s greatest blessing had indeed ruined his life to such an extent that his regret would be enough as a hell for him. Then he would have to account for all that he had received in this life. If he considered the bounties of this life as wealth that had to be shared, and acted according to that precept, then good can accrue, otherwise the punishment that a fraudulent person or a robber receives will be his lot, too.

3. Therefore, it is not fitting for a believer to cast greedy and covetous looks at the wealth and riches of this world. This
world’s sustenance (by which is meant all the worldly benefits that man gets in this life) is temporary and liable to be taken away. But that blessing which is everlasting, and which a believer can acquire without measure, is indeed the spiritual sustenance which is better and more lasting.

4. That spiritual sustenance is acquired through salah. The Holy Qur’an is also a Book which is replete with wonderful knowledge and insights, and in mentioning the spiritual food that the believer gets from salah, it instructs us first to enjoin salah on our wives and children and tells us to hold on fast to it, ourselves. Why this order of priority? Because in the matter of spending his worldly provision, every man gives preference to his wife and children over himself. The greater part of a man’s income is spent on food, clothing and other necessities for his wife and children, but much more is expended on his wife’s jewellery and latest fashions in clothes. Although the man is the breadwinner, very little is spent on him. So the verse says that just as a man shows greater care and concern for his wife and children with regard to worldly provisions like food and clothes, in the same way he must act in regard to their spiritual sustenance, and not only should he enjoin salah on them, but, he, too, must hold on steadfastly to it in order to set the example, else they would not heed his words.

5. Just as Allah gives us bodily and worldly provisions and does not ask us for any sustenance for Himself, in the same way, if He enjoins salah on us, He gets no profit from it, but instead it is totally to our benefit so that we can obtain spiritual sustenance, which is essential, and which is better and more lasting.

6. The last point mentioned is that the good end is reserved for taqwa (righteousness). That is, even with regard to the worldly sustenance we receive from Allah, Most High, we must choose
the path of taqwa, otherwise it will be taken from us, and the
spiritual sustenance which we obtain through salah should
be used to make our soul healthy and strong so that our ani-
mal desires and passions may be kept under control, other-
wise that powerful animal appetite within us will make us act
contrary to the requirements of taqwa and the result will be
loss and even the fire of Hell. As I said before, if salah is not
merely read but established, it engenders faith in a living God
and thus taqwa, too, is born.

I will make one more important point on the subject of salah and
then conclude the topic. The Holy Prophet (sas) said that salah is
the mi’raj (ascension) of the believer.

Now, as regards the celebrated event of the Mi’raj, every Mus-
lim knows that our Holy Prophet (sas) was carried up to the Heav-
ens in a vision and he ascended so much higher than all the other
Prophets that at one stage Angel Gabriel, who had transported
him, said that if he (Angel Gabriel) were to advance further he
would not be able to bear the power of the glory of Allah. There-
fore, he requested the Holy Prophet (sas) to proceed alone. So,
the Holy Prophet (sas) proceeded alone and arrived at the very
presence of Allah, Most High. He then fell down respectfully (on
his knees) before Allah, and said:

“All prayers and worship rendered through words, actions
and wealth are due to Allah.”

To which Allah, Most High, replied:

Peace be on thee, O Prophet, and the mercy of Allah and
His blessings.

Then the Holy Prophet continued:
"Peace be upon us and on the righteous servants of Allah."

There is no record of whatever other conversation took place there, but the precious gift he brought from above was the permission for his ummah to have an audience with Allah, Most High, five times a day.

These are some of the lessons we can learn from the events of the Mi’raj:

1. If we are perfect followers of the Holy Prophet (sas), then we, too, can be elevated to the loftiest reaches in that world to which we have to go when we die.

2. If we are true and sincere disciples of the Holy Prophet (sas), we, also, can advance further than the angels. The Holy Qur’an has pointed out, too, that if man should make himself a righteous khalifah (vicegerent) of Allah, then the angels will have to make submission to him.

3. The Holy Prophet’s station symbolises the furthermost limit of fana fil-Lāh (being lost in Allah) - the station where man’s every word, every action and every piece of belonging are spent for the sake of Allah; that is, they come under the command of Allah, just as the words of the Holy Prophet (sas) elucidate: All prayers and worship rendered through words, actions and wealth are due to Allah.

4. On this manifestation of perfect obedience, whatever security, spiritual graces and blessings of this world and the Hereafter Allah bestowed on His Prophet, he immediately accepted them, not for himself, but he passed them on straightaway to his ummah and all the righteous servants of Allah, for he knew that whenever Allah, Most High, decrees a matter, it is ful-
filled and remains so. What selfless passion and sympathy there was in the heart of this holy man for the welfare of Allah’s creatures!

5. In this face-to-face interview with Allah, Most High, the like of which never occurred before nor will ever occur again, what did our Holy Prophet (sas) seek? Only this - that whatever glory and honour accrued to him (because of his obtaining closeness to the Divine Being), he wished it to fall to the lot of his ummah, also. This is why he returned with permission for us to have an audience with Allah at least five times a day. Unfortunate indeed is the man who is bereft of this gift, or who does not establish salah, but instead performs it perfunctorily as a habit, and so does not acquire the true benefit of it.

The Holy Prophet (sas) has designated salah as the mi’raj of the believer. That is, salah provides the opportunity for becoming close to Allah. Whatever conversation took place between the Holy Prophet (sas) and Allah, Most High, was carried out in sajdah (prostration), from which it is clear that the place of greatest nearness to Allah is in sajdah. Therefore, we should prolong our sajdah and remember the words that are recited in that position: Subhana Rabbiyal A’la (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High).

Rabb is He Who elevates from the lowest level to the highest level.

Subhanaka means: Thou art free from all blemish, therefore nourish and foster me in such a way that all my imperfections, too, will disappear.

Al A’la means: Thou art the Most High, that is, all excellences and praise belong to Thee Alone, therefore inculcate virtue in
me, too.

We should make this *du'a* (supplication) with an aching heart, for all the good of both this world and the next hinges on it. Further, if we have a request to make, then, in addition to the prescribed supplications of the Holy Qur’an and the *Hadith*, we can, indeed, make other supplications in our own language and we should do so with weeping and lamentation for that is the place nearest to Allah and no other place is like that. When a child clings to its mother and cries, then the mother’s mercy is aroused. So who can surpass Allah, Most High, in mercy and compassion?

**SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS OF HAZRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD ON SALAH**

**What is salah?**
What is *salah*? It is a unique *du'a*, but it is sad that people consider it a tax owed to a king. The foolish ones do not know that Allah has no need of these matters. Why should He, Who is Self-sufficient, want man to engage himself in supplicating, praising and glorifying Him? The truth is that it is to the benefit of man that he should achieve his goal in this manner.

I feel very unhappy when I see that nowadays people have no love for worship, piety and virtue. Ritualism is the cause of this pervasive poisonous influence, and so the love of Allah grows cold in us and we do not experience, in worship, the type of pleasure that we ought to.

There is nothing in the world in which Allah, Most High, has
reposed not only a pleasure, but a distinctive delight, as well. Just as a sick person can derive no enjoyment from the most delightfully palatable dish and considers it bitter or insipid, in the same way, those people who find no pleasure in their worship should ponder over their illness. For, as I have just said, there is nothing in this world in which Allah, Most High, has not placed some enjoyment or other. So, if Allah has created man to worship Him, then what reason is there to doubt that He has placed for him joy and ecstasy in this worship of His? Pleasure and delight there are indeed, but there must be someone to enjoy it. Allah, Most High, has said:

And I have not created the jinn and the men except that they should serve Me (51:56).

Now, since man was created in order to serve Allah, it is necessary that a high degree of pleasure and delight be also vested in worship. This point we can very easily assimilate through our daily observation and experience. For example, look at the grain and all the things that have been created for man to eat and drink. Does he not derive pleasure and delight from them? Does he not have a tongue in his mouth to enable him to enjoy the feeling of their taste and relish? Does he not derive pleasure from seeing all those beautiful things, whether they may be vegetables or minerals, animals or humans? Is his ear not intoxicated by charming and melodious voices? Should we then seek any further evidence to support the fact that there is ecstasy in worship?

Thus, I wish to say that you should beseech Allah with great feeling and fervour, that, just as He has bestowed all kinds of delights in fruits and other things, in the same way He should make us taste even once, that sweetness that comes through salah and Divine service. (Malfuzat, vol. 9, pp. 3-7.)
The essence of salah
The next pillar (of Islam) is salah, the scrupulous observance of which has been repeatedly mentioned in the Holy Qur’an and, in addition, remember that in the same Holy Qur’an, a curse has been placed on those praying ones who are heedless of the nature of salah, and are niggardly towards their brothers. The truth is that salah is an entreaty to Allah imploring Him to preserve us from all kinds of evils and sins. Man is afflicted by pain and sorrow on being separated from Allah and wishes to attain closeness to Him through salah, by means of which he can enjoy that peace and tranquillity which is a consequence of salvation. But this desire cannot be achieved by man’s own ingenuity or goodness. Unless Allah summons, he cannot approach. If He does not purify him, man cannot be cleansed.

Innumerable people can testify to the fact that many a time there arises in their minds a powerful desire to rid themselves of a particular sin in which they are enmeshed, yet they fail even after a thousand attempts, and in spite of the persistent pricking of their conscience, they still slide into error. From this, it is clear that to purify a person of sins is the work of Allah, Most High. Nothing can be achieved through one’s own power. However, it is also true that one must strive after this goal.

In short, that inner self which is filled with sins has fallen far from knowing Allah and from coming near to Him and can be purified and brought closer from afar only through the instrumentality of salah. Through this medium, those evils are expelled and in their place, pure feelings are generated in the heart.

Except him who repents and believes and does good deeds; for such Allah changes their evil deeds to good ones. And Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful (25:70).
This is the secret behind the saying that salah drives away vices or keeps one away from evils and indecencies.

Recite that which has been revealed to thee of the Book and keep up prayer. Surely prayer keeps (one) away from indecency and evil; and certainly the remembrance of Allah is the greatest (force). And Allah knows what you do (29:45).

Again, what is salah? It is a du’a accompanied by complete pain and heart-burning, and so that is why it is called salah, for with burning and pangs of separation and pain, supplication is made that Allah may drive away evil desires and low passions from our hearts and engender in their stead His pure love as a sample of His universal grace. In this regard, the word salah constitutes strong proof that mere words and supplication alone are not sufficient, but they must be accompanied by heart-burning, weeping and pain. Allah, Most High, does not listen to any du’a unless the petitioner reaches the point of death. To make a du’a in the proper way is a difficult thing and people are very ignorant of the nature of it. Many people write me letters complaining that at a certain time they made du’a for a particular affair but it made no difference. They thus begin to distrust Allah, Most High, and sink into despondency and finally suffer destruction. They do not know that if the requirements of du’a are not fulfilled, that supplication of theirs can never be efficacious.

One of the essentials of supplication is that the heart should melt and the soul should flow like water at the threshold of the Holy One, and fear and distress should be generated in the heart, and together with this, man should not be impatient or hasty but should engage in supplication with perseverance and constancy. Then it can be hoped that the du’a will be accepted.

Salah is the highest degree of du’a but it is a pity that people do
not appreciate the value of it, and consider it to just consist of bowing and making prostration routinely and repeating by rote a few sentences like a parrot, regardless of whether they understand the meaning or not.

Another regrettable development has come into being, in that Muslims were already ignorant of the true reality of salah and never paid much attention to it. Now, on top of this, there have sprung up many sects that have removed the requirements of salah and substituted in its place a few incantations and chants. Some are Noshahis, others are Chistis, and some belong to this or to that religious school. These people are waging an internal battle against Islam and the commands of Allah and are breaking the bounds of the Shari’ah and are establishing a new Shari’ah. Please do remember that to us and to every dispassionate seeker after truth, salah is such a living blessing that there is no need for any innovation. Whenever the Holy Prophet (sas) experienced any difficulty or misfortune, he immediately resorted to salah, and that is my own practice, too, and that of all the righteous ones who have passed away.

There is nothing greater than salah to take a person to Allah. When man takes the standing position (qiyyam) in salah, he assumes a posture of courtesy and submission. When a servant stands before his master, he always stands with folded arms.

Then in the bowing position (ruku), he shows greater submission than when standing, and prostration (sajdah) reflects the uttermost limit of subservience. When man sinks into the state of total self-effacement, he then falls down in prostration. Woe to those foolish people and those worshippers of this world’s life who wish to make amendments to salah and make objections to ruku (bowing) and sujud (prostration). These are virtues of the highest degree. The fact is that, until a man partakes of the experience which takes salah to its fullness, he knows nothing. But the man
who has no faith in Allah cannot have any faith in salah either.

Whatever I say is not mere imitation (hearsay) or custom. Indeed, I speak out of my own experience. Furthermore, any person who performs salah like this and tries it out himself, will see for himself. Always keep this prescription in mind and make use of it so that whenever any sorrow or calamity strikes, immediately resort to salah, and whatever the troubles and difficulties, disclose them fully to Allah and make petition to Him. for He certainly does exist and it is He Who extricates man from all kinds of troubles and calamities. He hears the cry of the suppliant and there is no helper except Him. Very deficient in faith are those people who, when faced with misfortunes, turn to lawyers and doctors or to others, but leave no room at all for Allah. The true believer is he who flees to Allah first of all.

This point, too, you ought to remember, that if you pay no heed to Allah, and do not look to Him, no harm can be done to His Person thereby and He will not care for you as He, Himself says:

"Say: My Lord will not care for you if you do not worship Him with a sincere heart. Just as He is Beneficent and Merciful, so too is He Self-sufficient, above all needs (25:77)."

(Malfuzat, vol. 9, pp. 108-113.)

The next quality of a muttaqi (pious person) is that he upholds salah. Here, by muttaqi is meant one who performs salah in whatever way he can. That is, sometimes this salah happens to “fall down” but he sets it upright again. A muttaqi fears Allah all the time and establishes prayer. But in this state there arise many different kinds of distracting thoughts and troubles which enter his mind and present an obstacle to his concentration and “throw down” his salah. Despite this pulling and tugging in his mind, he
still performs his prayer. Sometimes his salah “falls down,” but he sets it straight again and he remains in this condition where, with repeated efforts, and proper observance of prayer, he keeps it straight to such an extent that Allah, Most High, bestows guidance on him by actually speaking to him.

And what is this guidance of his? At that time, instead of setting upright the fallen prayer, people reach the point where these struggles and evil insinuations depart from their life and Allah, Most High, by unseen means, confers upon them that rank concerning which it is said that many men become so perfect that salah to them is like food and it brings them the pleasure and relish that a person in the throes of a searing thirst receives when he drinks cold water, for he drinks it eagerly and finds extreme pleasure in quenching his thirst; or, just as if a person who is suffering the burning pangs of hunger should get a most delectable meal which brings extreme happiness to him, so, too, in salah, that same feeling is born and salah provides him with a kind of intoxication in the absence of which he experiences great anxiety and perturbation.

But in fulfilling salah in the proper manner his heart experiences particular joy and coolness which is not the lot of every person, nor are words adequate to describe this ecstasy. Man makes steady progress and reaches the point where he contracts a personal love for Allah and there is no necessity for him to make his salah “upright” for it is already in that condition and continues to be so all the time. A natural transformation begins to take birth in him and to such a man Allah’s pleasure is his pleasure, too. Such a change comes over man that his love for Allah becomes a natural love in which there is no pretence nor hypocrisy. Just as the animals find pleasure in their eating and drinking and mating, so, too, does the believer find delight in salah, but to an exceedingly greater degree. Therefore, one must perform salah as best as one can.

26
Salah is the root and stairway of all advancement and for this reason it has been said that “salah is the mi’raj of the believer.” In this religion, there have been hundreds and thousands of saints and righteous ones, abdals and qutbs. How do you think they achieved their exalted status? It was by means of salah. Our Holy Prophet (sas) himself said: “The coolness of my eyes is in salah,” and, in fact, when man attains this station and rank, then salah provides the most consummate pleasure for him, and that is the meaning of our Holy Prophet’s words.

Thus, after receiving deliverance from the struggles of the ego, man attains a lofty status.
(Malfuzat, vol. 8, pp. 309-311.)

The true salah
Remember that salah is such a wonderful thing that through it, both your worldly life and your religious affairs are set right. However, many people who perform salah find that it puts a curse on them as Allah, Most High, says:

Woe to the praying ones, who are heedless of their prayers (104:4).

Salah is such a wonderful thing that when man performs it, he is saved from all kinds of evils and indecencies. But, as I have said before, to perform salah like that is not within the power of man himself and this method cannot be procured without the aid and assistance of Allah, Most High. Unless a man is deeply engrossed in du’a, that kind of humility and submissiveness cannot be generated. Therefore, no day or night of yours, in fact, no hour of yours, should be devoid of du’a.
(Malfuzat, vol. 10, pp. 66-67.)
The qualities of a believer
It is clearly stated in the Glorious Qur’an:

Successful are the believers who are humble in their prayers (23:1-2).

That is, when man is deeply engrossed in frequent supplications and his heart melts and flows like water at the threshold of the Holy One and he is so absorbed in Allah and all stray thoughts are extinguished and he seeks Allah’s help and grace, he achieves such a single-mindedness of purpose that a kind of ecstasy and tenderness of heart arises, and the door of success is opened for him. Through this, the love of this world grows cold because two loves cannot occupy the same place simultaneously.

So, after the above verses, Allah continues:

And those who shun what is vain (23:3).

That is, when man begins to acquire humility and submissiveness in salah, then one of the consequences is that the love of the world is extinguished from his heart. This does not mean that he then forsakes occupations like agriculture, trade and commerce, service etc., but he begins to turn away from those worldly pursuits which involve deceit and which make a person heedless of Allah.

The weeping and lamentation, the humility and sincerity, and the subservience to Allah of such a person produce this result, that such an individual’s love for the faith takes precedence over everything - the love of this world, desires, greed, luxury and comfort etc., for it is a well-known truism that one good deed attracts another good deed just as one bad deed induces another.

When these people fall in humility and submissiveness in their
salah, then the inevitable result is that they turn away naturally from vanity and they obtain deliverance from this impure world; the love of this world grows cold and the love of Allah is born in them. The consequence of all this is that: They spend in the way of Allah, and this is a natural corollary of shunning what is vain (23:3).

Make du’a in salah
You should make supplication during salah in your own language because to make petition in your own language produces genuine fervour and enthusiasm. Surat-ul Fatiha is the word of Allah. You must read it in the original Arabic language and the portion of the Holy Qur’an that is recited after it should also be read in Arabic. After that, the prescribed du’as and the glorification of Allah (tasbih) must also be done in Arabic, but you must learn the translation of all of them and, in addition to this, you should then make supplication in your own tongue in order to create deep concentration, for that salah in which there is no concentration cannot be called salah. Nowadays, it is the habit of people to perform salah perfunctorily. They rush down the prayer as if they are under compulsion, then they immediately begin to make very lengthy supplications. This is an innovation. Nowhere is it recorded in the Hadith that after making salams at the end of salah, one should then make du’a. Foolish people take salah as a tax and make du’a separately from it. Salah itself is du’a. On account of any religious or secular misfortune and at the time of any calamity man should make du’a within the salah.

Du’a can be made in salah at any point - in ruku’ after the tasbih (glorification), in sajdah after tasbih, after the At-tahiyyat, in standing after the ruku’. Make abundant supplications so that you may prosper. In du’a, it is necessary that the soul should flow like water. That kind of du’a cleanses and purifies the heart. If you can achieve that kind of du’a you may continue in it for hours. To be saved from the clutches of sin, one ought to make
petitions to Allah.

_Du’a_ is a healing by means of which the poison of sin is expelled. Many ignorant people think that to make _du’a_ in their own language makes the prayer void. This is a wrong belief. Such people’s own prayers are void.

(Malfuzat, vol. 9, pp. 54-55.)

**Bad thoughts during salah**

What kind of _salah_ is it that the tongue says, Guide us on the right path but the heart is preoccupied with thoughts like, the business must be done in this way; or, if this happens, then do it in such and such a way? This is only a waste of one’s time. Unless man gives preference to the Book of Allah and acts according to it, his _salah_ is a mere waste of time.

(Malfuzat, vol. 10, p. 62.)

**SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS OF HAZRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD ON DU’A**

**Why the Qur’an begins and ends with a _du’a_**

Remember this point, that the reason Allah, Most High, began the Holy Qur’an with a _du’a_ (supplication) and ended it with one is to emphasise the fact that man is so weak that he can never become pure without Allah’s grace, and unless he receives help and victory from Him, he can never advance in righteousness. It is mentioned in a _hadith_ that everyone is dead except him to whom Allah gives life, and all are astray except him to whom Allah gives guidance, and all are blind except him to whom Allah gives sight.

In short, it is an indisputable fact that unless man receives the grace of Allah, the yoke of the love of the world will always
cling to his neck. Only those whom Allah has blessed can achieve deliverance from this.

You must bear in mind that it is *du’a* that initiates the fervour of Allah. However, do not for a moment think that *du’a* is mere verbal prattling for, indeed, *du’a* connotes the undergoing of a kind of death and only after this can one gain life. *Du’a* possesses a magnetic property which attracts to itself grace and fervour.

(*Malfuzat*, vol. 10, p. 62.)

**The philosophy of *du’a***

Behold a child, through hunger, becomes restless and anxious and begins to scream and cry for milk and automatically milk surges in the breasts of the mother. Although the child does not even know the name *du’a*, yet his screams are the means by which milk is attracted. This experience is a universal one. Many times it has been observed that mothers do not even feel the presence of milk in their breasts and often there is not any; yet, immediately upon the desperate scream of the child reaching their ears, milk instantly begins to flow as if there is a powerful connection between the cries and the generation of milk.

I say with all sincerity that if we display a similar helplessness before Allah, then it will stimulate and draw His grace and mercy; and I affirm on the basis of my own experience that Allah’s grace and mercy, which come through the acceptance of *du’a*, I have felt being drawn towards me, and even more, I have seen it, also. It is true that the modern-day obscure-minded philosophers can neither feel nor see this; but this truth cannot be abolished from the world, especially as I am always ready to demonstrate the certainty of the acceptance of *du’a*.

(*Malfuzat*, vol. 1, p.198.)
The fundamentals of *du’a*

This is the intrinsic nature of *du’a*. Allah, Most High, is not guided by our concerns and desires. Look how much a mother loves her child and does not wish any kind of affliction to befall him. But if the child should foolishly persist and obstinately cry for a sharp knife or a burning piece of charcoal in his hand, do you think that the mother, in spite of her true love and genuine tenderness, will ever allow her child to burn his hand with the lighted coal or to cut his hand by passing it over the sharp edge of the knife? Certainly not! From this point, one can appreciate the fundamental principle of the acceptance of *du’a*. It is my personal experience in this matter that if a *du’a* contains something harmful in it, it is never granted.

We can readily understand that our knowledge is not infallible, nor always correct. We engage ourselves very happily in many occupations thinking that they are commendable pursuits and believe that the outcome will be very propitious to us. But in the end they are attended with pain and tribulation. In short, all man’s requests cannot be granted, nor are they all sound, for it is the nature of man to err and to forget. Therefore, it is to be expected, and it is indeed a fact, that many petitions are detrimental and if Allah, Most High, were to grant them, then they would clearly contradict His exalted attribute of mercy.

It is a genuine and an incontestable fact that Allah, Most High, hears the supplications of His servants and honours them with His acceptance, but not willy-nilly, for on account of self-exuberance, man cannot foresee the outcome and consequence of the *du’a* he makes. But Allah, Who is the Truest Well-wisher and the Seer of consequences, preserves the supplicant from the injuries and harmful repercussions that can befall him if his *du’a* were to be granted, and so He rejects it. For the supplicant, this apparent rejection of the supplication really amounts to an acceptance of it. Thus, Allah, Most High, accepts those supple-
tions that will not bring misfortune and injuries to man. However, He also accepts harmful entreaties, but by rejecting them.

I have received this *ilham* (revelation) many times: I answer every supplication of yours. In other words, it can be said that every *du’a*, the substance of which is profitable and beneficial, will be granted. So, whenever this thought comes to mind, my soul overflows with joy and ecstasy. When this very first revelation came twenty-five or thirty years ago, I was overjoyed that Allah would accept the supplications I would make on my own behalf and on behalf of my friends. Then I thought that I ought not to be niggardly in this affair for this is a divine favour, and among the attributes of the God-fearing ones Allah has mentioned, And they spend out of what We have given them.

Therefore, with regard to my friends, I have observed the rule that whether they remind me or not, or whether it is an important or a trifling matter, I make supplication for their worldly and religious affairs.

(*Malfuzat*, vol. 1, pp. 107-109.)

**The secret of the acceptance of *du’a***

This is the secret behind the acceptance of *du’a* - unless man forsakes his own wishes, desires and knowledge and annihilates himself in Allah, and unless he has complete trust and perfect confidence in the total and absolute power of Allah, that Allah is the Hearer and Acceptor of supplications, then his *du’a* is without substance. The reason why philosophers do not believe in the acceptance of prayer is that they do not fully believe in Allah’s All-encompassing power and His being the Originator of the most minute of provisions, and they consider His power to be limited, and they rely on their own experience and knowledge.

As compared to their experiences, the idea never crosses their
minds that God exists and that He has power to act. That is why, when some very deadly diseases attack a person, those people pronounce with certainty and finality that the afflicted one cannot be saved, or that he will die after a certain period of time, or will die in such and such a way. But I, myself, have witnessed a score of examples and many others I know about, in which, notwithstanding their conclusive and decisive verdict, Allah has created for the well-being of those afflicted ones such conditions, that in the end they were finally rescued.

Many a time, too, it so happens that many of those on whom those people had passed an irrevocable sentence of death remained alive and got well, and on meeting them on some other occasion the doctors were embarrassed, and their knowledge and claims were put to shame.

The Hadith tells us, “There is no illness but there is a remedy for it.” I remember the words of a famous doctor who said that there is no illness that is not susceptible to healing, but it is because of a deficiency in our understanding, intellect and learning that our knowledge has not yet advanced to that point.

It is possible that Allah, Most High, may create for this disease such conditions by means of which that person, whom we considered beyond cure, will respond to treatment and regain his health and strength. So we should never give a final decision, but if we have to express an opinion, we should say that we suspect this, but it is possible that Allah may bring about such conditions through which this impediment may be removed and the patient may become well again.

Du’ā is such a potent weapon which Allah has created that a seemingly impossible matter which man considers impossible can actually take place because nothing is impossible with Allah. (Malfuzat, vol. 10, pp. 195-197.)
The true *du’ā*  
There are two kinds of *du’ā*. Firstly, the habitual kind, and secondly, the one which man takes to the utmost limit, and this is what is called *du’ā* in the true sense of the word. Man ought to be constantly engaged in making *du’ā* even when he is not beset by difficulty, for what knowledge does he have of the intentions of Allah or what may happen on the morrow? He should make *du’ā* in advance in order to be saved. Many a time a calamity strikes so suddenly that man has no time to supplicate, so that if he were making *du’ā* beforehand, it would redound to his benefit when this awry time descends.  
(*Malfuzat*, vol. 10, p. 122.)

Many people believe in such a way that they listen with one ear and let the words escape out of the other ear without any impression being made on their heart. Regardless of how much advice one gives, it makes no effect on their hearts. Remember that Allah, Most High, is Self-sufficient and unless we make *du’ā* to Him in abundance and repeatedly and with anguish of heart, He does not care.

*Say: My Lord would not care for you were it not for your prayer (du’ā). Now indeed you have rejected, so the punishment will come* (25:77).

If, for example, a person’s wife or child falls ill, or he is caught up in a serious court case, look how shaken he becomes because of these matters. In like manner, in *du’ā*, unless a true eagerness or a genuine feeling of anguish is born in the heart, then that *du’ā* is a vain and fruitless affair. An indispensable condition for the acceptance of *du’ā* is the presence of anxiety in the heart, as the Holy Qur’an bears out:
Or Who answers the distressed one when he calls upon Him and removes the evil? (27:62).

(*Malfuzat*, vol. 10, p. 137.)

**Everyone experiences debilitating calamities**

Allah, Most High, is hidden, but He is recognised through His powers. Through *du‘a*, one realises His existence. Every person, whether King or Shah of Shahs, is bound to experience such difficulties which render him powerless and at a loss as to what he ought to do. It is at such a time that difficulties can be overcome by *du‘a*.

(*Malfuzat*, vol. 8, p. 35.)

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**Every *du‘a* receives an answer**

I am very grateful that the petitions that I make to Allah are frequently granted. No one can avert what is already decreed and Allah does everything according to His perfect wisdom. However, many supplications are successful in that we get what we ask for and this is a conclusive and incontrovertible fact that whatever may be the outcome of the prayer, every *du‘a* is bound to receive an answer, whether it is in accordance with one’s petitions or contrary to them.

(*Malfuzat*, vol. 8, p. 410.)

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**Whose *du‘a* is not accepted**

Unless your heart is clean, your *du‘a* will not be accepted. If in some worldly affair you harbour malice in your heart against another person, your *du‘a* cannot be answered. You ought to impress this in your mind that you must never bear ill-will against anyone ever in a secular matter. What is the value of this world and its provisions that for its sake you should entertain hostility against another?

(*Malfuzat*, vol. 9, pp. 217-218.)

36
Power of *du’a* - our Holy Prophet’s example
That strange event which took place in the desert land of Arabia, by which millions of people who were spiritually dead were re-suscitated in a very short time, and people who had remained corrupted for generations became imbued with divine attributes, and the blind regained their power of vision, and the dumb became eloquent in respect of the knowledge of God, and a revolution took place in the world in such a sudden manner that the like of it no eye had seen before and no ear had heard - what was it, after all? It was, at bottom, the silent prayers in the darkness of the night of a lonely man who had annihilated himself in God that created this huge tumult in the world, and produced those strange phenomena which seem almost impossible to have been effected by that unlettered, helpless man.

(*Barakat-ud Du’a*, p. 10.)

In short, when our soul stretches its hands of petition with utmost enthusiasm and humility towards the Source of all grace in its efforts to get a thing, and, when finding itself devoid of resources, it seeks light, through thinking, from other quarters than its ownself, the state of mind which ensues as a result is, in fact, a state of prayer. It is through such prayers that the sciences of the world have come into being.... Our thinking, our pondering, our directing our thoughts to finding out hidden matters - all of these are included in the act of praying.... But the man in the veil of ignorance, who has no attachment to God, does not recognise the source of the grace.

Like the man of spiritual knowledge, he, also, in the course of his mental struggle, seeks help from a source outside and makes efforts to secure that help, with the difference that the man of knowledge sees that source, whereas the ignorant one walks in darkness and is not aware that whatever comes to his mind as a result of his thinking and pondering, is also from God, Who, accepting the thinking of the thinker as a kind of prayer, communicates the
knowledge to his mind.
(Taken from Barakat-ud Du’a)

**The best du’a of all**
The best du’a is the one that is a collection of all things good and a rejection of all things evil. Therefore, the du’a. Those on whom Thou hast bestowed favours, is a prayer to attain the blessings granted to all those favoured ones from the time of Prophet Adam (sas) to that of our Holy Prophet Muhammad (sas). And, *Not those upon whom wrath is brought down nor those who go astray,* is a du’a to save us from every kind of evil.
(Malfuzat, vol. 2, p. 124.)

**POINTS TO NOTE AS REGARDS DU’A**

1. Every du’a is not answered in the positive, however righteous the supplicant may be, for Allah is Master, Knower, Seer, and has power over all things and is not controlled by our requests.

2. Our hearts must be pure and sincere and devoid of any grievance or resentment towards anyone when we make du’a. Thus, the cleaner our lives, the more will our petitions be granted.

3. Du’a must not be a repetition of certain magic formulae. Instead, we must know what we are saying and our hearts must be filled with fear and hope, anxiety and restlessness, when we supplicate.

4. To decide upon a matter beforehand and then make du’a as if seeking Allah’s legitimisation of our wishes, prejudices, predilections, etc., is self-delusion, and a curse, and is tantamount
to putting Allah, Most High, to test. Also, we must never try to predetermine the result of our prayer, but instead, we must submit with a weeping heart when we lay our petitions to Allah and with a willingness to accept cheerfully whatever He may decree.

5. To neglect effort, or means, or the tools of work that Allah has provided for us and to make du'a and sit down and wait for things to come, also amount to putting Allah to test. On the other hand, to plan is not against the will of Allah, but we must implore Him to guide us to the best plan and then to give us His help to implement it all the way through.

6. To be hurry and impatient for a desired answer and to feel despondent when it does not come and so abandon prayers as useless will only lead to a life of misery, for this amounts to a rejection of Allah, Most High. Look how long it took for Allah to answer the du'a of Prophets Abraham and Ishmael. This was fulfilled in the coming of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sas) at least three thousand years after the du'a was made.

7. Du'a is so important that Allah will not care for us if we do not make supplication to Him (25:77).

8. Du'a is what lifts us from a state of utter helplessness to that of vicegerents of Allah on earth. Paradoxically, our weakness is the greatest source of our strength for we have recourse to the greatest Source of Power - Allah, Himself (27:62).

9. Allah may answer a request in four ways:

(i) He may grant it immediately.

(ii) He may refuse it at once.
(iii) He may delay His answer.

(iv) In His Wisdom and Mercy, He may give us something better than what was asked for.

10. In regard to a *du’ā* to remove a burdensome calamity from us, Allah answers in three ways:

(i) He removes the difficulty quickly, or

(ii) He gives us superhuman strength to endure it, or

(iii) He makes the misfortune a means of intense delight to us for then we are forced to beseech Him in total helplessness, and when we are in that condition, we are close to Him and He, Himself, as it were, bears the pains and comforts our soul. That is why those who are advanced in spirituality actually make *du’ā* for trials and tribulations to befall them! The Holy Prophet (sas) is reported to have said: “Sorrow is my friend, for it brings me close to my Lord.” Thus, we are commanded to make ourselves helpless before Allah in *salah* (even if there is no misfortune), and to consider Allah as Most Powerful and Most Merciful. That is the prerequisite to the granting of any request of ours.

11. Allah, Most High, treats us like a favourite friend. Sometimes He gives us what we ask for: *He gives you all that you ask for* (14:34), and *Call upon Me and I shall answer you* 40:60). But we must not be one-sided, for Allah tells us that He will ask for certain things, too, as we find in the Holy Qur’an: *And We shall certainly try you with something of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits. And give news to the patient, who, when a misfortune befalls them say: Surely we are Allah’s and to Him we shall return* (2:155-156).
12. There are three ways of showing compassion to others: one is physical and the other financial; but the third, *du’ā*, is the best, for it does not need worldly provisions and its scope is more extensive. As a result, it must become second-nature for us to make supplication for others, including even our enemies. This will give us long life, as the Holy Qur’ān says: *Whatever is of benefit to man, tarries in the earth* (13:17).

13. There is no contradiction between seeking physical means for the relieving of pain and making *du’ā* for the same, for Allah has reposed properties in physical things for the alleviation or removal of distress. For example, food relieves hunger, water assuages thirst, etc. Similarly, through Allah’s grace, *du’ā* helps to activate causes in the physical and spiritual worlds for the expulsion of pain and distress. Therefore, although Divine decree is a fact and it is absolute, yet there is much room for the use and benefit of *du’ā* outside of those irrevocable decrees, and it is in this domain that *du’ā* comes into bloom. Even those who believe that everything is decreed beforehand and therefore *du’ā* is of no avail still visit the doctors when they fall ill and they also look for outside help in other matters. Remember that from time immemorial, *du’ā* and *ṣadqah* (charity) have been used by man to avert all but the irrevocable decrees of Allah.

14. *Du’ā* and planning are not antithetical but are rather complementary and work, in fact, like blood brothers for the advancement of man, for planning is the natural corollary of *du’ā* and *du’ā* stimulates and attracts plans like a magnet. In fact, if Allah does not illumine our brain, no good plan can be born.

15. While it is true that without overtly and consciously making *du’ā* some people succeed in their occupation only through what appears to be their brilliant planning, yet that success is
only apparent and not real, for without *du’a* every "success" is inevitably followed by pain, grief, sorrow and disgruntlement, for peace, security and tranquillity can never come through planning alone. Only through *du’a* can one get true happiness for *du’a* makes us recognise the Source of all favours and successes, and inspires in our hearts the sincerest feelings of humility and gratitude. On the other hand, the successes of others eventually increase them in pride, vanity, arrogance and hardheartedness.

16. When a *du’a* is answered, it forges an unbreakable bond with Allah and not only brings us closer to Him, but enables us to "see" Him in this very life. For just as Allah has told us to seek for signs of Him in the organisation of the heavens and the earth (2:164), so, too, there are signs for His recognition in His acceptance of *du’a*. And just as a single flash of lightning can make us see our way out of a pit of darkness, so, too, can *du’a* illumine our lives and bring us face to face with Allah, Most High. But even more than that, *du’a* helps man to achieve the status of sainthood and to become an intercessor for lesser mortals.

17. The best *du’a* is not the one that is made for self or family but it is the one which incorporates the whole community. We must always remember that the *du’a* in the *Al-Fatiha* is made in the plural, that is, for all and not for self alone.

18. To enjoy *salah* which provides delight for the soul, we must make *du’a* in our own language during the *salah*. Otherwise, we will not be able to experience true bliss in our prayer.

19. In our *salah*, we should make *du’a* for others, family, friends, etc. by calling their names. One of the saints of Islam explained that he made prolonged *sajdahs* because he made *du’a* for seventy people, name by name.
20. Hazrat Mirza asks: “What difference is there between a man and an animal if, like the animal, he does not make du’a or between him and an unbeliever (kafir) if, like the unbeliever, he makes du’a only when calamities befall him?”

He then pointed out that the distinctive quality of a Muslim lies in the fact that not only does he make du’a for the past and the present but also for the future even if he is in no difficulty for we do not know what the future holds. Trials and tribulations, he reminds us, are more numerous than ants and he draws to our attention the hadith which states that du’a and sadqah (charity) can avert calamities and conditional decrees of Allah.

It is interesting to read the following verses from Lord Tennison’s poem, The Death of Arthur, parting words which the poet put in the mouth of the dying King as he was bidding farewell to his courtiers.

“Pray for my soul.  
More things are wrought by prayer,  
Than this world dreams of.  
Wherefore, let thy voice rise like a fountain for me night and day.  
For what are men better than sheep or goats,  
That nourish a blind life within the brain.  
If knowing God they life not hands of prayer,  
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?  
For so the whole round earth is every way,  
Bound by g old chains about the feet of God.”
CONCLUSION

We hope and pray that this booklet may help us to restore or to intensify the yearning for Allah in our hearts, to live in His presence and to pray that He does not forsake us even for the twinkling of an eye. We know that we cannot be successful unless it pleases Allah.

- And you will not, except Allah pleases, the Lord of the worlds (81:29) -

but we cherish the hope that we may be among those who can truly say in this very life:

All praise is due to Allah, Who guided us to this. And we would not have found the way if Allah had not guided us. Certainly the messengers of our Lord brought the truth (7:43).

Ameen.
About the Author

Moulana Kalamazad Mohamed is a teacher at the Carapichaima Senior Comprehensive School and he is the Imam of the Fireburn Mosque in Trinidad and Tobago. He was born in an Ahmadié home and he has taken the Bi’at (Pledge) of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha’at Islam (Lahore).

He is the grandson of Imam Sackrullah Mian. Imam Sackrullah Mian was one of the first Ahmadié Imams in Trinidad and Tobago and he was the first Imam of the Fireburn Mosque.

Moulana Kalamazad is the author of numerous short works on Islam including Necessity & Benefits of Trials and Tribulations and Remembrance of Allah.