



Prophetic Prayers for Relief and Protection

TAHIR WYATT

YAQeen[™]
INSTITUTE FOR ISLAMIC RESEARCH

Author Biography

Dr. Tahir Wyatt is a published academic, experienced interpreter, and instructor of Islamic studies and comparative religion. During his twenty-one years of studying and teaching in Saudi Arabia, he procured several degrees, including a doctorate in theology. He was also the only American ever to be appointed to teach in the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah, the second holiest site in the Muslim world. Dr. Wyatt currently lectures both nationally and internationally at mosques, universities, and other institutions of learning. He serves as the Executive Director of the United Muslim Masjid in Philadelphia and is the President of the Quran, Arabic, and Reflection Institute (QARI), an institute dedicated to structured, curriculum-based instruction of the Quran and Arabic Language.

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Beneficent

Preface

Asking Allah for help is one of the best ways we can come closer to Him and express our vulnerability and need for Him. The Prophet ﷺ said, “*Du‘ā*’ is the essence of worship,”¹ meaning that it is the ultimate expression of one’s humility and submissiveness. During times of hardship and suffering, it is even more important that we humbly beg Allah for His comfort and protection. Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, says:

فَلَوْلَا إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوا وَلَكِنْ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

Translation: If only, when Our calamity came upon them, they humbled themselves. But their hearts hardened, and Shaytan made their deeds appear good to them.²

The famous scholar of *tafsīr*, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Qurṭubī (d. 671 AH), said, “This is (divine) reproach for abandoning supplication. It also draws awareness to the fact that they did not humble themselves when punishment came.”³ May Allah protect us from hard hearts and the delusion of Shayṭān!

The importance of supplication to Allah cannot be overstated. Ibn al-Qayyim said, “*Du‘ā*’ is one of the most beneficial remedies. It is the enemy of calamity; it repels it, cures it, prevents its occurrence, and alleviates it or reduces it if it befalls [one]. It is the weapon of the believer.”⁴

There are two kinds of supplications related to hardships, illnesses, and epidemics. We will begin with the first type, which are general supplications for protection from evil. Our goal is to build a habit of saying these prayers even after Allah ends

¹ *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, no. 1479; *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, no. 2969, who graded it authentic.

² Qur’an 6:43.

³ Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi‘ li-aḥkām al-Qur’ān* (Beirut: al-Risālah Publishers, 2006), 8:378.

⁴ Ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Dā‘ wa-al-dawā’* (Mecca: Dār ‘Ālam al-Fawā’id, 1429 AH), 11.

the current pandemic by His Grace and Mercy. The Prophet ﷺ said, “The most beloved deeds to Allah are those that are the most consistent, even if they are few.”

⁵ We will then follow with supplications that are specific for relief and protection from illnesses.

In total there are sixteen (16) supplications in this small booklet. You might find many of them in other books of *du‘ā* and mobile apps. However, our goal is not simply that you learn how or when to say a *du‘ā*. We want you to *understand* the *du‘ā*. *Du‘ā* is described as “the weapon of the believer,” but a weapon’s effectiveness coincides with the skill of the person using it. *Du‘ā* will benefit the believers most when they understand what they are praying for. Otherwise, we may be guilty of making empty prayers without our hearts being present. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah does not answer the prayer coming from a preoccupied heart.”⁶ Therefore, we will add a brief explanation after each *du‘ā* to help you better understand its context and meaning.

I. Prayers in the morning and the evening

Some of the most frequent supplications that the Prophet ﷺ would make are those commonly referred to as *adkhār al-ṣabāḥ wa-al-masā*, supplications of the morning and evening. The “morning” here refers to the time between dawn (*fajr*) and sunrise, while the “evening” refers to the beginning of ‘*aṣr*’ time until sunset.⁷ Allah has specified these times for glorifying and remembering Him. Allah says,

وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا

Translation: Glorify your Lord with praise before the rising of the sun and before its setting.⁸

He also says,

⁵ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, no. 6464; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no. 783.

⁶ *Musnad Aḥmad*, no. 6655, graded authentic by Shaykh Aḥmad Shākir.

⁷ See Ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Wābil al-ṣayyib* (Mecca: ‘Ālam al-Fawā’id, 1425 AH), 239. If someone misses saying these *du‘ā* at the specified time, they should say them as soon as they remember.

⁸ Qur’an 20:130.

وَاذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ وَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ

Translation: And remember your Lord within yourself, humbly and fearfully—without raising your voice—in the morning and the evening, and do not be of the neglectful.⁹

Du‘ā’ made during this time has special merit and puts one on the path of being from those praised by Allah as “men and women who remember Allah often.”¹⁰ Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ (d. 643 AH) said, “Whoever consistently says the prophetic *adhkār*”¹¹ of the morning and evening, along with the supplications that are specific to time and situation ... is among those who remember Allah often.”¹²

The following eight supplications were made by the Prophet ﷺ regularly.¹³ We need them to bring life to our hearts. Ibn Taymīyah said, “*Dhikr* is to the heart like water is to fish. In what condition would the fish be without water?!”¹⁴ Moreover, the Prophet ﷺ himself said, “The example of the one who remembers his Lord compared to one who does not remember his Lord is like that of the living and the dead.”¹⁵

(1.1) Prayer for general protection from evil

أَمْسَيْنَا وَأَمْسَى الْمُلْكُ لِلَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ. رَبِّ أَسْأَلُكَ خَيْرَ مَا فِي هَذِهِ اللَّيْلَةِ وَخَيْرَ مَا بَعْدَهَا وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا فِي هَذِهِ اللَّيْلَةِ وَشَرِّ مَا بَعْدَهَا. رَبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْكُسَلِ وَسُوءِ الْكِبَرِ رَبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عَذَابٍ فِي النَّارِ وَعَذَابٍ فِي الْقَبْرِ.

Amsaynā wa-amsá al-mulku lillāhi wa-al-ḥamdu lillāhi lā ilāha illā Allāhu waḥdahu lā sharīka lahu, lahu al-mulku wa-lahu al-ḥamdu wa-huwa ‘alā kulli shay’in qadīr. Rabbi as’aluka khayra mā fī hādhīhi al-laylati wa-khayra mā

⁹ Qur’an 7:205.

¹⁰ Qur’an 33:35.

¹¹ Plural of *dhikr*, which here refers to the remembrance of Allah.

¹² *Fatāwā Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ* (Beirut: ‘Ālam al-Kutub, 1407 AH), 150.

¹³ This list is not meant to be exhaustive. There are over twenty supplications that the Prophet ﷺ would regularly say in the morning and evening. Some of them mention a specific reward for saying them and others do not. Memorizing all of them is highly encouraged, though not an obligation.

¹⁴ Ibn al-Qayyim mentions that he heard Ibn Taymīyah say this. Ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Wābil al-ṣayyib*, 96.

¹⁵ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, no. 6407.

ba 'dahā wa-a 'ūdhu bika min sharri mā fī ḥādhihi al-laylati wa-sharri mā ba 'dahā. Rabbi a 'ūdhu bika min al-kasali wa-sū' al-kibari rabbi a 'ūdhu bika min 'adhābin fī al-nāri wa- 'adhābin fī al-qabr.

Translation: We have reached the evening, and all sovereignty remains with Allah this evening, and all praise is for Allah. There is no true God except Allah, alone, without a partner. To Him belongs all sovereignty and praise, and He has power over all things. My Lord, I ask You for the good in this night, and the good of what follows it, and I seek refuge in You from the evil in this night and the evil of what follows it. My Lord, I seek refuge in You from laziness and from the harms of old age. My Lord, I seek refuge in You from torment in the Fire and punishment in the grave. [Muslim]

أَصْبَحْنَا وَأَصْبَحَ الْمُلْكُ لِلَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ. رَبِّ أَسْأَلُكَ خَيْرَ مَا فِي هَذَا الْيَوْمِ وَخَيْرَ مَا بَعْدَهُ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا فِي هَذَا الْيَوْمِ وَشَرِّ مَا بَعْدَهُ. رَبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْكَسَلِ وَسُوءِ الْكِبَرِ رَبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عَذَابٍ فِي النَّارِ وَعَذَابٍ فِي الْقَبْرِ.

Aṣḥaḥnā wa-aṣḥaḥa al-mulku lillāhi wa-al-ḥamdu lillāhi lā ilāha illā Allāhu waḥdahū lā sharīka lahu, lahu al-mulku wa-lahu al-ḥamdu wa-huwa 'alā kulli shay'in qadīr. Rabbi as'aluka khayra mā fī ḥādhā al-yawmi wa-khayra mā ba 'dahu wa-a 'ūdhu bika min sharri mā fī ḥādhā al-yawmi wa-sharri mā ba 'dah. Rabbi a 'ūdhu bika min al-kasali wa-sū' al-kibari rabbi a 'ūdhu bika min 'adhābin fī al-nāri wa- 'adhābin fī al-qabr.

Translation: We have reached the morning, and all sovereignty remains with Allah this morning, and all praise is for Allah. There is no true God except Allah, alone, without a partner. To Him belongs all sovereignty and praise and He has power over all things. My Lord, I ask You for the good in this day and the good of what follows it, and I seek refuge in You from the evil in this day and the evil of what follows it. My Lord, I seek refuge in You from laziness and from the harms of old age. My Lord, I seek refuge in You from torment in the Fire and punishment in the grave. [Muslim]

Context: ‘Abd Allah ibn Mas‘ūd (ra) narrated that the Prophet ﷺ “used to say” this beautiful *du‘ā* in the morning and in the evening. “Used to say” indicates that it was a part of the Prophet’s ﷺ routine.

Notable: The Prophet ﷺ begins this *du‘ā* by praising and glorifying Allah. This is one of the most important etiquettes of *du‘ā*.¹⁶ Allah established this model for us in the greatest *du‘ā*: “Sūrat al-Fātiḥah.”¹⁷ By recognizing that everything we need and want is in Allah’s hands (“to Him belongs all sovereignty”), and that He has the power to grant our petitions (“and He has power over all things”), we are expressing confidence that our prayers will be answered.

Protective Benefits: After praising Allah, the Prophet ﷺ makes the following request:

When asking for “the good in this night,” you are praying that Allah will grant you that which benefits you both materially and spiritually. This includes help in guarding your prayers, reciting the Qur’an, and calling upon Him.

“And the good following it” refers to all of the good that comes after the time in which you are making this supplication.

“And I seek refuge in You from the evil in this night” means that you seek Allah’s protection and safety from anything and everything that may be harmful during that night.

“And what follows it” refers to the evil of the next day. It may also refer to any future evil.¹⁸ This is significant because it begs us to look beyond this life. Night is

¹⁶ Fudālah ibn ‘Ubayd (ra) narrated that Allah’s Messenger ﷺ heard a person supplicating during prayer without mentioning Allah’s greatness and without invoking blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ. Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said: “He was hasty.” He then said to the man (or perhaps to another person): “If any of you prays, he should praise and glorify his Lord in the beginning, and then invoke blessings on the Prophet ﷺ. Thereafter he should ask Allah for anything he wishes.” *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, no. 1481, graded authentic by al-Albānī.

¹⁷ Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya gives a beautifully detailed explanation of how Sūrat al-Fātiḥah is an actual lesson on how to properly ask Allah for one’s needs and of how Sūrat al-Fātiḥah is the model followed by the Prophet ﷺ in his own supplications. See Ibn al-Qayyim, *Madarij as-salikeen* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1988), 1:23–24.

¹⁸ See Muḥammad Mubarakfūrī, *Tuḥfat al-aḥwadhī bi sharḥ al-Tirmidhī* (Damascus: Dār al-Manhal, 2011), 9:323.

the time that Allah has created for sleep, and “what follows it” may well be death.¹⁹ What circumstance could be more evil than being deprived of Allah’s mercy and compassion in the Hereafter?

(1.2) Prayer to avoid bringing harm to oneself or other Muslims

اللَّهُمَّ فَاطِرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ عَالِمَ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ رَبَّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَمَلِكُهُ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ نَفْسِي وَمِنْ شَرِّ الشَّيْطَانِ وَشِرْكِهِ وَأَنْ أَقْتَرِفَ عَلَى نَفْسِي سُوءًا أَوْ أَجْرَهُ إِلَى مُسْلِمٍ.

Allāhumma fāṭira al-samāwāti wa-al-arḍi ‘ālima al-ghaybi wa-al-shahādati lā ilāha illā anta rabba kulli shay’in wa-malīkahu a‘ūdhu bika min sharri nafsī wa-min sharri al-shayṭāni wa-shirkihi²⁰ wa-an aqtarifa ‘alā nafsī sū’an aw ajurrahu ilā muslim.

Translation: O Allah, Originator of the heavens and the earth, Knower of the Unseen and Visible, there is no true god but You, Lord of all things and their Sovereign. I seek refuge in You from the evil of myself and the evil of Shayṭān and his (encouragement to commit) idolatry, and from bringing evil to myself or to another Muslim. [al-Tirmidhī]

Context: This is a *du‘ā* the Prophet ﷺ taught the best of his Companions, Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (may Allah be pleased with him). al-Tirmidhī narrates that Abū Bakr said: “O Messenger of Allah, teach me what to say in the morning and in the evening.” He ﷺ said: “Say: ‘O Allah, Originator of the heavens and the earth...’”

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Notable: This supplication begins with the mention of several of Allah’s noble attributes. It highlights His Greatness, Majesty, and Perfection. As we make this *du‘ā*, we remember that Allah is the “Knower of the Unseen and Visible.” He sees that which is hidden to others and He knows our secrets. He is the “Lord and

¹⁹ See Qur’an 39:42.

²⁰ *Wa-shirkihi* has also been narrated as *wa-sharakihi*. al-Nawawī mentioned that the most obvious and popular of the two narrations is *shirkihi*, which refers to Shaytan’s attempt to get man to associate partners with Allah. The second pronunciation, *sharakihi*, means the traps of Shayṭān. al-Nawawī, *al-Adhkār* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1994), 78.

²¹ *Jami’ al-Tirmidhī*, no. 3529. There is a similar narration with slightly different wording (no. 3392), classified as authentic by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī*, no. 2701.

Master of all things” so nothing is outside of His control. He has the power to answer our prayers and give us whatever good we ask for. Beginning the prayer in this fashion reminds us that we are in dire need of Allah’s aid at all times. It serves as a way to introduce the request that we are making of Allah.

Protective Benefits: When we truly understand this *du‘ā*, we will realize that we are seeking Allah’s protection from both the sources of evil and the consequences of evil. Commenting on this supplication, Ibn al-Qayyim said, “The Prophet ﷺ mentioned the two sources of evil: the self (*nafs*) and the Shaytan. He also mentioned the two victims of evil; i.e., it will return to oneself or his Muslim brother. Hence this *hadīth* has combined the sources of evil, its causes, and where it leads in the briefest yet clearest and most comprehensive expression.”²²

This *du‘ā* is especially relevant during times of widespread illness. A Muslim needs Allah’s protection to avoid doing things that may unintentionally bring harm to himself, to his family, or to other people.

(1.3) Prayer to avoid sudden afflictions

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ (ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ)

Bismillāhi al-ladhī lā yaḍurru ma‘a ismihi shay’un fī al-arḍi wa-lā fī al-samā’i wa-huwa al-samī‘u al-‘alīm.

Translation: In the Name of Allah, with Whose Name nothing is harmed on earth nor in heaven, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. (Repeat three times) [Abū Dāwūd and al-Tirmidhī]

Context: The great *khalīfah*, ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān (may Allah be pleased with him), mentioned that he heard Allah’s Messenger ﷺ say, “Whoever repeats, ‘*In the Name of Allah, with Whose Name nothing is harmed on earth nor in heaven, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing*’ three times [in the evening] will not be stricken with a sudden affliction until he reaches the morning. And whoever

²² Ibn al-Qayyim, *Badā’i‘ al-fawā’id* (Mecca: Dar ‘Alam al-Fawa’id, 1425 AH), 2:718.

repeats this three times in the morning will not be stricken with a sudden affliction until he reaches the evening.”²³

Notable: ‘Uthmān’s son, Abān, narrated this hadith from his father. Later he suffered partial paralysis. One of the narrators who had heard this *hadīth* from Abān began to look at him strangely. He wondered how Abān was harmed if he had been saying these words. So Abān said to him, “Why are you looking at me? I swear by Allah, I did not tell a lie about ‘Uthmān, nor did ‘Uthmān tell a lie about the Prophet ﷺ, but that day when I was afflicted by it, I became angry and forgot to recite this supplication.”²⁴

Protective Benefits: When we say “*bismillāh*” at the beginning of an action, we are seeking help through the name of Allah and seeking blessing from Him in that action. In Arabic there is always a verb implied with “*bismillāh*.” For example, when we say *bismillāh* before eating, it means “In the name of Allah I begin eating.” Similarly, when we say *bismillāh* before reading, it means “In the name of Allah I begin reading.” Each time a person says *bismillāh* there is a verb implied based on the context. In this *du‘ā*, saying *bismillāh* means “In the name of Allah I seek refuge (from any harm coming to me).”²⁵

“With Whose Name nothing is harmed on earth nor in heaven” means that whoever seeks refuge in the name of Allah will not suffer any calamity coming from the earth, nor from the heavens, except as Allah wills. The great scholar of Yemen, Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Shawkānī (d. 1250 AH) said, “This hadīth is evidence that these words repel every harm, no matter what it is, from the one who says them. He will not be afflicted by anything in the night or day if he says them during the night and day.”²⁶

(1.4) Prayer for well-being and divine protection

²³ *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, no. 5088; *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, no. 3388; *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, no. 3869, graded authentic by Ibn al-Qayyim in *Zād al-ma‘ād* (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risālah, 1994), 2:338.

²⁴ *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, no. 5088; *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, no. 3388; *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, no. 3869, graded authentic by Ibn al-Qayyim in *Zād al-ma‘ād*, 2:338.

²⁵ ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Badr, *Fiqh al-ad‘iyah wa-al-adhkār* (Medina, self-pub., 1426 AH), 2:13.

²⁶ Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Shawkānī, *Tuḥfat al-dhākirīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Qalam, 1984), 91.

((اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَافِيَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَفْوَ وَالْعَافِيَةَ فِي دِينِي وَدُنْيَايَ وَأَهْلِي وَمَالِي اللَّهُمَّ اسْتُرْ عَوْرَاتِي وَآمِنْ رَوْعَاتِي اللَّهُمَّ احْفَظْنِي مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِي وَعَنْ يَمِينِي وَعَنْ شِمَالِي وَمِنْ فَوْقِي وَأَعُوذُ بِعَظَمَتِكَ أَنْ أُغْتَالَ مِنْ تَحْتِي)).

Allāhumma innī as'aluka al-'āfiyah fī al-dunyā wa-al-ākhirah allāhumma innī as'aluka al-'afwah wa-al-'āfiyah fī dīnī wa-dunyāya wa-ahlī wa-mālī allāhumma ustur 'awrātī wa-āmin raw'ātī allāhumma ihfaznī min bayni yadayya wa-min khalfī wa-'an yamīnī wa-'an shimālī wa-min fawqī wa-a'ūdhu bi-'azamatika an ughtāla min tahtī.

Translation: O Allah, I ask You for well-being in this world and the Hereafter. O Allah, I ask You for pardon and well-being in my religion, my worldly affairs, my family and my property. O Allah, conceal my faults and keep me safe from what I fear. O Allah, guard me from in front of me and behind me, on my right and on my left, and from above me. And I seek refuge in Your Magnificence from being swallowed up from beneath me. [Abū Dāwud and Ibn Mājah]

Context: The Prophet ﷺ consistently made this supplication every morning and every evening. Ibn 'Umar (ra) said, “Allah’s Messenger never failed to say these prayers when he reached the evening and [then again] when he reached the morning.”²⁷

Notable: In this *du'ā'*, the Prophet ﷺ asked for well-being ('*āfiyah*'), which means to be free of illnesses and afflictions. '*Āfiyah*' is much more than physical health. It includes spiritual, emotional, and social dimensions of well-being. '*Āfiyah*' is so important that the Prophet ﷺ asked for it twice in this *du'ā'*.

The Prophet’s uncle, al-'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, said, “O Messenger of Allah, teach me something that I should ask Allah for. He ﷺ said: ‘Ask Allah for '*āfiyah*.’ So I remained for a few days, then I came back and said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, teach me something that I should ask Allah for.’ So he ﷺ said to me: ‘O Abbas, O uncle of the Messenger of Allah! Ask Allah for '*āfiyah*' in this world and in the Hereafter.’”²⁸

²⁷ *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, no. 5074; *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, no. 3871; and graded authentic by al-Nawawī and al-Albānī.

²⁸ *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, no. 3514.

It is as if al-‘Abbās (ra) wanted the Prophet ﷺ to teach him another *du‘ā*. Instead the Prophet ﷺ emphasized the importance of asking for *‘āfiyah*. This is because *‘āfiyah* includes Allah’s safeguarding of His servant from every misfortune and tribulation, by turning evil away from him, protecting him from afflictions and sickness, and guarding him from evil and committing sin.

In this particular *du‘ā*, the Prophet ﷺ asks for *‘āfiyah* in this world and the hereafter. He also asks for *‘āfiyah* in his religion, worldly affairs, family, and property. *‘Āfiyah* in the religion means that one is protected from doubts, misunderstandings, and evil thoughts. It includes anything that would hurt our faith or cause our worship to be deficient. Notice that this is the first thing that the Prophet ﷺ mentions in this *du‘ā*. When a person’s religious affairs are in order, his or her bond with Allah is strong. This will cause every other aspect of life to improve.

‘Āfiyah in worldly affairs includes protection from any physical or mental harm or other forms of hardship. *‘Āfiyah* in family means that they are protected from trials, misfortune, and severe suffering. *‘Āfiyah* in wealth is that it is preserved from anything that would destroy it, including floods, fires, and theft. *‘Āfiyah* in the hereafter is that one is protected from any distress or punishment in the next life.²⁹

Protective Benefits: The Prophet ﷺ requested that Allah protect him and grant him security from every direction. The greatest evil that we need protection from is the evil of Shayṭān. We know that he is lurking, waiting for every chance to turn us away from the path that pleases Allah. This is what Allah has told us that Shayṭān said: Since You misguided me, I will lie in ambush for mankind on Your straight path. I will come upon them from the front, from the rear, from the right, and from the left, and You will not find most of them to be grateful.³⁰

This *du‘ā* is one of the best ways that a believer can beseech Allah’s protection from Shayṭān and from any other evil.

²⁹ Al-Badr, *Fiqh al-ad‘iyah wa-al-adhkār*, 2:31.

³⁰ Qur’an 7:16–17.

(1.5) Prayer for the well-being of our faculties

((اللَّهُمَّ عَافِنِي فِي بَدَنِي اللَّهُمَّ عَافِنِي فِي سَمْعِي اللَّهُمَّ عَافِنِي فِي بَصَرِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ)) ثَلَاثًا حِينَ تَصْبِحُ
وَتَلَاثًا حِينَ تُمْسِي

Allāhumma ‘āfinī fī badanī allāhumma ‘āfinī fī sam‘ī allāhumma ‘āfinī fī baṣarī lā ilāha illā ant.

Translation: “O Allah! Grant me well-being in my body. O Allah! Grant me well-being in my hearing. O Allah! Grant me well-being in my sight. There is no true god but You.” (Repeat three times in the morning and three times in the evening.) [Abū Dāwūd]

Context: ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakrah reported that he used to hear his father repeat this *du‘ā* three times in the morning and three times in the evening, so he asked his father about that. His father replied, “I heard Allah’s Messenger ﷺ praying with these words and I like to follow his practice.”³¹

Notable: The companions of the Prophet ﷺ were eager to put what they learned into practice. They followed his example and taught those who came after them. When we learn new supplications, we should try to learn them and teach them to our families and loved ones.

Protective Benefits: In this prayer, we are asking Allah to protect our bodies, our hearing, and our sight. This means that we are asking to be granted good health and that we use that blessing to fulfill our purpose in life. Allah says, “I did not create jinn and humans except to worship Me.”³² When we ask Allah for *‘āfiyah* in our bodies, we are asking that He grant us the strength to serve Him.

Many scholars have noted that the Prophet ﷺ specified hearing and sight. They point out that these senses allow us to know Allah’s blessings. We see His signs in the creation and hear His speech in the words of the Qur’an.³³ Hearing and sight

³¹ Collected by *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, no. 5090 and graded *ḥasan* (fair) by Ibn Ḥajar in *Natā’ij al-afkār* (Damascus: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 2008), 2:390 and al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ Abū Dāwūd*.

³² Qur’an 51:56.

³³ See, for example, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Mubārakfūrī, *Mir’āt al-maḥāṭīḥ* (India: Idārat al-Buḥūth al-‘Ilmīyah, al-Jāmi‘ah al-Salafīyah, 1984), 8:156.

are also the main pathways to the heart. If the eyes and ears have ‘*āfiyah*, the heart is safe from doubt and desire. When we ask Allah for ‘*āfiyah* in hearing and sight we are asking for more than protection from loss. We are begging for protection from seeing and hearing things that feed our egos and cause us to be heedless of Allah’s commands.

(1.6) Supplication that protects from every harm

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ وَالْمُعَوِّذَتَيْنِ حِينَ تُمْسِي وَحِينَ تُصْبِحُ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ تَكْفِيكَ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

Translation: (Reciting) Surat al-Ikhlāṣ and the *Mu‘awwidhatayn* (Surat al-Falaq and Surat al-Nās) three times in the morning and three times in the evening will suffice you in all respects. [Abū Dāwūd and al-Tirmidhī]

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ (١) اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ (٢) لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ (٣) وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ (٤)
 قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ (١) مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ (٢) وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ (٣) وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ (٤)
 وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ (٥)
 قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ (١) مَلِكِ النَّاسِ (٢) إِلَهِ النَّاسِ (٣) مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ (٤) الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي
 صُدُورِ النَّاسِ (٥) مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ (٦)

Qul huwa Allāhu aḥadun. Allāhu al-ṣamad. Lam yalid wa-lam yūlad. Wa-lam yakun lahu kufiwan aḥadun.

Qul a‘ūdhu bi-rabbi al-falaqi. Min sharri mā khalaqa. Wa-min sharri ghāsiqin idhā waqaba. Wa-min sharri al-naḥḥāthāti fī al-‘uqadi. Wa-min sharri ḥāsidi al-idhā ḥasada.

Qul a‘ūdhu bi-rabbi al-nāsi. Maliki al-nāsi. Ilāhi al-nāsi. Min sharri al-waswāsi al-khannāsi. al-Ladhī yuwaswisu fī ṣudūri al-nāsi. Min al-jinnati wa-al-nāsi.

Context: ‘Abd Allāh ibn Khubayb (may Allah be pleased with him) said, “We went out one very dark, rainy night looking for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to lead us in prayer. When we found him, he asked: ‘Have you prayed?’ but I did not say anything. So he said: ‘Say’ but I did not respond. He again said: ‘Say’ but I did not respond. He then said: ‘Say.’ So I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, what should I

say?’ He said: ‘Recite Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ and the *Mu‘awwidhatayn* (Sūrat al-Falaq and Sūrat al-Nās) three times in the morning and three times in the evening. This will suffice you in all respects.’³⁴ Al-Shawkānī (d. 1250 AH) said, “This hadīth is evidence that reciting these sūrahs in the evening and in the morning protect the reciter from anything and everything that is feared.”³⁵

Notable: The Prophet ﷺ said about the *Mu‘awwidhatayn* that “people have never sought refuge by means of anything like them.”³⁶ They are so important that the Prophet ﷺ left off many other ways of seeking refuge in Allah after they were revealed.³⁷ He also recited them along with Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ before going to sleep,³⁸ and He taught us to recite those three suraḥs after each of the five daily prayers.³⁹

Ibn al-Qayyim said, “A person’s need of seeking refuge by (reciting) these two suraḥs is greater than his need for air, food, drink, and clothing.”⁴⁰

Reading these suraḥs in order again follows the model set in Sūrat al-Fātiḥah. Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ is dedicated entirely to praising Allah and declaring His Oneness. In Sūrat al-Falaq and Sūrat al-Nās we are asking for Allah’s protection.

Protective Benefits: These suraḥs, when recited with conviction, protect from both internal and external evils. In Sūrat al-Falaq, we seek refuge in Allah, the “Lord of the daybreak,” from the “evil of what He created.” This refers to external dangers

³⁴ *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, no. 5082; *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, no. 3575, who graded it authentic, as did al-Nawawī in *al-Adhkār*, 107.

³⁵ *Tuḥfat al-dhākirīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Qalam, 1984), 91.

³⁶ *Sunan al-Nasā’ī*, no. 5431.

³⁷ Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to seek refuge from the evil eye of the jinn and of mankind. When the *Mu‘awwidhatayn* (Sūrat al-Falaq and Sūrat al-Nās) were revealed, he took hold of them and ceased other forms of seeking refuge.” *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, no. 2058; *Sunan al-Nasā’ī*, no. 5494; *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, no. 3511, and graded authentic by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī*.

³⁸ ‘Ā’ishah reported that, upon going to bed each night, the Prophet ﷺ would join his hands, then blow in them as he recited in them Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ and Sūrat al-Falaq and Sūrat al-Nās. He would then wipe as much of his body as he could, beginning with his head and face, and then the front of his body. He would do this three times. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*.

³⁹ ‘Uqbah ibn ‘Āmir said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded me to recite the *Mu‘awwidhat* [i.e., the last three chapters of the Qur’an] following every prayer.” *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, no. 1523 and *Sunan al-Nasā’ī*, no. 1336, graded authentic by al-Dhahabī in *Mīzān al-ītidāl* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma‘rifah, 1963), 4:433 and others.

⁴⁰ Ibn al-Qayyim, *Tafsīr al-mu‘awwidhatayn* (Taif: Maktabah al-Ṣiddīq, 1988), 15.

that threaten to harm a person. Allah specifies three of these evils in the surah. They are: the darkness as it falls, sorcery, and envy.

In Sūrat al-Nās, however, we seek refuge in Allah from internal threats. Allah mentions the whispers of Shayṭān that cause us to leave the path that is pleasing to Allah. Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī (d. 745) notes that the internal threat is actually more severe than external threats. He says in his commentary on these two surahs, “The disease of evil insinuations (*waswasah*) damages one’s religion and is more dangerous than the harm to one’s worldly affairs, even if that harm is severe. For that reason refuge is sought through three divine attributes—“*Rabb*, *Mālik*, and *Ilāh*”—even though there is only one request [i.e., protection from *waswasah*]. In Sūrat al-Falaq refuge is sought from three things: the darkness as it falls, sorcery, and envy—through only one divine attribute and that is “*al-Rabb*.”⁴¹

Highlighting the importance of seeking refuge from Shayṭān’s whispers, Burhān al-Dīn al-Biqā‘ī (d. 885 AH) said, “Sūrat al-Nās comprises seeking refuge from a specific evil, namely diabolical whispers. These whispers are the foundation of all internal deficiencies of the human soul and are the cause of all sins and disobedience.”⁴² Only Allah can grant protection from the evil of Shayṭān who makes immorality attractive to men and causes us to wrong ourselves. He “flows inside man like blood”⁴³ and seeks to destroy us from within. Once we understand the protective value of these surahs, we should follow the guidance of our Prophet ﷺ by reciting them several times daily and reflecting on their meanings.

(1.7) A supplication that removes anxiety

حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ (سَبْعَ مَرَّاتٍ)

Hasbiya Allāhu lā ilāha illā huwa ‘alayhi tawakkaltu wa-huwa rabbu al-‘arshi al-‘azīm.

⁴¹ Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī, *al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1420 AH) 10:579.

⁴² Burhān al-Dīn al-Biqā‘ī, *Nadhm al-durar* (Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-Islāmī, n.d.), 22:424.

⁴³ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, no. 7171; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no. 2174.

Translation: Allah is enough for me. There is no true god but Him, in Him I put my trust, and He is the Lord of the Great Throne. (Repeat seven times.) [Abū Dāwūd]

Context: This prayer was actually taught by one of the Prophet’s ﷺ Companions. Abū al-Dardā’ (ra) said, “Anyone who repeats, ‘Allah is sufficient for me...’ seven times in the morning and seven times in the evening, Allah will suffice him from that which worries him.”⁴⁴

Notable: This supplication also appears in the Qur’an. Allah, the Almighty, says, If they turn away, say, “Allah is enough for me. There is no true god but Him, in Him I put my trust, and He is the Lord of the Great Throne.”⁴⁵

Protective Benefits: Anxiety is a state of uneasiness and apprehension. Usually it comes from worrying about the future. By saying “Allah is enough for me” we affirm that Allah is sufficient for all of our needs. This should help us temper our worries and keep our composure.

Everything that happens is part of Allah’s decree. Nonetheless, we are instructed by our Prophet ﷺ to “strive to do what benefits you, and seek Allah’s aid.”⁴⁶ We should work diligently today to reap the fruits that we want tomorrow. Ultimately, however, “what reached us was never going to miss us, and what missed us was never going to reach us.”⁴⁷ No matter how much we plan for our future, there are so many things that are beyond our control. Something as simple as avoiding a traffic jam, even with modern-day technology, is often not possible. So we say, “in Allah I put my trust.” We resign our affairs to Allah and rely upon Him.

This *du‘ā* is a reminder that everything in creation is under Allah’s control. Our belief in Him and His divine decree should soothe our hearts. Once we have put forth the effort for our desired results, we no longer have to worry. The outcome is

⁴⁴ Abū Dāwūd (no. 5081) collects this narration with the addition, “whether or not he believes what he is saying.” This addition has been declared a fabrication. However, the supplication of Abū al-Dardā’ has been classified as authentic and is given the ruling of a hadith of the Prophet ﷺ, for such a statement could not be made based upon opinion and independent judgment. See: *Silsilat al-aḥādīth al-da‘īfah*, no. 5286.

⁴⁵ Qur’an 9:129.

⁴⁶ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no. 2664.

⁴⁷ *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, no. 4700.

in the Hands of the Lord of “the Great Throne” and the Throne is the greatest of all creations.

It is interesting to note that mental health professionals often suggest repeating certain phrases to relieve anxiety.⁴⁸ Perhaps that is one reason why the Prophet ﷺ instructed that this *du‘ā* be repeated seven times.

(1.8) A prayer for protection in the evening

أَعُوذُ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ التَّامَّاتِ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ

A ‘ūdhu bi-kalimāti Allāhi al-tāmmāti min sharri mā khalaq.

Translation: I seek refuge in the Perfect Words of Allah from the evil of what He has created. [Muslim]

Context: Abū Hurayrah reported that a person came to Allah's Messenger ﷺ and said, “Allah's Messenger, I was stung by a scorpion last night.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Had you recited these words in the evening: ‘I seek refuge in the Perfect Words of Allah from the evil of what He has created,’ it would not have harmed you.”⁴⁹

Notable: This supplication can also be said when stopping at a place to rest while traveling. Khawlah bint Ḥakīm al-Sulamīyah said, “I heard Allah's Messenger ﷺ say, ‘Whoever stops at a place and then says: ‘I seek refuge in the Perfect Words of Allah from the evil of what He has created,’ nothing will harm him until he leaves that place.’”⁵⁰ Some scholars say that this hadith is not specific to travel and can be said whenever we stop at any place, such as a family outing to the park.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Some experts in the field mention that repeating a positive phrase, especially one that has spiritual connections, creates new pathways between neurons in the brain, which help people feel calmer and healthier. Dr. Jill Bormann, a Psychiatric Mental Health Clinical Nurse Specialist, has written a lot on this topic. See: “A ‘Burnout Prevention’ Tool for Improving Healthcare Providers’ Health and Wellbeing: Mantram Repetition,” https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/coe/cesamh/docs/Mantram_Repetition_for_Employees.pdf.

⁴⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no. 2709.

⁵⁰ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no. 2708.

⁵¹ ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Qarī, *Mirqāt al-maḥfātīḥ* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2002), 4:1682; Abū al-Ḥasan al-Mubārakfūrī, *Mir ‘āt al-maḥfātīḥ*, 8:171.

Protective Benefits: “Seeking refuge” means to run away *from* something we fear *to* someone who can protect and defend us. By seeking refuge in Allah, we acknowledge that He is the best protector. We turn to Him for shelter and safety from all harm. The “Perfect Words of Allah” in this *ḥadīth* may refer to the Glorious Qur’an, or to Allah’s divine decree that governs the universe.⁵²

The *ḥadīth* indicates that whoever recites this supplication at the onset of the evening will be protected and safeguarded, by the permission of Allah, from “the evil of what He has created.” This refers to evil from a created being, be it animal, man or *jinn*, or even the wind and lightning.⁵³

II. Prayers made on specific occasions

(2.1) Prayer for guidance and protection before leaving the home

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

Bismillāhi tawakkaltu ‘alā Allāhi lā ḥawla wa-la quwwata illā billāh.

Translation: In the Name of Allah, I place my trust in Allah. There is no might nor power except with Allah. [Abū Dāwūd, al-Tirmidhī, and al-Nasa’ī]

Context: The Prophet ﷺ mentioned that whoever says these words upon leaving the home will be protected from evil and harm, and will be guided by Allah.

Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him) said that the Prophet ﷺ said, “If a man leaves his home and says: ‘In the Name of Allah, I place my trust in Allah. There is no might nor power except with Allah.’ It will be said: You have been guided, defended and protected. The devils will flee from him saying to each other, ‘How can you reach a man who has been guided, defended and protected?’”

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⁵² al-Badr, *Fiqh al-ad‘iyah wa-al-adkār*, 2:277.

⁵³ Sulaymān ibn ‘Abd Allah ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Taysīr al-‘Aziz al-Ḥamīd* (Riyadh: Dār al-Sumay‘ī, 2007), 1:404.

⁵⁴ *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, no. 5095; *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, no. 2436, who graded it authentic.

Notable: “There is no might nor power except with Allah” is one of the treasures of Paradise.⁵⁵ We are encouraged to say it on various occasions throughout the day, including after the five daily prayers and after the statements “come to prayer, come to success” when hearing the *adhān*.

A word-for-word translation of *lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh* is “There is no might nor power except with Allah.” However, this may not adequately convey the meaning of this magnificent phrase. The word *ḥawla*, translated here as “might,” comes from the trilateral root *hā’-waw-lām* which means movement.⁵⁶ It includes every transition from one condition to another. The word *quwwah* refers to the ability to make the transition.⁵⁷ When put together, this statement means that there is no strength to repel evil or resist sin and no power to acquire good and do acts of obedience except with Allah’s aid.⁵⁸

The message here is that we are frail beings in constant need of Allah. Our egos may try to convince us that we are independent and in control. But Allah reminds us of our fragility when He says, “O people, it is you who stand in need of Allah; Allah is inherently rich (free of all needs) and worthy of all praise.”⁵⁹ Allah will strengthen us when we acknowledge that we are weak. Allah will grant us power when we absolve ourselves of independent ability. When we remove our egos from the equation, Allah will fill that void with His guidance and protection.

Protective Benefits: Home is a safe haven, comfort zone, and place of stability. When leaving this familiar space, we are reminded to seek Allah’s protection and help. As mentioned previously, there is always a verb associated with “*bismillāh*.” So here we mean “*bismillāh* I leave my home,” for it is with Allah’s name that nothing is harmed. By saying *bismillāh* upon exiting, we are seeking Allah’s protection from all danger. By putting our “trust in Him” we are showing that we

⁵⁵ Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī (ra) narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “O ‘Abd Allāh ibn Qays, would you like to be guided to one of the treasures of Paradise: *lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*.” *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, no. 6384; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no. 2704.

⁵⁶ Ibn Fāris (d. 395 AH), *Maqāyīs al-lughah* (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1999), 2:121.

⁵⁷ Ibn Taymīyah, *Majmū‘ al-Fatawā* (Medina: King Fahd Complex, 1995), 5:574.

⁵⁸ al-Nawawī’s explanation of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth, 1392 AH), 4:87.

⁵⁹ Qur’an 35:15.

recognize His ability to care for and defend us. Surely Allah does not disappoint those who rely upon Him.

This full reliance culminates in “*lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*.” This phrase embodies the essence of surrendering to Allah: we recognize that there is nothing we can do or change without His help. Ibn al-Qayyim said, “*lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*” has the effect of warding off anxiety and depression because it comprises complete surrender, total admission of no strength or power except with Allah, resignation of one’s affairs totally to Him, and not challenging Him in any way ... It has an amazing effect in repelling the devil.”⁶⁰

When we leave the home and utter these three phrases, we are leaving it to Allah, the Most Merciful, to guide, protect, and defend us. This is what it means to truly be a *Muslim* (literally, one who submits). Surrendering means that we also accept whatever happens during the day, good or bad. We meet the good with appreciation and the bad with patience. The Prophet ﷺ said, “How wonderful is the case of a believer! There is good for him in every situation and this applies only to a believer. If something good happens to him, he thanks [Allah] and this is good for him. When he faces adversity, he endures it patiently and this too is good for him.”⁶¹

(2.2) Reciting these two *āyahs* at night is a protection from all harm

مَنْ قَرَأَ بِالْآيَتَيْنِ مِنْ آخِرِ سُورَةِ الْبَقَرَةِ فِي لَيْلَةٍ كَفَتَاهُ

Translation: Whoever recites the last two verses of Sūrat al-Baqarah at night will be sufficed by them. [Bukhārī and Muslim]

أَمَّنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلُّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْ رُّسُلِهِ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ (٢٨٥)

⁶⁰ Ibn al-Qayyim, *Zād al-ma‘ād*, 4:193.

⁶¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no. 2999.

لَا يَكْلِفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إَصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ (٢٨٦)

Āmana al-rasūlu bi-mā unzila ilayhi min rabbihi wa-al-mu'minūna. Kullun āmana billāhi wa-malā'ikatihi wa-kutubihī wa-rasulihī lā nufarriqu bayna aḥadin min rusulihī wa-qālū sami'nā wa-aṭa'nā ghufrānaka rabbanā wa-ilayka al-maṣīru.

Lā yukallifu Allāhu nafsān illā wus'ahā lahā mā kasabat wa-'alayhā ma iktasabat. Rabbanā lā tū'akhidhnā in nasīnā aw akḥṭa'nā. Rabbanā wa-lā taḥmil 'alaynā iṣrān kamā ḥamaltahu 'alā al-ladhīna min qablinā. Rabbanā wa-lā tuḥammilnā mā lā ṭāqata lanā bihi wa'fu 'annā waghfir lanā warḥamnā anta mawlānā faṣṣurnā 'alā al-qawmi al-kāfirīna.

Context: ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Yazīd al-Nakha‘ī (d. 83 AH) narrated that he saw the noble Companion, Abū Mas‘ūd al-Badrī (ra), near the Ka‘bah and said to him, “A ḥadīth has been conveyed to me on your authority about the two *āyahs* in Sūrat al-Baqarah.” He responded, “Yes. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Whoever recites the last two verses of Sūrat al-Baqarah at night will be sufficed by them.’”⁶²

Notable: These two verses are a concise summary of the major themes in Sūrat al-Baqarah. They begin, as the *sūrah* does, by mentioning the articles of faith. Allah then describes the attitude of the believers towards His injunctions. Believers accept what Allah says and adhere to His commands. They say, “We hear and we obey,” indicating their total submission. Nonetheless, it is human nature to fall short in fulfilling one’s obligations. Therefore, the believers ask Allah for forgiveness “Your forgiveness (O Allah),” fully aware that they will have to stand in front of Allah “and to You is the final return.”

In principle, it is not difficult to adhere to Allah’s commands and prohibitions. They are nourishment for the soul, a remedy for the body, and protection from harm. Despite that, our accountability is limited by the extent of our ability. Allah excuses us if we are unable to perform a required act. Furthermore, we are only

⁶² The Prophet’s statement is collected by both al-Bukhārī (no. 5009) and Muslim (no. 807), while the story of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Yazīd meeting Abū Mas‘ūd is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* alone.

accountable for what we ourselves do. No soul shall bear the burden of another.⁶³ After informing us of these laws of retribution, Allah mentions that the believers pray, “Our Lord! Do not punish us if we forget or make a mistake. Our Lord! Do not place a burden on us like the one you placed on those before us. Our Lord! Do not task us with more than we have strength to bear. Pardon us, forgive us, and have mercy on us. You are our Guardian. So grant us victory over the disbelieving people.”

Ibn Taymīyah asserts that the depth of meaning found in these two verses is “beyond the ability of human intellect to fully grasp.”⁶⁴ This is why it is so important to read them every night and reflect deeply on them.

Protective Benefits: The Prophet ﷺ said, “Shayṭān runs away from the home in which Sūrat al-Baqarah is recited.”⁶⁵ This refers to the entire *sūrah*. However, the last two verses are especially beneficial for protection from devils. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah sent down two *āyahs* to conclude Sūrat al-Baqarah. Devils will not come near a house in which they are recited for three nights.”⁶⁶

Furthermore, the Prophet ﷺ informed us that whoever recites these verses at night would be “sufficed” by them. Ibn al-Qayyim said, “The correct meaning is that they protect him from any evil that would harm him.”⁶⁷ Due to the virtue and importance of reciting these verses, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (ra) said, “I do not think that anyone who understands Islam would ever go to sleep without reciting the last verses of Sūrat al-Baqarah, for they are a treasure given to your Prophet from under the Throne.”⁶⁸

Every Muslim should strive to read these priceless verses every night. It takes less than two minutes to gain this divine protection. Who does not need Allah’s

⁶³ See: Translation of *Tafsīr al-Sa‘dī* (Riyadh: IIPH, 2018), 1:367–71; Ibn Taymīyah, *Majmū‘ al-fatawā*, 14:129–41.

⁶⁴ Ibn Taymīyah, 14:129–41.

⁶⁵ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no. 780.

⁶⁶ *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, no. 2882, graded authentic by al-Albānī.

⁶⁷ Ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Wābil al-ṣayyib* (Cairo: Dar al-Hadith, 1999), 97. For other opinions about what “suffice” means in this context, refer to Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fatḥ al-Bārī* (n.p.: al-Maktabah as-Salafīyyah, n.d.), 9:56.

⁶⁸ See *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr* (Riyadh: Dar Taybah, 1999), 1:735. A similar wording was mentioned by al-Nawawī who graded it authentic in *al-Adhkār*, 94.

protection? Who does not waste that much time every day? May Allah help us to use our time in a way that benefits us in this life and the next.

(2.3) Du‘ā’ for well-being and protection in *witr* prayer

اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنِي فِيمَنْ هَدَيْتَ وَ عَافِنِي فِيمَنْ عَافَيْتَ وَ تَوَلَّنِي فِيمَنْ تَوَلَّيْتَ وَ بَارِكْ لِي فِيمَا أُعْطِيتَ وَ قِنِي شَرَّ مَا قَضَيْتَ إِنَّكَ تَقْضِي وَ لَا يُقْضَى عَلَيْكَ إِنَّهُ لَا يَدُلُّ مَنْ وَالَيْتَ تَبَارَكْتَ وَ تَعَالَيْتَ

Allāhumma ihdinī fī-man hadayta wa- ‘āfinī fī-man ‘āfayta wa-tawallanī fī-man tawwalayta wa-bārik lī fī-mā a ‘ṭayta wa-qinī sharra mā qaḍayta innaka taqḍī wa-lā yuqḍā ‘alayka innahu lā yadhillu man wālayta tabārakta wa-ta ‘ālayt

Translation: O Allah, guide me among those whom You have guided, grant me well-being among those whom You have granted well-being, turn to me in friendship among those to whom You have turned in friendship, bless me in what You have bestowed, and save me from the evil of what You have decreed. Truly, You decree and none can decree against You; one whom You have befriended is not humiliated. Blessed are You (O Allah) and Exalted. [Abū Dāwūd, al-Tirmidhī, and al-Nasa’ī].

Context: The Prophet ﷺ taught his grandson, al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, to say this supplication during *qunūt* in the *witr* prayer.⁶⁹

Notable: This supplication begins with a request for guidance, which is one of the most comprehensive things a person can ask for. Whoever is guided by Allah will achieve all that is good in this life and the next. Due to the necessity of divine guidance in every aspect of our lives, Allah requires us to say “Guide us to the straight path”⁷⁰ in every *rak‘ah* of prayer. That’s a minimum of seventeen times a day! This is especially important during trying times. We need the light of Allah’s guidance to get through adversity and help us navigate the path forward. Allah reminds of this in the Qur’an:

⁶⁹ *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, no. 1425; *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, no. 464; *Sunan an-Nasa’i*, no. 1745; *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, no. 1178. Some scholars maintain that this *du‘ā’* can be made at any time, and that the correct wording of the hadith does not include a reference to *qunūt* or the *witr* prayer. See: *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Khuzaymah* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, n.d.), 2:252.

⁷⁰ Qur’an 1:6.

No affliction happens except by the will of Allah. And whoever has faith in Allah, He will guide his heart.⁷¹

This means that whoever suffers an affliction must know that it occurred by Allah's decree. Therefore, he patiently endures the hardship and anticipates Allah's reward. If he does so, Allah will guide his heart, grant him certainty in faith, and replace whatever he lost with something equal or better.⁷²

Protective Benefits: In addition to the supplication for guidance, this *du'ā'* includes four other requests for different kinds of protection..

The first of the four requests is for well-being (*ʿāfiyah*), which includes protection from physical, mental, and spiritual diseases. Physical and mental illnesses are well known, so most people will be mindful of them as they pray for well-being. When making this *du'ā'*, however, one should not neglect to think about being cured of spiritual diseases. These are two main types: vain desires (*shahawāt*) and doubts (*shubuhāt*).

The second request is for Allah to be your *walī*, a close, watchful companion and ally. Allah says, “Allah is the *Walī* of those who believe. He brings them out from darkness into light.”⁷³ This special type of companionship and guardianship includes Allah's guidance, aid, and protection. Allah also says, “The friends of Allah will certainly have nothing to fear, nor shall they grieve. (They are) those who are faithful and God-fearing.”⁷⁴ This clarifies that the friends of Allah are people of faith and *taqwá*. When we say “Turn to me in friendship among those to whom You have turned in friendship,” we are asking Allah to grant us faith (*īmān*) and God-consciousness (*taqwá*).

The third request is for Allah to bless everything that He has bestowed upon us. Allah has given us everything we have, tangible or intangible. He has granted us knowledge, hearing, sight, wealth, children, and faith. When Allah blesses (puts *barakah* in) something, He makes it stable. He nourishes what he has given us so

⁷¹ Qur'an 64:11.

⁷² Translation of *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr* (Lebanon: Dar us Salam, 2003), 10:25.

⁷³ Qur'an 2:257.

⁷⁴ Qur'an 10:62–63.

that it will grow and develop. Allah's *barakah* protects what He has blessed us with from destruction. If these things are not "blessed" we will truly be in loss!

The final request is for protection from the evil of what Allah has decreed. It is important to distinguish between things that are evil and things we dislike. Allah says,

Perhaps you dislike something which is good for you and like something which is bad for you. Allah knows and you do not know.⁷⁵

Most people can think of something that they initially thought was bad, only to later see Allah's wisdom in it. These are the things that we often dislike, although they are good for us. Evil is a different matter. Being dissatisfied with Allah's decree, not trusting Him, and losing faith in Him are all examples of "evil." We are begging Allah for protection from evils such as these. Additionally, Allah has given people the ability to obey or disobey Him.⁷⁶ Disobedience, though occurring by Allah's will, is not pleasing to Allah. It is the evil of what Allah decreed. So in this prayer we are seeking Allah's protection from disbelief, idolatry, murder, adultery, and all other evils that exist.

(2.4) Prayer made when afflicted with illness or pain (1)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ (ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ)

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ وَقُدْرَتِهِ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا أَجِدُ وَأُحَاذِرُ (سَبْعَ مَرَّاتٍ)

Bismillāhi. A 'ūdhu billāhi wa-qudratihi min sharri mā ajidu wa-uḥādhir

(Place your hand where you feel pain and say) '*Bismillah*' (three times). (Then repeat seven times), "I seek refuge in Allah and in His power from the evil of what I am experiencing and what I fear." [Muslim]

Context: 'Uthmān ibn Abī al-ʿĀṣ said that he went to Allah's Messenger ﷺ to complain of [severe] pain that had been bothering him from the time he had

⁷⁵ Qur'an 2:216.

⁷⁶ For further discussion on the relationship of man's free will and the divine decree, see: Justin Parrott, "Reconciling the Divine Decree and Free Will in Islam," *Yaqeen*, July 31, 2017, <https://yaqeeninstitute.org/justin-parrott/reconciling-the-divine-decree-and-free-will-in-islam/>.

become Muslim. The Prophet ﷺ instructed him to place his [right] hand on the area of pain and say “*Bismillāh*” three times ... [‘Uthmān (ra) said, “So I said that and Allah healed me.”]⁷⁷

Notable: One of the prominent scholars of al-Andalus, al-Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ (d. 544 AH), notes that it is common in the *sharī‘ah* to repeat phrases three or seven times. This is especially true for matters related to healing and well-being. It is also common for remedies used to protect from sorcery, the devil, and poisons.⁷⁸ For example, when the Prophet’s ﷺ illness intensified, he said to those caring for him, “Pour on me the water of seven water skins.”⁷⁹ The Prophet ﷺ also said, “Whoever eats seven ‘*ajwah*’ dates in the morning will not be harmed by toxins or sorcery on that day.”⁸⁰

Ibn al-Qayyim also mentions that repeating phrases makes them more effective, like the repetition of any medical treatment, and asserts that there is a unique effectiveness in repeating things seven times.⁸¹

This ḥadīth also indicates that it is permissible for a person to inform his loved ones that he is suffering, as long as he does not show any displeasure with Allah’s decree. They may be able to help him, pray for him, and offer him sound advice that he would otherwise be deprived of if they were unaware of his situation.

Protective Benefits: This prayer is for relief of pain that one is currently experiencing. It is also a request for protection from future complications associated with the original disease. A person may worry that the pain will increase or that his illness will become more severe. This may cause a lot of anxiety. This supplication is for seeking refuge in Allah from current pain, future complications, and the mental anguish associated with it.⁸²

Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ al-‘Uthaymīn (d. 1421 AH) said, “If a person says this prayer with conviction, believing that he will benefit from it, the pain will

⁷⁷ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no. 2202; the additions in brackets come from *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, no. 3522.

⁷⁸ See al-Qaḍī ‘Iyāḍ, *Ikmāl al-mu‘īn* (Cairo: Dār al-Wafā’, 1998) 7:110.

⁷⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, no. 4442.

⁸⁰ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, no. 5779 and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no. 2047, on the authority of Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ.

⁸¹ *Zād al-ma‘ād*, 4:172.

⁸² *Fiqh al-ad‘iyah wa-al-adkār* 2:216-217.

subside by the will of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. This prayer is more effective than tangible medication (e.g., pills, syrup, and injections) because you are seeking refuge in the One in whose hand is the kingdom of the heavens and earth Who sent down the disease and Who will protect you from it.”⁸³

This is not an encouragement to not take conventional medicine.⁸⁴ However, true healing is from Allah, the Healer (*al-Shāfi*). So we should pray to Allah to make any medication we use beneficial.

(2.5) Prayer made when afflicted with illness or pain (2)

أَذْهِبِ الْبَاسَ رَبَّ النَّاسِ وَاشْفِ أَنْتَ الشَّافِي لَا شِفَاءَ إِلَّا شِفَاؤُكَ شِفَاءً لَا يُغَادِرُ سَقَمًا

*Adhhibi al-ba'sa rabba al-nās washfi anta al-shāfi lā shifā'a illā shifā'uk
shifā'an lā yughādiru saqaman*

Remove the difficulty O Lord of mankind, and heal. You are the Healer, no healing avails but Yours, a healing that leaves behind no ailment. [Bukhārī and Muslim]

Context: The Prophet ﷺ used to make this *du'ā'* for others when they were sick. Aisha (ra), the wife of the Prophet ﷺ, said, “Whenever Allah’s Messenger ﷺ would visit a patient, he would say, ‘Remove the difficulty, O Lord of mankind...’”⁸⁵ In a slightly different wording of the prayer, Aisha (ra) reported:

The Prophet ﷺ used to invoke Allah’s protection for some of his wives by passing his right hand over the place of ailment and saying, ‘O Allah, Lord of mankind! Remove the difficulty and heal the patient. You are the Healer, no healing is of any avail but Yours, a healing that leaves behind no ailment.’”⁸⁶

Notable: Some of the Prophet’s ﷺ Companions learned this prayer from him and would say it as a treatment for people experiencing pain. Thābit al-Bunānī (d.

⁸³ Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ al-‘Uthaymīn, *Sharḥ riyāḍ al-ṣāliḥīn* (Riyadh: Madār al-Waṭan, 1426 AH), 4:483.

⁸⁴ Some Bedouins asked the Prophet ﷺ, “Should we treat our ill?” He replied, “Yes, O servants of Allah, use medicine. Surely Allah has not made a disease except that He made a cure (or remedy) for it.” Collected by al-Tirmidhī (no. 2038), who graded it authentic.

⁸⁵ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, no. 5675; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no. 2191.

⁸⁶ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, no. 5743.

127 AH) went to Anas ibn Mālik, an esteemed Companion of the Prophet ﷺ, and mentioned to him that he was ill. So Anas said, “Shall I treat you with the *ruqyah* of Allah’s Messenger ﷺ?” Thabit said, “Certainly!” So Anas prayed, “O Allah, Lord of mankind, Remover of difficulty! Heal; You are the Healer, there is no Healer but You, a healing that leaves behind no ailment.”⁸⁷

Protective Benefits: Protection of the heart from being attached to other than Allah is a great blessing. We should not place our hope in others; rather it should be reserved for Allah alone. Saying “You are the Healer, no healing avails but Yours” emphasizes that only Allah can cure.

Prophet Ibrāhīm said when describing Allah, “And when I get sick, He heals me.”⁸⁸ Any treatment, whether it be medicine or *du‘ā’*, will not work unless Allah decrees for that person to get well.⁸⁹ The great scholar of al-Andalus, Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr (d. 463 AH) highlighted this point. He mentioned that more than once, he had heard a physician claim that two men had the same illness at the same time. The two men were of the same age and locale. In some cases, they were twins who had the same diet. The physician used the same treatment for both of them, and while one of them recovered the other died!⁹⁰

A comforting aspect of this *du‘ā’* is that it asks for complete removal of the disease and its future effects. Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī said,

The benefit of qualifying ‘healing’ with the statement ‘that leaves behind no ailment’ is that one could be cured from that disease but then another disease resulting from the initial one arises. So the Prophet ﷺ prayed for complete and total healing.⁹¹

⁸⁷ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, no. 5742.

⁸⁸ Qur’an 26:80.

⁸⁹ See: Aḥmad ibn ‘Umar al-Qurṭubī, *al-Mufḥim* (Damascus: Dar Ibn Katheer, 1996), 2:819; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fath al-Bārī*, 10:207.

⁹⁰ Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Tamhīd* (Morocco: Ministry of Endowments, 1967), 5:264.

⁹¹ Ibn Ḥajar, *Fath al-Bārī*, 10:131.

III. Prayers not specific to time or occasion

(3.1) Prayer for protection from illnesses

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْبَرَصِ وَالْجُنُونِ وَالْجُذَامِ وَمِنْ وَسْيِيءِ الْأَسْقَامِ

Allāhumma innī a‘ūdhu bika min al-barāṣi wa-al-junūni wa-al-judhāmi wa-min sayyi‘i al-asqām

Oh Allah! I seek refuge in you from vitiligo, madness, leprosy, and evil diseases. [Abū Dāwūd and al-Nasa’ī]

Context: Anas ibn Mālik (ra), who served the Prophet ﷺ in Madīnah for ten years, said that Allah’s Messenger would frequently say this prayer.⁹²

Notable: The Prophet ﷺ only asked for protection from evil diseases and not all illnesses. Certainly, good health is best.⁹³ But some scholars explain that diseases with only mild, temporary symptoms can benefit the believer. If one bears them patiently, they will be an expiation for one’s sins.⁹⁴ The Prophet ﷺ said, “A person shall continue to be tried until he is left walking upon the earth without any sins.”⁹⁵

Sharaf al-Dīn al-Ṭībī (d. 743 AH) emphasized this point when he said:

The reason why the Prophet ﷺ did not seek refuge with Allah from all diseases is that some temporary ailments (e.g., fevers, headaches, and eye inflammation) are easy to bear. However, they bring a great deal of reward if one endures them patiently. In this hadith, refuge is sought from chronic diseases. That is because they could lead to a situation where one’s close friends abandon him and only a few are around to care for and comfort him. They may even carry a great deal of stigma.⁹⁶

⁹² *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, no. 1554; *Sunan an-Nasa’i*, no. 5493. It was graded authentic by al-Nawawī in *Riyād al-ṣālihīn* (Dammam: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, 1421 AH), p. 492, ḥadīth no. 1492.

⁹³ Ibn Baṭṭāl, *Sharḥ ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 2003), 9:390.

⁹⁴ See al-Khaṭṭābī, *Ma‘ālim al-sunan* (Ḥalab: al-Maṭba‘ah al-‘Ilmīyah, 1932), 1:297; *Dalīl al-Fāliḥīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma‘rifah, 2004), 7:290.

⁹⁵ *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, no. 2398, who graded it authentic, as did al-Albānī.

⁹⁶ See ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Qarī, *Mirqāt al-maḥfātīḥ* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2002), 4:1711.

Protective Benefits: Preserving one’s mental health is so important that it is one of the five higher objectives of the *sharī‘ah*. This *du‘ā* mentions protection from “madness” or severe mental illness. Needless to say, our prayers should be combined with action. Therefore, a person who makes this prayer should also avoid anything that would alter their own mental state, such as drugs and alcohol.

The last phrase in this *du‘ā* is “evil diseases.” This refers to diseases that most find extremely hard to bear. They are usually chronic or have long-term devastating effects. When we make this *du‘ā*, it will protect us, *in shā’ Allah*, from all of these diseases. We should do our best to say this prayer frequently, as our Prophet ﷺ did.

(3.2) Prayer for protection from grief and anxiety

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْهَمِّ وَالْحَزَنِ وَالْعَجْزِ وَالْكَسَلِ وَالْبُخْلِ وَالْجُبْنِ وَضَلَعِ الدَّيْنِ وَغَلَبَةِ الرِّجَالِ

Allāhumma innī a‘ūdhu bika min al-hammi wa-al-ḥazani wa-al-‘ajzi wa-al-kasali wa-al-bukhli wa-al-jubni wa-ḍala‘i al-dayni wa-ghalabati al-rijāl

Translation: O Allah, I seek refuge in You from anxiety and grief; from inability and laziness; from stinginess and cowardice; and from the burden of debt and oppression of men. [Bukhārī]

Context: Anas ibn Mālīk (ra) said, “I would tend to the needs of Allah’s Messenger ﷺ whenever he dismounted [to stay somewhere on the way to Khaybar from Madīnah] and I heard him ﷺ frequently saying, ‘O Allah, I seek refuge in You from anxiety and grief...’ I continued to serve him ﷺ until we left [the battle of] Khaybar.”⁹⁷

Notable: The Prophet ﷺ begins this supplication by seeking refuge in Allah from anxiety (*al-hamm*) and grief (*al-hazan*). These are both forms of mental suffering, but they are different. Anxiety comes from fear about some future uncertainty. Grief is the anguish associated with loss (i.e., something that has

⁹⁷ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, no. 5425.

happened in the past). Experiencing some degree of grief and anxiety is normal for most people. It may even serve to cleanse a believer from sins. The Prophet ﷺ said, “No hardship, illness, anxiety, grief, harm, or distress—not even the pricking of a thorn—afflicts a Muslim but that Allah will expiate some of his sins by it.”⁹⁸

Being consumed by grief and anxiety, on the other hand, can have a devastating impact on a person. Sometimes it can arise due to underlying biological or genetic factors. Therefore, it is important for a person suffering from symptoms of depression or anxiety to seek the attention of a trained mental health professional. It is also recognized that a positive spiritual outlook can help protect against such symptoms or lessen their intensity. The noted Māliki scholar of hadith, Ibn Baṭṭāl (d. 449 AH) said,

A believer should not be anxious or overly concerned about worldly matters, for Allah has decreed everything with precision and measured all provisions. Anxiety does not engender any good to a person in this world, nor does it bring to him something that was not decreed for him. Excessive worry implies a lack of contentment with Allah’s decree and displeasure with Him.

‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz used to pray, ‘O Allah make me content with Your judgment, and make Your decree beloved to me so that I do not want what You have delayed to be hastened, nor what You have hastened to be delayed.’

Whoever believes in the divine decree should not lament anything of the *dunyā* that passes him by, nor should he accuse his Lord [of being unfair], for what Allah has chosen for him is best. A person should instead be concerned about the Hereafter, when he will be brought before his Lord. He should think about what he can do to be saved from the questioning in which he will be asked about everything, even [something as trifling as] the *qīṭmīr* (film over a date-stone). This is why the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘If you knew what I knew, you would laugh little and cry much.’⁹⁹ It is only about this that it makes sense to be anxious and to cry.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, no. 5641; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no. 2573.

⁹⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, no. 6486; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no. 2359 on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik.

¹⁰⁰ Ibn Baṭṭāl, *Sharḥ ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 10:120.

Protective Benefits: Another prophetic tradition tells us of the efficacy of this *du‘ā* in relieving anxiety. Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered the mosque one day and saw a man from the Anṣār named Abū Umāmah. The Prophet ﷺ said, “O Abū Umāmah, why are you sitting in the mosque while it is not time for prayer?” He said, “O Messenger of Allah, I am consumed by anxiety and debts.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Shall I not teach you words to say by which Allah, the Almighty, will remove your anxiety and settle your debt?” He said, “Certainly, O Messenger of Allah.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Say in the morning and evening: O Allah, I seek refuge in You from anxiety and grief. I seek refuge in You from inability and laziness. I seek refuge in You from stinginess and cowardice. I seek refuge in You from the burden of debt and oppression of men.” Abū Umāmah said “When I did that, Allah removed my anxiety and settled my debt.”¹⁰¹

This supplication is especially important during turbulent times of widespread economic instability, public health crises, and general apprehension about what the future holds. While people who lack faith panic and lose hope, a believer finds solace in this prophetic prayer. He or she knows that whoever seeks refuge in Allah is safeguarded by the Most Merciful Protector and Wise Overseer.

(3.3) A comprehensive prayer for certainty and protection of faith

اللَّهُمَّ اقْسِمْ لَنَا مِنْ خَشْيَتِكَ مَا يَحُولُ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ مَعَاصِيكَ وَمِنْ طَاعَتِكَ مَا تَبْلُغُنَا بِهِ جَنَّتِكَ وَمِنْ الْيَقِينِ مَا تَهْوُو بِهِ عَلَيْنَا مُصِيبَاتِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَتَّعْنَا بِأَسْمَاعِنَا وَأَبْصَارِنَا وَقُوتِنَا مَا أَحْيَيْتَنَا وَاجْعَلْهُ الْوَارِثَ مِنَّا وَاجْعَلْ ثَأْرَنَا عَلَى مَنْ ظَلَمْنَا وَانْصُرْنَا عَلَى مَنْ عَادَانَا وَلَا تَجْعَلْ مُصِيبَتَنَا فِي دِينِنَا وَلَا تَجْعَلِ الدُّنْيَا أَكْبَرَ هَمًّا وَلَا مَبْلَغَ عِلْمِنَا وَلَا تُسَلِّطْ عَلَيْنَا مَنْ لَا يَرْحَمُنَا

Allāhumma iqsim lanā min khashyatika mā yaḥūl baynanā wa-bayna ma ‘āshika wa-min ṭā‘atika mā tuballighunā bihi jannataka wa-min al-yaqīn mā tuhawwinu bihi ‘alaynā muṣībātī al-dunyā wa-matti’nā bi-asmā’inā wa-abṣārinā wa-quwwātinā mā aḥyaytanā waj’alhu al-wāritha minnā waj’al tha’ranā ‘alā man ḡalamanā wanṣurnā ‘alā man ‘ādānā wa-lā taj’al

¹⁰¹ *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, no. 1555. This hadith has some weakness. One of the narrators, Ghassan ibn Auf, is described as *layyin al-hadith* (lit. “soft” in hadith), which means that he did not have a strong memory. Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalani, *Taqreeb at-tahdheeb* (Halab: Dar ar-Rasheed, 1991), 42.

muṣibatānā fī dīninā wa-lā tajʿal al-dunyā akbara hamminā wa-lā mablagha ʿilminā wa-lā tusalliṭ ʿalaynā man lā yarḥamunā

Translation: O Allah, apportion us reverential fear of You that will stop us from disobeying You, and (apportion us) obedience to You that will allow us to reach Paradise, and (apportion us) conviction that will make calamities in the world easier for us (to endure). Let us enjoy our hearing, our sight, and our power, as long as you let us live, and leave them to inherit us. Let retaliation be upon those who oppress us, and support us against those who are hostile to us. Let no calamity afflict our religion. And let not the world be our greatest worry, nor the extent of our knowledge. And let not rule over us those who are unmerciful to us. [al-Tirmidhī]

Context: Ibn ʿUmar said: “Rarely would the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stand up from a gathering until he supplicated for his Companions with these words: ‘O Allah, apportion us reverential fear of You...’”¹⁰²

Notable: The Prophet ﷺ used to sit with his Companions and make himself available to them. He ﷺ was, as Allah described him, “deeply concerned for your well-being, compassionate and merciful to the believers.”¹⁰³ This *duʿā*, which comprises the good of this life and the hereafter, is one way that the Prophet ﷺ would show his compassion for the Companions. We should also follow this prophetic tradition and pray for one another when we gather. This will ensure that our gatherings are a source of benefit for us in this life and the next, and not a source of regret. The Prophet ﷺ said,

There are no people who rise from a gathering in which Allah was not mentioned except that it is like they are rising from the carcass of a donkey, and it will be a cause of regret for them.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² *Jāmiʿ al-Tirmidhī*, no. 3502, graded *hasan* (fair) by al-Shawkānī in *Tuḥfat al-dhākirīn* (no. 451) and al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī*.

¹⁰³ Qurʾan, 9:128.

¹⁰⁴ *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, no. 4855, graded authentic by al-Nawawī in *Riyāḍ al-ṣālihīn*.

It is also important to note that in this prayer the Prophet ﷺ did not seek refuge from calamities. In fact, he ﷺ mentions twice that there will be affliction. This should remind us that this world is one of trials and tribulations.

So what does the Prophet ﷺ ask Allah for? Two things:

The first is for *yaqīn* (conviction or certainty) which is the highest level of faith. Through *yaqīn* we know that Allah, with his eternal attributes of Wisdom, Mercy, and Justice, is in control and that nothing happens outside of His divine will. When our *yaqīn* is strong, it is easier to endure the trials of life with patience and even contentment.

The second request is that our hardships do not hurt our faith. Every human being will face some degree of misfortune in this life, whether it be in their health, wealth, family, or otherwise. But the greatest calamity is to be afflicted with doubt or disbelief, or hating what Allah loves, or loving sin and transgression. These are as destructive to one's soul as death is to the body.

Protective Benefits: This is one of the most comprehensive prayers found in the prophetic tradition. It includes protection for the mind, body, and soul.

In addition to *yaqīn*, which has a marked calming effect on the mind, the Prophet ﷺ says, “Let not the world be our greatest worry, nor the extent of our knowledge.” When a person's primary concern is this temporary life, they will have little time to prepare for their permanent abode. Their mind will be preoccupied with thoughts and plans that will ultimately bring them little benefit, and they may suffer from severe anxiety. Allah sums up the focus of these type of people with the following words:

Know that this worldly life is no more than play, distraction, adornment, mutual boasting, and competition in wealth and children.¹⁰⁵

The Prophet ﷺ also informed us that there is an underlying detriment to being preoccupied with this life. He ﷺ said,

¹⁰⁵ Qur'an 57:20.

Whoever makes this world his primary concern, Allah will scatter his affairs and put poverty right before his eyes, and he will get nothing of the world but what is decreed for him. But whoever makes the Hereafter his goal, Allah will bring his affairs together, place richness in his heart, and the world will come to him despite his lack of enthusiasm for it.¹⁰⁶

Thus, the prayer “let not the world be our greatest worry” is a great protection for our mental well-being.

We pray for our physical health when we say, “Let us enjoy our hearing, our sight, and our power, as long as you let us live, and leave them to inherit us.” We ask Allah to protect our senses and strength until the day we die. It is if they are our heirs who, by definition, are there even after death.¹⁰⁷

“O Allah apportion us reverential fear of You that will keep us from disobeying You” is a prayer for spiritual health. There are two kinds of disobedience: one can fail to fulfill his duty to Allah, or he may violate Allah’s prohibitions. Either of these may distance him from spiritual serenity in this life, which is achieved through a genuine bond with the Divine. Worse, they may jeopardize a person’s salvation and eternal bliss in the next life.

Conclusion

One of the Companions came to the Prophet ﷺ concerned with his inability to keep up with the number of good deeds Islam has prescribed. Looking for something that was comprehensive and would give him a lot of reward, he said to the Prophet ﷺ, “Tell me something that I can stick to.” The Prophet ﷺ replied, “Keep your tongue moist with the remembrance of Allah.”¹⁰⁸ Calling upon Allah is one of the greatest ways that you can strengthen your bond with Him. Many of the sixteen supplications found here should be said daily, or multiple

¹⁰⁶ *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, no. 4105, graded authentic by al-Albānī.

¹⁰⁷ See ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Qarī, *Mirqāt al-mafātīḥ* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2002), 5:1727; al-‘Uthaymīn, *Sharḥ riyāḍ al-ṣālīḥīn* (Riyadh: Madar al-Watan, 1426 AH), 4:362–63.

¹⁰⁸ *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, no. 3375; *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, no. 3793.

times a day. They are not, however, ritual incantations that you can simply repeat without understanding their meanings. This will not bring about the desired benefit. So come back to this book periodically to remind yourself of the meanings of these *du'ās*. Memorize them and teach them to your friends and family. Always know that when you ask Allah for anything, He is Near. “If My slaves ask you about Me, I am Near. I answer the call of the caller when he calls on Me.”¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ Qur'an 2:186.