

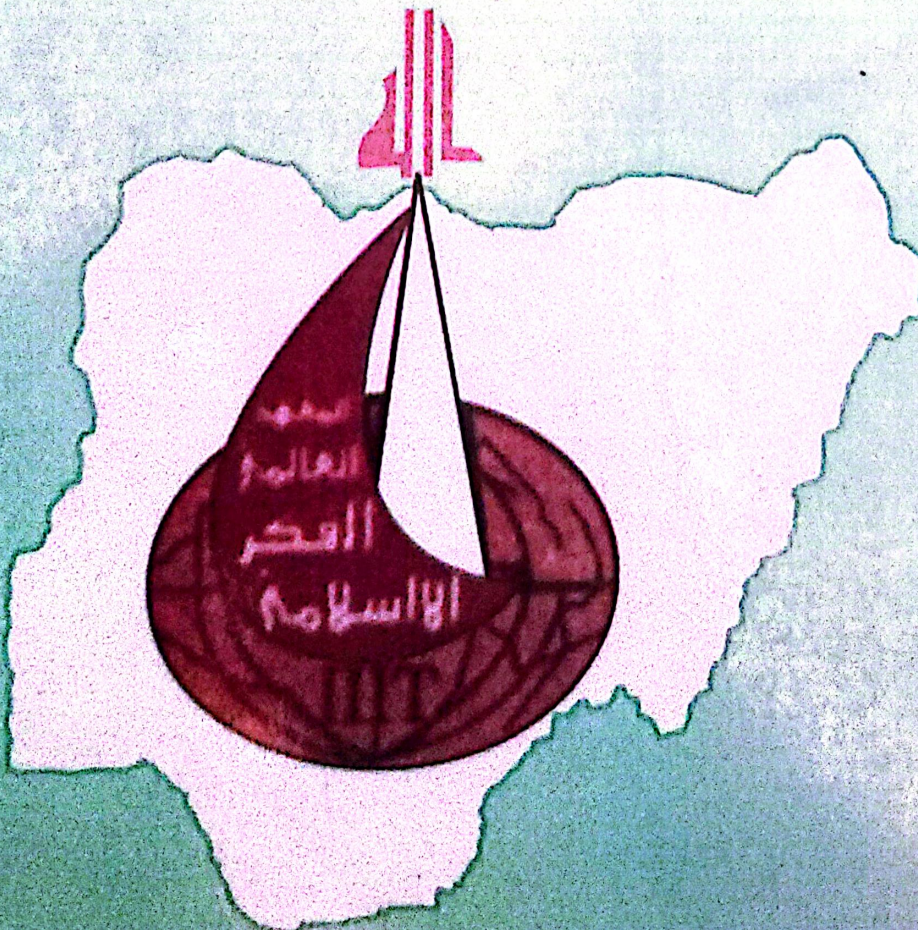
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Reflections on the Magnificence and the Effectiveness of Du'a

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Abstract

This paper analyses the importance of Du'a to the human beings vis a vis the observation of the devotees and scholars as regards the existence and efficacy of the built-in du'a instinct in all human beings. The types of Du'a, worshipal and petitional, the correct mode of Istikhara and al-Qunut all were discussed adequately. The study has touched upon allowance or otherwise of offering of Du'a collectively after obligatory prayer. It also highlights the proper use of Beautiful Names of Allah for the sake of urgent acceptance. It is hoped that the paper will be an eye-opener for understanding the proper way of conducting the Du'a and making the heart-energetic supplicant be closer to Allah (SWT).

Introduction

In the world of today, 'Strategic Planning' becomes the bedrock of any firm or institution or even business that tends to grow immensely. It is, of course, a self-study with the intention of evaluating the current status and foreseeing the proper steps to be taken for successfully moving forward. Mankind, despite their intelligence in planning and implementation, their power of thinking and high capacity of foresight, are very dim. Their gigantic effort in preparation and designing cannot be done without mistakes and shortcomings while putting their plan on the ground. For this reason and various others, it is important to make a thorough strategic planning for effective.

Definitions of Du'a

Supplication, or invocation, prayer or *Du'a*; these words may be used interchangeably, for being the most important rituals that require certain conditions in order to be up to standard. The *Du'a* is earnestly asking Allah's favour and humbly begging His attention by means of invocation for the fulfillment of one's personal needs^{li}.

The pure *Du'a* is to be directed absolutely to Allah (SWT), the Creator, the Sustainer, the All-Knowing, the Powerful and the Possessor of many other qualities that qualify Him as the only One worth worshiping. Supplication undoubtedly is the quintessence of worship to Allah. A flood of light has been thrown upon this momentous human instinct in Allah's saying: "And when My servants ask you, concerning Me-indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me and believe in Me that they may be rightly guided" (Q 2:186). The Prophet (PBUH) has expressed the upper position of supplication in Islam. He said: "There is nothing more cherished in the sight of Allah, Most High, than supplication"^{lii}. Hence, *Du'a* itself is not an exception; it ideally needs to satisfy basic lawful strategic planning requirements for the betterment of the supplicants.

This idea is impliedly discerned from some prophetic narrations, which confirmed the indispensability of *Du'a* and its effectiveness in the entire human endeavor: "Whoever wishes that Allah would respond to him during hardship and grief, then let him supplicate plentifully when at ease"^{liii}. "Be mindful of Allah, and you will find Him in front of you. Recognize and acknowledge Allah in times of ease and prosperity, and He will remember you in times of adversity"^{liiv}. Nevertheless, the supplicant really needs to set his/her goals wisely and apply any lawful method that can positively support his/her invocations.

Types of Du'a: Worshipal and Petitional

Generally, there are two types of *Du'a*, namely: 'Worshipal' and 'Petitional'^{lv}. As for the first, whose meaning is the widest, every Muslim is ordered to submit his whole life to the injunctions of the Shari'a (Q 6:163-164). By doing this, as a weakling servant, he/she is actually making *Worshipal Du'a* to Allah. It is quite obvious that only Muslims maintain this unique characteristic. The Prophet (PBUH) had taught the Ummah different types of supplications to be recited in every walk of life; e.g. for exiting and entering one's house; while getting to sleep and after waking up; going into and out of the toilet; during eating and wearing clothes; on vehicles; when set out for journey; for entering mosques, markets and the office, et.c. In fact, there are specific varieties of supplications for seeking refuge with Allah and others for imploring Him for goodness in this World and the Hereafter. Such supplications are called 'al Ma'athurat', and available to every Muslim. It is left to us to search for them, memorize them and affect them appropriately^{lvi}. As for the second type, Petitional prayer, it is the kind of *Du'a* with which the supplicant implores Allah for his specific needs, hoping in Him alone to answer and sweep away his/her troubles. Our discourse, as is obvious, revolves basically around this type.

Comparatively, our souls are, without doubt, in earnest need of consolation from *Du'a* more than our bodies' need to take breaths or to quench thirst. This built-in *du'a*-instinct is recognized by every devotee and celebrated scholars from great religions existing on the planet, not from Islam only. Mahatma Gandhi was the greatest Indian leader since Buddha. He was reported to have said: "He would have collapsed if he had not been inspired by the sustaining power of prayer". "Without prayer," he wrote, "I should have been a lunatic long ago"^{lvii}. Indeed, the same was portrayed in a speech of Dr.

Alexis Carrel, one of the leading Psychologists and a Nobel Prize winner. He said: "Prayer is the most powerful form of energy one can generate. It is a force as real as terrestrial gravity. As a physician, I have seen men, after all other therapy had failed, lifted out of disease and melancholy by the serene effort of prayer.. Prayer like radium is a source of luminous, self-generating energy.. In prayer, human beings seek to augment their finite energy by addressing themselves to the Infinite source of all energy. When we pray, we link ourselves with the inexhaustible motive power that spins the universe. We pray that a part of this power be apportioned to our needs"^{lviii}.

These two apt quotations are intentionally quoted from non-Muslim sources so as to ascertain the efficacy of the prayer-instinct in all human beings. There are many more of such scientific assertions in Islamic literature, but not enough provision here to mention them. What we are all about is to strengthen the heart-energetic supplicant in order to explore himself carefully and outline the basic things inside himself, which require his utmost attention. I don't think there is one among Muslims who may ever conceive the notion that our lives will do without supplications! Without proper supplications, no doubt, life will be shoreless and numb. The Qur'an itself says: "What would my Lord care for you if not for your supplication?"(Q 25:77). The devotee, the unbeliever and even the skeptic all get themselves into terrible conditions, which necessitate turning to Allah alone, supplicating Him consciously and unconsciously for aid. The Qur'an has clearly mentioned some hard times and rush hours during which mankind will unconsciously abandon all deities and submit to the Will of Allah, the true God. It is when they are in desperate situations, when seeking safe delivery for pregnant wives; or when they are surrounded by ocean waves and storm winds, or when they board ships, to give a few examples (Q7:189, 10:22, 29:65, 31:32).

Things, sometimes, happen by chance. But for the quick offer of an effective Du'a, a determinant invocator has to set forth certain goals, which he will head for at all times. He will not carelessly leave his moment and future to mere chance. Allah has built in us a will and the ability of choice and making decisions within our own capacity. Human beings, indeed, are not just like a sheath or a paper blowing in the wind. All human beings have an innate faculty of determining and planning, which Islam requires Muslims to make positively functional to their uttermost. At this point, I believe the idea of 'Mission' and 'Vision', better known in the Strategic Planning Schedule, is strongly applicable in the supplication realm.

The Objective of *Du'a*

The 'Mission' is, etymologically, a set-up of the fundamental purpose(s) of the task at stake. It also touches the desired processes toward a distinctive end and the fair valuation of the current performances. Here the invocator will cast in his mind the level, in terms of quantity and quality, of the *Du'a* and worship he has been doing to please His Creator. This also will give him the chance to assess the degree of his closeness to Allah, a situation from which he can map out a vivid plan for the purpose and essence of making the current *Du'a*. Take for example Prophet Zakariyya (Zachariah) (A.S). He made a special supplication seeking a son, and in the midst of his presentation he said: "I have never been unblest in my invocation to you, O my Lord" (Q 19:4)

It is true, of course, that the lack of spontaneity in the supplication breaks its efficacy. For this reason, I believe, Islam does not put restrictions on frequent supplications; for it is not but to increase one's closeness to Allah. The Prophet (PBUH) had said: "Let one of you ask his Lord for his every need, even until he asks Him for the strap of his sandal when it breaks"^{lix}. The main subject of

the *Du'a*, therefore, has to be clearly determined, as well as minor details. Thus, the *Du'a* may be weaved on poverty eradication, marrying, seeking admission into a college or university, passing examinations, business prosperity and making a profit in trade, getting and keeping employment, contesting for a political position, the cure of the barrenness of a wife, getting a favorable decision in a law case, and a host of other things seeking smoothness or lifting one up in our day-to-day life. All that is important in the face of any problem in this world is to have the courage of making supplication and determining its purpose plainly. "I have no concern for the answer; my only concern is making supplication. But whenever I make supplication, I know that the answer will come with it"- said Umar bn Khattab (R.A)^{lx}.

The 'Vision', in any given strategic planning schedule, more especially in the *Du'a*, concentrates more on the future by outlining what kind of effects, in terms of getting benefits or otherwise, the invocator wants the *Du'a* to make in his life. This, of course, is the source of inspiration and foresight through which a tenacious supplicant will clearly decide the 'needs' in his supplication. All these organizations and arrangements, provided they are clear and well formulated, can be thought of and arranged in one's mind without even inscribing them on paper or disclosing them to others, unless the invocator wants it that way. But it is true, in many times; the successful supplication, like many other important activities, needs some secrecy. Allah says "Call upon your Lord in humility and privately; indeed, He does not like transgressors" (Q 7:55).

The afore-mentioned 'Mind-Organization' is a package that consists of different items, including setting a ladder of priority, the itemization of the *Du'a* subject-matter, language coinage, duration and goal setting, and other techniques and modalities of implementation that all

could be regarded as the true 'Blue-Print' for the successful *Du'a*:

As for the issue of "duration", often called "goal-setting", it is of paramount importance to the extent that it could not be totally over sighted. I mean the powerful invocation has to be broken-down into terms and the pieces tagged in accordance to its persistence and earnestness. We have said earlier that every serious invocator has to realistically know himself and determine his needs very well. This will help, because, some supplications may fall under 'long-term duration', others under 'medium-term duration'; majority are of 'short-term duration'. Of course, during setting the ladder of priorities, people may differ in determining which step will come first or last. And this will consequently affect the durations that people deem their 'needs' could fit in. But since we are only conveying the idea here, and the practical part remains at the invocator's hand, I can only make a proposal with certain examples from our daily life.

Long term duration, which is a tactical projection of what one may think is beneficial to his life in the future, may take time before one achieves it or makes immediate use of it. Nevertheless, it is desirable to engage soonest in serious *Du'a* seeking smoothness and the actualization of that particular thing. All our supplications with regard to the hereafter fall under this category. Similarly, the supplications for seeking refuge with Allah from evils and misfortunes. A level one student, who knows the miraculous power of supplication, immediately starts praying everyday about hitch-free examinations and subsequently graduates with a good result. Likewise, the one who shortly starts a business will begin invoking sonorously for rapid selling and earning a profit. The worker also supplicates rigorously for the ease retirement. The *Du'a* for getting a house and vehicle for newly recruited employees is also good to be cited here, as exactly

as examples of long term supplications. The target of supplications of all these people is obviously meaningful but far-reaching. They are all holding ambition, which may not practically be perpetuated until after, for example, four to forty or fifty years in the future.

As we are all aware in our daily affairs, some problems only emerge on the stage without prior notice. For the problems that can be supplicated for within an intermediate time, the medium term duration is appropriately set for them. Such activities and events, which are less pressing but can be done or occurred within one, two to four years are, I suppose, typical examples worth citing. Just like the duration of pregnancy, or a person studying in a program of three-month or one year duration. All these fall under middle-term supplication. The Prophet Zakariyya made such a *Du'a*, when he said: "O lord, bestow on me a good offspring from You; verily, You are the hearer of prayer" (Q 3:27).

The short term duration pertaining to the *Du'a*, is the sort of prayer being done in the face of most urgent issues, and those which prevail at the moment. Most people are only aware of this kind of *Du'a*, and the medium term *Du'a*, as the case may be (Q 27:62). They have no idea about preparation for the Long Term *Du'a*. This is not a good idea at all. Instead, one has to think of them all, for each has its own benefits and is enough to put the persistent invocator forward towards what can be termed as 'Humanitarian Perfection'.

The Prophet (PBUH) Teaches Istikharah

The theory of mission and vision with any kind of duration it may require are better actualized vividly in two kinds of supplications namely, '*Du'a al Istikharah*' and *Al Qunut Du'a* for urgent occurrences. I must say a word briefly in turn on both.

The *Istikahrah Du'a* is the only lawful supplication of *Istikharah* taught by the Prophet (pbuh). All other forms carrying the tag of *Istikharah* or any 'sacred formulae' such as talismans, pendants and amulets, are all innovative according to the unanimity of Hadith Scholars and Jurists. That is why the attention of my fellow Muslims should be drawn to be careful of what the so-called 'diviners', 'Mallams', 'Bokaye' or 'Fortune-tellers' if not 'sorcerers' and 'witch crafts' - call them what you wish, errantly prescribe for the people as *Istikharah*. In fact, visiting such a Mallam is forbidden in Islam. The Prophet (PBUH) has said: "Whoever visits a fortune-teller; his prayer will not be accepted for forty nights"^{lxi}. He (PBUH) also said: "Whoever visits a soothsayer and believes him in what he says has disbelieved in what is revealed to Muhammad"^{lxii}. He/she is in a dilemma. It is punishment; the prayers will not be certainly accepted, despite the fact that they are Muslim. If they misguidedly give up prayer they become automatically infidels!

For the importance of correct *Istikharah*, "the Prophet (pbuh), according to Jabir bn Abdullah (R.A), used to teach his Companions the *Istikharah* for every matter, as he used to teach them the Surah from the Qur'an. He (PBUH) also used to say: "If anyone of you intends to do something, he should offer a two raka'at prayer other than the obligatory salat, and then say- the *Istikharah* supplication". The *Du'a* reads: "O Allah, I seek your guidance in making a choice by virtue of Your knowledge, and I seek the ability by virtue of Your power. I ask You of Your great bounty. You have power, I have none. And You know, I know not. You are the Knower of hidden things. O Allah, if in Your knowledge, this matter (to mention the need by name) is good for me both in this world and in the Hereafter (or: in my religion, my livelihood and my affairs), then ordain it for me, make easy for me, and bless it for me. And if in Your knowledge it is bad for me and for

my religion, my livelihood and my affairs (or: for my both in this world and the next), then turn me away from it (and turn it away from me), and ordain for me the good wherever it may be and make me pleased with it"^{lxiii}. The one who is proposing for marriage, seeking a job, about to start a business, or wants to contest for a political position and various other matters, should do it. And it works perfectly.

***Du'a* in Languages other than Arabic**

With regard to the above *Du'a* and the like, there are two things worth noting here. Firstly, after offering *Istikharah*, some people worry themselves, before going ahead or not, to have a glance in their dreams about the negative or positive actualization of what they have prayed for, while, in reality, the Prophet (PBUH) did not mention seeing anything; good, or bad or ugly in one's dream concerning the subject-matter of the *Istikharah*, nor his companions and the rest of the celebrated Muslim Jurists throughout the ages. It is only known in recent hearsay books!

Secondly, this *Du'a* is in Arabic and the majority of Muslims, by training, have no problem with memorizing and reciting things written in that language. But, of course, there are some people who deficiently cannot! For this category, it is strongly allowed that they translate or say their *Du'a* proficiently in their vernacular, or any other language easier to them, be it Chinese, English, Fulfulde, Hausa, Igbo, Kanuri, Nupe, Yoruba and others. Imam Malik was asked about uttering of supplication in languages other than Arabic and his reply was in the affirmative^{lxiv}. Backing his view with a Qur'anic verse: "Allah does not charge a soul except with that within its capacity" (Q 2:286).

Saying of supplication in languages other than Arabic despite a slight divergence in jurists' opinion, is permissible for all, provided it gives the proper meaning

and is in line with the injunctions of the Shari'a. Sheikh al Islam Ibn Taimiyyah rightly said: "It is permissible to make Du'a in Arabic and in language other than Arabic; Allah knows the intention of the supplicant and what he wants no matter what language he speaks, because He hears all the voices in all different languages, asking for all kinds of needs"^{lxv}. One may think that uttering Du'a in other languages nullifies the Salat. But actually it wouldn't. Only worldly speeches, like saying to someone give me this, or wait for me, et.c. invalidate the Salat.

Du'al Al-Qunut

The next sort of supplication on which I must comment is *Du'a al Qunut*. I don't mean that supplication which we, the followers of the Malik School of Law, usually do in the last rak'at of Subh prayer. But this one is an extension of that. It was taught by the Prophet (PBUH). He used to do it even in his obligatory prayers, during the last rak'ah before or after bowing (*Ruku'u*). He (PBUH) used to open it with what he taught his grandson, al Hasan (R.A) to say in it: "O Allah, guide me among those you have guided, pardon me among those whom you have pardoned, turn to me in friendship among those you have turned in friendship, and bless me in what you have bestowed, and save me from the evil of what you have decreed. For verily you decree and none can influence you, and he is not humiliated whom you have befriended, nor is he honoured who is your enemy. Blessed are you, O Lord, and Exalted"^{lxvi}. After this citation, the strong-minded supplicant starts counting his needs one-by-one, depending on the situations that bring up the *Du'a*. It may be for a tribulation and calamity remedy or for getting certain things. Taken together, the *Qunut al Du'a* is essential and very effective. Just say your needs concisely in your language and be sincere. The answer is already before you.

Whoever makes such a strategic planning and applies it accordingly, I believe, his supplications must certainly be phenomenal. But there are still some etiquettes relating to the time, place, psyche and character of the supplicant, their consideration will also accelerate the acceptance of the *Du'a*. The essentiality of these etiquettes in the invocation-sphere resembles that of the implementation of an articulated blue-print in the strategic planning schedule. The planning, howsoever excellent it is, will be worthless without being practicable. Hence, the supplicant is required to offer his prayers in specific response times prescribed by the Shari'a. This, indeed, includes supplicating inside the Salat: while prostrating, after saying *al Tahiyat* before completion, after *Idhan*, at midnight, after *Iftar* from any fasting, and during the Hajj after drinking the water of Zamzam, on Safa and Marwa mountains, at the day of Arafat and Muna-days. There are ample prophetic narrations supporting each of these places and times and many others that, for space constraints, cannot be mentioned here. I wonder who has a problem but cannot use, before the occurrence of the event, the Sujuds and after *tahiyat*'s time of one of the five daily prayers, so as to mount his complaints to Allah in order to eject it for him!

Collective *Du'a* after Obligatory Prayer

The *Du'a* inside the Salat is the proper Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH). And he required people to say some Adhkars immediately after the prayer. After finishing the prayer and whatever connected to it, one can also offer new *Du'a* for something-for example- that has escaped his mind during the prayer. There is no contention about these three cases. The bone of contention between the scholars is in the collective *Du'a*, which an Imam leads and the rest of people saying after him saying 'Amen!'

There is no doubt also about the fact that the Prophet (PBUH) did not lead such collective *Du'a* after prayers. But some scholars found that Abu Umamah al-Bahili had reported a hadith, which can open a room for such *Du'a*. He said: "The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) was asked as to which supplication was most quickly accepted? He replied: "In the middle of the night and after the obligatory prayers (Dubur as- Salawat al-Maktubah)"^{lxvii}.

The phrase "Dubur as- Salawat al-Maktubah" doesn't mean after prayer only, rather, it includes last part of the prayer, and that immediately follow it, the space which the Prophet (PBUH) used to say his Azkar. We are aware that the Prophet (PBUH) and the pious predecessors did not offer such prayer is enough for us to stop it and stick to the proper Sunnah. Abu Zayd al Qairawani, Abu Musa al Maliki, Ibn Taimiyyah, Ibn Qayyim al Jauziyyah, Abu Ishaq Al Shatibi, Ibn al-Hajj and a host of others were of the opinion that such collective *Du'a* is bid'ah.

On the contrary there are many scholars those who allowed it^{lxviii}. Sheik Usman bn Fodio reported that "it is a reprehensible innovation according to the Mad'hab of Imam Malik"^{lxix}. He indicated to his view at the end of the chapter by quoting Ibn Hajj that "It has not been narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) prayed a prayer, made Salam from it and then extended his hands making supplication while those who followed him said Amen after his supplication. This is the same with the rightly Caliphs after him and likewise with the remainder of the Companions. A thing which the Prophet (PBUH) didn't do nor any from among his companions, there can be no doubt that leaving it is better than doing it. Rather, it is an innovation"^{lxx}.

Other Reinforcements

Notwithstanding the significance of the content, the wording, the times and places of offering invocations, two things are also very imperative for getting quick answers,

namely, Praising Allah and offering Salat to the Prophet (PBUH). It was reported from him (PBUH) that: "When anyone of you prays, let him start by praising Allah, then let him offer blessings to the Prophet (PBUH), then let him say the supplication however he wishes"^{lxxxi}. The supplicant can glorify Allah with any lawful words full of gratitude, but I suggest the one which Buraydah (R.A) reported that: "The Prophet (pbuh) heard a man saying: 'O Allah, I ask You, I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship but You, the One, the Self-Sufficient Master Whom all creatures need, Who begets not, nor was He begotten, And there is none coequal or comparable to Him". The Prophet (pbuh) then remarked that: 'You have supplicated Allah using His Greatest Name, when asked with this name He gives, and when supplicated by this name He answers"^{lxxii}.

The Use of the Beautiful Names of Allah

The supplicant has a wide range of choices in the Beautiful Names of Allah, who has unlimited potency and is responsive whenever one of His names is called upon in a legal manner^{lxxiii}. Calling His name doesn't mean mere repeating it over and over without comprehending its implications. But to put it in a full sentence in a way that ties the needs with manifestations of that particular name^{lxxiv}. It means the supplicant has to take one and above of those names, befitting his condition and mould the *Du'a* on Its light. Allah says: "Say: invoke Allah or call upon Rahman, by whatever name you invoke Him it is the same, for to Him belong the Best Names" (Q 17:110) "And to Allah belong the best names, so invoke Him by them. And leave those who practice deviation concerning His names. They will be recompensed for what they have been doing" (Q7:180). In an explanation of this verse, the Prophet (PBUH) had been reported to have said: "Allah, the Most High, has ninety-nine names. He who retains them in his memory or recites them, will enter Paradise"^{lxxv}. Take as an

example the *Du'a* of Prophet Ayyub (Job) (A.S), who after a long time of suffering from distress and adversity, he cried to his Lord: "Verily, adversity has touched me, and You are the Most Merciful of all those who show mercy". (Q 21:83). Simply he invoked Allah with His name 'Ar-Rahman', The Merciful and was immediately answered. The Prophet Zakariyya (Zachariah) was in need of children so he put his *Du'a* in this way: "O My Lord, do not leave me alone (childless) while you are the best of the inheritors" (Q21: 89). He, interestingly, based his supplication on the name 'Al Warith', The Inheritor, seeking a child who will inherit him and was immediately given a learned son, Yahya (A.S). Generally, one can explore the Qur'an and Prophetic narrations on *Du'a* and see how the names of Allah are put in use in lawful manner.

The parts of the *Du'a*, the beginning, the middle or the end, are desirably to be so connected up with the word: "Ya Rabbi, Ya Rabbi"- O My Lord, O My Lord. Imam Malik was reported to have said: "I like the supplication to be full of the word: Ya Rabbi, Ya Rabbi. For it was the supplication of the prophets"^{lxxvi}.

The psyche and character of the supplicant must be sufficiently prepared for this serious function. I mean by 'Psyche' a collection of the mind, the thought, and the emotions of the invocator. The character of the supplicant is required also to be as good as the purity of the psyche itself. The *Du'a*, in whatever situation it may be, gets an accelerated answer if the supplicant keeps his/her mind and action in earning halal and it is, of course, halted from being answered if he/she indulges in earning haram and doing vice. The Prophet (PBUH) pointed out some basic conditions of accepting *Du'a* whose its fulfillment is desirable in the person of the supplicant. Those conditions are adequately fulfilled in a man, despite that the fact his supplication will not be heard, for only one reason, which is

earning haram: "A man who, having journeyed far, is disheveled and dusty and who spreads out his hands to the sky, saying, O Lord! O Lord! – while his food is lawful, his drink unlawful, his clothing unlawful, and is nourished unlawfully, so how can he be answered!"^{lxxvii}.

Apart from the committing sins as impediments to accepting the *Du'a*, the Prophet (PBUH) also added to it supplicating something that may break the ties of kinship, having doubt in Allah and being aggressive when supplicating. This is clear in the Hadith of Abu Huraira reported that the Prophet (PBUH) said: "Whenever a Muslim supplicates Allah, He accepts his supplication or avert any similar kind of trouble from him until he pays for something sinful or something that may break the ties of kinship"^{lxxviii}.

The active supplicant is recommended to prepare his consciousness in a state that can get rid of any doubt or hesitation regarding the acceptance of his *Du'a*. He/she must wholeheartedly be sure the *Du'a* is perfectly heard. We read in a hadith: "One of you will be responded to, so long as he is not hasty, saying I supplicated, and I was not responded"^{lxxix}.

If the *Du'a* is observed outside the Salat (not whilst bowing and prostration), it is good also for the supplicant to join his hands and raise them up together. It was reported in numerous hadith that the Prophet (PBUH) used to do so. He also said: "Your Lord, is Shy, Ever Generous; He is shy to allow His servant's hand to return empty after he has raised them up to Him"^{lxxx}. Of course, it is a form of worship. But the supplicant has to concentrate on the *Du'a* and feel with a high degree of certainty that the subject-matter would be handed directly to him. "Ask Allah and be certain of a response and know that Allah does not respond from the heart of the oblivious"^{lxxxii}. By doing so, it will, for sure, be actualized before him after a while.

The *Du'a* has an extraordinary power of changing one's entire life. The Prophet (PBUH), however, taught individuals how to pray in order to demolish bad habits and maintain the good ones. He (PBUH) said in one of his supplications: "O Allah! I seek refuge with you from worry and grief, from weakness and laziness, from cowardice and miserliness, from being heavily in debt and from being overpowered by other men"^{lxxxii}. It is always suggested to have a kind of *Du'a* for eliminating sins and correcting bad behavior to good ones. It is easier for everybody to enumerate the negative deeds and faults he/she does. For example, one, after careful self-study, may find out his/her major sins are slandering others, adultery/fornication, prostitution, drinking alcohol/cocaine and smoking cigarettes, et.c. He/she is, of course, required to abstain from all of these evils and malfunctions, but maybe, he/she could not make it at once. So they can use the idea of duration, short term or medium term for instance, and tackle the knotty behaviors, one by one, in order to get rid of them with a special *Du'a*. "Being a normal factor of moral health in the person, its omission would be deleterious"- Said William James^{lxxxiii} and he was right.

The collection of duration, time, place, Psyche and character of the supplicants would make the *Du'a* superb and consequently be reformative in the thought of the supplicant, his/her views, his/her feelings, his/her ideology and culture. It will be certainly clear that every legible *Du'a* has a definite answer. But the manifestation of its effects may have different faces in the sight of the supplicants. Each is good luck and fortunate:

- 1-The supplicant gets exactly what he has been praying for.
- 2- Sometimes, the prayer is perfectly answered, but the Wisdom of Allah, the All-Knowing, has planned to delay its effect and appearance until further time.

3-The other option is averting the supplicant from evils, which, had it not been designated that way, could have exposed him/her to another dilemma.

4- Sometimes, the supplicant may have been apparently deprived of the exact answer and instead made comfortable with other gifts and bounties showered upon him.

5- And sometimes, the *Du'a* is heard but cannot be actualized according to the designation of the supplicant, but his/her accumulated sins and multiple wrongdoings are emphatically expiated instead. It was reported that the Prophet (pbuh) said: "There is not a man who calls upon Allah with a supplication, except that he is answered. Either it shall be granted to him in the world, or reserved for him in the Hereafter, his sins shall be expiated for it according to the extent that he supplicated – as long as he does not supplicate for some sin, or for the severing of the ties of kinship, and he does not become hasty. They said: O, Messenger of Allah and how would he be hasty? He said: He says: I called upon My Lord, but He did not answer me^{lxxxiv}."

Conclusion

I would like here to gather up the threads of our discourse by quoting Mr. Dale Carnegie, who has fluently expressed what is clinking in my mind. It was wisely said: 'Wisdom is the goal of the faithful, his wherever he finds it'. Mr. Carnegie was right in saying^{lxxxv}: "Prayer fulfills these three very basic psychological needs which all people share, whether they believe in God or not:

1. Prayer helps us to put into words exactly what is troubling us. It is almost impossible to deal with a problem while it remains vague and nebulous. Praying, in a way, is very much like writing our problem down on paper. If we ask help for a problem-even from God-we must put it into words.

2. Prayer gives us a sense of sharing our burdens, of not being alone. Few of us are so strong that we can bear our heaviest burdens, our most agonizing troubles, all by ourselves. Sometimes our worries are of so intimate a nature that we cannot discuss them even with our closest relatives or friends. Then prayer is the answer. Any psychiatrist will tell us that when we are pent-up and tense, and in an agony of spirit, it is therapeutically good to tell someone our troubles. When we can't tell anyone else-we can always tell God.
3. Prayer puts into force an active principle of doing. It's a first step towards action. I doubt if anyone can pray for some fulfillment, day after day, without benefiting from it-in other words, without taking some steps to bring it to pass. A world-famous scientist said: 'Prayer is the most powerful form of energy one can generate'. So why not make use of?". Indeed, *Du'a* is indubitable."And whosoever puts his trust in Allah, then He will suffice him"(Q 65:3).

End Notes

- ¹- Hattabi, Sha'an alDu'a,
- ²-Abu Dawud, Al Sunan, Beirut: Dar al Kitab al Arabi, N.D., vol. 1, p.551, No. 1481; Tirmidhi, Al Sunan, ed. Ahmad Muhammad Shakir, Beirut: Dar Ihya' Turath al Arabi, vol.5 p. 211, No. 2969
- ³-Tirmidhi, Al Sunan, vol.5 p.462, No. 3382
- ⁴-Ahmad bn Hambal, Al Musnad, ed. Shu'aib Al Arna'ut and co., Cairo: Mu'assasat al Risalah, 1420 A.H-1999 C.E, vol.5 p.19, No. 3803
- ⁵- See Ibn Taimiyya, Iqtida' Sirat al Mustaqim, Cairo: Matba'at al Sunnah al Muhammadiyyah, ed. Muhammad Hamid al Faqqi, 1379 AH, p.357; Ibn Qayyim, Jala' al Afham Fi Assalati WaAssalamalaKhayr al Anam, p.

- ⁶ Many scholars have written books on such supplication like 'AmulYaumWalLailah of Imam Nasa'i, Al Adhkar of Imam Nawawi, Al Kalim al Tayyib of Ibn Taimiyya, Al Wabil As-Sayyib of Ibn Qayyim, Al Ma'athurat by Hasan Albanna, Hisnul Muslim by Qattan and many more in any language.
- ⁷ Dale Carnegie, How to Stop Worrying and Start Living, USA: Pocket Books, 1990, pp.112-3
- ⁸ Ibid, p.116. He also said: "Prayer should be understood, not as a mere mechanical recitation of formulas, but as a mystical elevation, absorption of consciousness in the contemplation of a principle both permeating and transcending our world".See: Alexis Carrel, Man: The Unknown, USA: Harper Brothres,1939, pp.74-5
- ⁹ Ibn Hibban, Sahih, vol.3 p.148, No.866
- ¹⁰ Ibn Qayyim, Madarij al Salikin, Beirut: Dar Kitab al Arabi, 2nded, 1393A.H-1973C.E., vol. 3 p.103
- ¹¹ Muslim, Al Sahih, Beirut: Dar Ihya' TurathArabi, 2nded, 1392, vol.14 p.227
- ¹² Ahmad, Musnad, vol. 38 p.264, No. 233222
- ¹³ Bukhari, Al Sahih, vol.11 p.183, No. 6382
- ¹⁴ Khalil bn Ishaq, At Taudih Sharh Mukhtasar bn al Hajib, Beirut: Dal Kutob Al-Ilmiyah, 1sted, 2011, vol. 1 pp.385-386; Al Dusuqi, Al Hashiyah, Beirut: Dar al Fikr, vol. 1 p.233; Al Adawi, Al-Hashiyah Ala Sharh al-Kharshi Ala-Mukhtasar al-Khalil, vol.1 p.292; Al-Nawawi, Al Majmu', vol.3 p.436
- ¹⁵ Ibn Taimiyyah, Al Fatawa, vol.22 pp.488-489
- ¹⁶ Abu Dawud, Al Sunan, vol.1 p.536, No.1427
- ¹⁷ Tirmidhi, Al Sunan,vol.5 p.188 with a Hasan chain of transmission
- ¹⁸ Manjur, Ahmad bn Ali, Sharh Manhaj al Muntakhab 'Ila Qawa'id al Mad'hab, Egypt: Dar Ihya' Kutub al Arabiyyah, N.D., vol.2 pp.693-702

al-ijtihad - Vol. 11. No. 1, January 2013/Safar, 1434 A.H.

- ¹⁹ - Shehu Usman bn Fodio, *Ihya' al Sunnah Wa Ikhmad al Bid'ah*, published by Dan Ige, N.D., p.95
- ²⁰ - Ibn Fodio, *Ihya'*, p.100
- ²¹ - Abu Dawud, *Al Sunan*, vol.1 p.467, No. 1481
- ²² - Abu Dawud, *Al Sunan*, vol.1 p.554, No. 1495
- ²³ - Qurtubi, *Jami'ul Bayan Fi Ahkam al Qur'an*, Beirut: Dar Ihya' Turath Al Arabi, 1985, , vol.7 p.328
- ²⁴ - Ibn Taimiyyah, *Al 'Ubudiyyah*, Beirut: al-MaktabIslami, p.35-8
- ²⁵ - Bukhari, *Al Sahih*, vol. 11, p.214, No. 6409; Muslim, *Al Sahih*, vol.17 p.5
- ²⁶ - Ibn Taimiyyah, *Majmu al Fatawa*, vol.1 p.224
- ²⁷ - Muslim, *Al Sahih*, vol.7 p.100
- ²⁸ - Muslim, *Al Jami' al Sahih*, vol.17 p.51
- ²⁹ - Bukhari, *Al Sahih*, vol.11 p.140, No. 6340; Muslim, *Al Sahih*, vol.17 p.51
- ³⁰ - Abu Dawud, *Al Sunan*, vol.1 p.468, No.1488
- ³¹ - Tirmidhi, *Al Sunan*, vol.5 p.517, No. 3497
- ³² - Bukhari, *Al Sahih*, vol.6 p.86, No.2893
- ³³ - William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, USA: The Library of America, 1987, p.415
- ³⁴ - Timidhi, *Al Sunan*, vol.5 p., No.3968
- ³⁵ - Dale Carnagie, *How to Stop Worrying*, p.118-9