

Prophet Muhammad

(Peace be upon him)

in the Mirror of

His Supplications

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**ACADEMY OF
ISLAMIC RESEARCH & PUBLICATIONS
LUCKNOW-(INDIA)**

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Post Box No. 119, Tagore Marg,
Nadwatul Ulama, Lucknow—226 007
(India)

Series No. 188

Edition :
First, English 1985

Printed at :

Nadwa Press
Nadwatul-Ulama
Tagore Marg,
Lucknow-(India)

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In the name of Allah, the Most Benevolent, the Most Merciful.

P R E F A C E

The present work is in fact an essay which was written in Urdu for the Karachi magazine *Farān* to be included in its special issue on Prophet Muhammad (Allah's blessings and peace be upon him) published in January, 1956. In that article such aspects and qualities of the Prophet's supplications were emphasized as would draw attention to his prophetic wisdom and miraculous excellence and reveal an important and magnificent chapter of the Prophet's character in a new context. While these supplications enhance a Muslim's faith and trust in Allah, they would not leave any good-natured and unprejudiced person unaffected and unimpressed. Those whom God has granted a judicious taste and a wholesome heart consider these supplications to be an important and strong proof—among others—of the Prophet's messengership.

With minor changes and addition of sub-titles, the essay was published in the form of a book in May, 1972. The English translation of it is being published now for the benefit of the English reading people. May Allah accept it and make it a source of benefit for all.

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Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama

Lucknow :

Lucknow.

August 25, 1985.

In the name of Allah, the Most Benevolent, the Most Merciful.

TWO CATEGORIES OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S EXCELLENCES

The excellences of the unique character of Prophet Muhammad (on him be Allah's blessings and peace) can be placed under two heads: his perfect submission (to Allah) and his comprehensive prophethood.

Supplication and Call¹

While supplication is an expression and a consequence of submission, call is a manifestation of prophethood. Each forms an important and distinct title in the story of the Prophet's glorious life and is a permanent chapter in his miraculous memoirs. Whether a reader or a writer, one clearly sees the place of call highlighted in Prophet Muhammad's personality, for books on him bring it out in its full detail and its achievements and influences shine in their rich splendour all over the world. A call is public, and, therefore, everybody has seen the effect of the Prophet's call clearly and openly. But, to my limited knowledge, only a few people were able to notice how important to him was the other aspect, that is, his supplication to God, and what an enormous contribution

1. *Supplication* and *call* will be used throughout this study as English equivalents of the Arabic terms *du'ā* and *dā'wah* respectively.

it made to the effectiveness and triumph of his call itself. Very few people could appreciate how the Prophet elevated supplication to cherished and sublime heights, how he revived and renewed it when, like all other forms of prayer and submission to Allah, it had withered to death. Indeed, the Prophet perfected it and established it in its most consummate form before he departed from the world.

Age of Ignorance—Man's Relationship with god

Those who have a deep and thorough knowledge of the history of religions and creeds know that the period known as the Age of Ignorance saw a serious decline of man's relationship with his Creator. The fountainhead of supplication, which would not gush forth except through faith and love and fear, had dried up in man's heart. Man, the creature, had fallen a prey to so many misunderstandings and misconceptions about himself and his Creator that the desire and the urge to supplicate to Him could hardly well up in his heart. To approach God with supplication one needs, first of all, belief in His existence. Man must also have faith that his Lord is all-powerful and can grant whatsoever He likes, and that there is no door but his Lord's at which he is to knock. He should further trust that, attributed as He is especially with compassion and mercy, benevolence and generosity, beneficence and charitableness, his Creator loves to give and grant and is more pleased by bestowing than His creature is by receiving. Man must believe that in relation to the Creator the creature's life from beginning to end is literally one beggar's bowl, and that the Lord is

closer to each of His slaves than all His other creations, nay than even man's own jugular vein, and further that He listens to everybody and can help everyone in all circumstances.

Denial of Divine Attributes

A look at the history of the times of *Jāhiliyah*, i.e., before the advent of Islam, would show how rare and feeble each one of these beliefs had become and how many doubts and barriers, superstitions and misconceptions had grown in man's mind about each of the above-mentioned facts of faith. What room was there for supplication and prayer by those who lived under its influence in the face of denial of the attributes of the self-Existent (*wājibul wujūd*) or the First Cause (*mabḍā'i awwal*) and the affirmation of its existence without Divine Attributes in Greek philosophy ? What logic would be there in invoking a deity and seeking its help when there was no knowledge of its attributes, nay, the very idea of its possessing any perfect attribute was being negated ? How could man be justified in expecting new actions and directions to emerge every moment and at all the times from an entity which had no control over the workings of nature, which lay suspended after producing the First Intellect (*'aql-i-awwal*) and which was conceived as *One* (*wā'ḥid*) capable of creating *one*¹ only, which it had already done ?

-
1. These terms refer to the basic tenets of ancient Greek Philosophy. The Greek philosophers held that plurality of existence cannot come from a unity, that God is. He created First Intellect which gave birth to a series of successive intellections.

Hindrance in Supplication to God

Contrary to these tenets of ancient Greek philosophy, the polytheistic ignorance and idolatry had associated almost all of the divine attributes with one temporal creature or the other. One deity controlled life while the other provided sustenance. This one had all-encompassing, all-embracing knowledge so that the "unknown" was "known" to it, while that transcended the limitations of time and space, reaching anywhere and everywhere and helping its devotees all and at once. And so on and so forth. In such a situation, what possibility was there of man's turning to "the One God" and lifting his hands to Him for help in need, particularly when He should be Unseen and the palpable deities within sight and reach? It should also be borne in mind that there was then no mention or talk of the divine attributes and powers of "the One God"; a correct knowledge of them was as a matter of fact almost extinct. On the other hand, public gatherings of the time resounded with the tales of the grand performances and wonderful agencies of "the myriad deities," and minds and hearts were benumbed by such legends. In such a situation there naturally emerged a state of mind which is depicted in the Qur'ān as follows :

When God, the One and Only,
Is mentioned, the hearts
Of those who believe not
In the Hereafter, are filled
With disgust and horror ;
But when (gods) other than He

Are mentioned, behold,
They are filled with joy !¹

Greek Philosophy and Polytheistic Ignorance

Thus, Greek philosophy (due to its negative position on Divine Attributes) had closed the door of supplication and prayer upon man, and polytheistic ignorance (by ascribing divine attributes to temporal creatures) had directed them from the Creator to the created. The net result of these two influences was that the practice of directly seeking and begging of God and imploring Him with supplication and entreaty had almost come to an end. At the time of the conferment of prophethood on Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) it was hard to find even a few such persons in vast areas, even in a whole country, who regularly and properly supplicated to God, and who derived peace and contentment from this practice or invited others to it.

Mankind Under Obligation to Prophet Muhammad

Prophet Muhammad (our souls and spirits be offerings for him) bestowed upon the humanity deprived and debarred of its spiritual moorings, the riches of supplication once again, and helped man to open a dialogue with God. And what a rare gem this supplication was ! Man was now endowed with the bliss of submission to God, nay, with the bliss and honour of life itself. Thus the barred humanity once again gained access to the Lord and the fugitive son of Adam returned to the threshold of his Creator and Master saying ;

1. *Al-Zumar* : 45

**Your slave has staggered back to Your door,
Having stained his honour with deadly sin !**

Why man did not Supplicate ?

A major reason of man's deprivation of the bliss of supplication was the erroneous view prevalent in the Age of Ignorance that God was too far away from man to hear his feeble voice. Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) gave the glad tidings from Allah :

When My servants
Ask thee concerning Me
I am indeed
Close (to them) : I listen
To the prayer of every
Suppliant when he calleth on Me¹ :

Real Source of Help and Harm

Another false belief widely held at that time was that powers other than God could also help and harm man and come to his aid and assistance. This notion had diverted man's supplication and prayer from God, the Absolute ordainer of his good and evil haps, to imaginary helpers and protectors, and the world at large had fallen a prey to polytheism and idolatry. The Prophet of Allah proclaimed with all force and clarity Allah's dictate as directly addressed to him :

Say : "O ye men !
If ye are in doubt

1. *Al-Baqara* : 186

As to my religion, (behold)
 I worship not what ye
 Worship, other than God !
 But I worship God—
 Who will take your souls
 (At death) : I am commanded
 To be (in the ranks)
 Of the Believers,
 "And further (thus) : 'Set thy face
 Towards Religion with true piety,
 And never in any wise
 Be of the Unbelievers ;
 "Nor call on any
 Other than God ;—
 Such will neither profit thee
 Nor hurt thee : if thou dost,
 Behold ! thou shalt certainly
 Be of those who do wrong."
 If God do touch thee
 With hurt, there is none
 Can remove it but He :
 If He do design some benefit
 For thee, there is none
 Can keep back His favour :
 He causeth it to reach
 Whomsoever of His servants
 He pleaseth. And He is
 The Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.¹

1. *Yūnus* : 104-107

Sublime Position of Supplication

The Prophet did not only make it clear that man could approach his Creator with supplication who hears him and can help him; he also showed that Allah appreciates supplication of man and is pleased with it, and further that, in fact, He is displeased with the non-suppliant. Supplication is in essence a vivid and effective manifestation of man's bondage, and an evasion of it is a symptom of defiance, arrogance, and rebelliousness. The following proclamation of the prophet elevated the status of supplication to wondrous heights and transformed it from a compulsive act done in bondage to a sublime form of devotion and a sure step towards establishing closeness to Allah.

And your Lord says :

"Call on Me ; I

Will answer your (Prayer) :

But those who are

Too arrogant to serve Me

Will surely find themselves

In Hell—in humiliation !"¹

The Prophet is reported to have said that abstaining from supplicating to Allah not only causes a fall from His grace, but that it also earns Allah's displeasure. The words of a tradition are :

Allah is angry with him who does not ask of Him.

That is not all. The Prophet called supplication the quintessence of devotions and key to the door of divine mercy and favour. He observed.

To whom the door of supplication opens, to him

1. *Al-Mūmin* 60

the door of God's mercy opens wide.

Thus were the founts of supplication released to flow anew and afresh after it had virtually vanished from the then spectrum of life, its light having departed from prayers and prayer-houses, and the seeking, the disciplined, the pious, and the ascetic of the Age of Ignorance having gone without their share of its riches. In a short time this rare blessing of supplication was so plenteous that, according to an Urdu poet, "All inhabitants partook of it freely!"

Supplication an Evidence of Prophethood

The revitalizing and perfecting process of the prophethood of Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) did not stop there. He also taught us how to supplicate to Allah and enriched the treasure-house of humanity and the archives of world literature with those gems of supplications which are second only to the Holy Qur'ān in lustre and brilliance. He addressed his Lord in words so moving and meaningful, so apt and suitable that they can never be surpassed by human eloquence. These supplications live as Prophet Muhammad's lasting miracle and as a monumental testimony to his prophethood. The words of these supplications connote that they are from the tongue of a prophet. They reflect the light of prophecy and the faith of a prophet. They breathe the humility of a perfect bondsman and the confidence and pride of one who is beloved of the Lord of worlds. They are informed with the simplicity of the prophetic nature, and the straightforwardness of an anguished and restless heart. These supplications are

charged with the importunings and anxieties of one in need and want, and with sensitive care and profound reverence as shown by one who is well aware of the august decorum of the court of the Lord of lords. They throb with the distress of the bleeding heart and the agony of the suffering and with blissful faith in the All-Healing, All-Relieving. In the Prophet's supplications there is an expression of his anguish as well as a declaration of his belief:

All affliction is from You
And You the Only Remedy still !

Literary Value of Supplication

In addition to their spiritual and expressive values, the supplications of Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him) are of the highest literary standard. As literary rarities and masterpieces, they stand unparalleled in the whole range of man's literature. Many critics have given a high literary place to personal letters on the ground that they are spontaneous and informal, and contain a frank expression of emotions. But they do not know that, in the words of an Urdu poet, "There exist worlds even beyond the stars."

There is another form of literature which far excels personal letters in frankness and spontaneousness, and in which all disguises and formalities of communication disappear, and the speaker lays his heart bare in utmost sincerity, his tongue becoming truly representative of his heart. When supplicating to God the speaker rises above the considerations of ovation and applause and "plays" not "to the gallery," but addresses his Maker urged by

the dictates of his own heart. This sublime form of literature is—supplication and prayer (*du'ā* and *munājāt*).

Cry of Heart

Most critics of literary art tend to overlook an important element of literature which informs it with a genuine spirit and power and makes it immortal with truth and sincerity. The way this element finds expression in prayer and supplication, it cannot appear in any other form of literature. Besides, when the man supplicating be possessed of a heart in pain and of a mastery of the very highest order over the expression of his sense of pain, his words emerge as literary gems. They remain words no more : they in effect become bits of the heart and tears of the eye which move and stir the emotions of thousands of men over centuries. In addition, when the tongue giving utterance to these emotions is the one which has been a vehicle of divine revelation (*wahī*) and master of eloquence, the effectiveness and marvellousness of its supplications know no bounds.

Supplication at Ta'if

Take a look at the supplications of the Prophet recorded in books on his life and traditions. Can even the greatest literary writer employ more touching, more fascinating, and more inclusive words to depict his state of need and want, to invoke the surging sea of God's mercy? Bring to your mind the scene of the Prophet's journey to Ta'if, feel his broken-heart and bleeding feet and then against that background of persecution and oppression amidst an angry rabble, read the following

words :

اللَّهُمَّ إِلَيْكَ أَشْكُو ضَعْفَ قُوَّتِي، وَقِلَّةَ حِيلَتِي، وَمَوَانِي عَلَى
النَّاسِ، رَبِّ الْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ إِلَى مَنْ تَكَلَّمْتُ، إِلَى بَعِيدٍ يَتَجَمَّعُنِي، أَوْ
إِلَى عَدُوٍّ مَلَكَتْهُ أَمْرِي، إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ بِكَ عَلَيَّ غَضَبٌ فَلَا أُبَالِي،
غَيْرَ أَرْبَ عَافِيَتِكَ هِيَ أَوْسَعُ لِي، أَعُوذُ بِنُورِ وَجْهِكَ الَّذِي
أَشْرَقَتْ لَهُ الظُّلُمَاتُ، وَصَلَحَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرُ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ مِنْ أَنْ
يَحِلَّ بِي غَضَبُكَ، أَوْ يُنْزَلَ عَلَيَّ سَخَطُكَ، لَكَ الْعُتْبَى حَتَّى تَرْضَى
وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِكَ.

O Allah! I complain to You of the feebleness of my strength, of the littleness of my resource, and of my public indignity. You are the Most Merciful of all showing mercy. You are the Protector of the oppressed and the helpless, and indeed You are my Protector too. Whom do You entrust me to? To a stern stranger? Or to an enemy whom you have given control over my affairs? If thus Your wrath may spare me, I mind not how I am placed, except that Your grant of well-being would be immense to me. I seek refuge in the effulgence of Your Divine Being which dispels all darkness and sets right matters here and in the Hereafter, so that I may never incur Your wrath or earn Your displeasure. I shall plead

with You till You be pleased. And I receive only from You power to do good and stay away from evil.¹

If you ever experience such a moment and your heart be similarly charged, do you think you can employ better and more effective words than those used above or find in the literary treasure of the world more eloquent words to express your feelings?

Supplication at 'Arafat

Similarly, imagine the plain of 'Arafat. A hundred and twenty-four thousand pilgrims dressed shroud-style in two pieces of cloth are assembled there. The atmosphere resounds with their supplications and their pilgrimage-chant, "Here I am, O Lord!" The scene creates upon the heart a deep impression of Allah's unique state of total independence of all His creation, and His sublime grandeur and austere omnipotence. Among this dense mass of humanity there stands one (my father and mother be his ransom!), bare-headed and wearing two unsewn pieces of pilgrimage cloth, who carries the burden of all mankind on his shoulders. Of all watchers, his vision of Allah's magnificence and majesty is the best, and of all those who know, he is the most aware of deficiency, insignificance, and helplessness of man. His voice rises in this charged and awe-inspiring atmosphere and thus hears that audience then:

1. Tārīkh Tabrī.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ تَسْمَعُ كَلَامِي وَتَرَى مَكَانِي وَتَعْلَمُ سِرِّي وَعَلَانِي،
 لَا يَخْفَى عَلَيْكَ شَيْءٌ مِنْ أَمْرِي، وَأَنَا الْبَائِسُ الْفَقِيرُ، الْمُسْتَغِيثُ
 الْمُسْتَجِيرُ، الْوَجِلُ الْمُسْفِقُ، الْمُقِرُّ الْمُعْتَرِفُ بِذَنْبِي، أَسْأَلُكَ مَسْأَلَةَ
 الْمُسْكِينِ، وَابْتِهَالُ إِلَيْكَ ابْتِهَالُ الْمَذْنِبِ الدَّلِيلِ، وَأَدْعُوكَ دُعَاءَ
 الْخَائِفِ الضَّرِيرِ، وَدُعَاءَ مَنْ خَضَعَتْ لَكَ رَقَبَتُهُ وَقَاضَتْ لَكَ
 عَبرَتُهُ وَذَلَّ لَكَ جِسْمُهُ وَرَغِمَ لَكَ أَنْفُهُ، اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَجْعَلْنِي
 بِدُعَائِكَ شَقِيئًا وَكُنْ لِي رَوْفًا رَحِيمًا، يَا خَيْرَ الْمُسْأَلِينَ وَيَا خَيْرَ
 الْمُعْطِينَ.

O Allah ! Assuredly, You hear what I say and see where I am and know what I hide and what I show. Nothing concerning my case is concealed from You. I am afflicted, needy, begging Your help, seeking Your protection, miserable, frightened; admitting and confessing my sin. I ask of You as asks the helpless one. I cry, beseeching in front of You as a wretched transgressor wails in misery and I call to You as the scared and afflicted one calls, and as one whose neck is bent in front of You; whose tears stream forth in Your presence; whose body lies low in extreme humility to You; and who rubs his nose in the dust in humiliation before You. O Allah ! Let me not fail in supplicating to You and

turn to me as the Most Merciful and the Beneficent,
O You, the Best One Asked and the Best One Giving.¹

Is it possible to find in the record of human eloquence more touching, sincere, and winning words than these to suggest Allah's grandeur and magnificence, to express a suppliant's inability and resourcelessness, destitution and want, humility and helplessness, and to invoke Allah's boundless mercy? Can anybody better depict the state of his heart and his loneliness and desolation? Undoubtedly, these words are sufficient to move the mercy of Allah. Even today, when repeating them, hearts are moved, eyes are filled with tears, and Allah's beneficence clearly seems inclining. May Allah's myriad blessings descend on the Prophet who was "the mercy for the worlds." He taught his followers so rapturous and affecting a supplication and so well-prepared them for appealing to Divine Mercy.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ عِتْرَتِهِ بِعَدَدِ كُلِّ مَعْلُومٍ لَّكَ .

Bless him and his progeny with mercy and peace
as abundantly, O Lord, as Your omniscience extends.

Expression of Bondage and Helplessness

Everybody knows that in order to attract the attention of Allah, to seek His notice, and to invoke His Mercy, a suppliant approaches Him as the All-Powerful, Absolute, Omnipotent, the True Sovereign, and the Master of the universe, and he has to express his wretchedness and

1. *Kanzul 'Ummāl* : on the authority of Ibn Abbās.

bondage as perfectly and forcefully as possible. He admits that he is a slave in a line of slaves, a slave born of slave, living off Divine bounty and dependent on the provision granted by the Lord of Lords. He acknowledges that Allah alone is the Master of his life and belongings and all else, and that nothing is beyond His controlling power. In such a case if Allah is not merciful to him and takes no care of him, who else will? And what better opening to a supplication and what more effective key could there be to the achievement of a suppliant's aim than what follows :

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّى عَبْدُكَ وَابْنُ عَبْدِكَ وَابْنُ اَمَتِكَ ، نَاصِيَتِيْ بِيَدِكَ ، مَاضٍ
فِيْ حُكْمِكَ ، عَدْلُ فِى قَضَاؤِكَ ، اَسْأَلُكَ بِكُلِّ اِسْمٍ مَّوْلَاكَ سَمَّيْتَ
بِهٖ نَفْسَكَ ، اَوْ اَنْزَلْتَهُ فِى كِتَابِكَ ، اَوْ عَلَّمْتَهُ اَحَدًا مِّنْ خَلْقِكَ ،
اَوْ اِسْتَأْذَنْتَ بِهِ فِى عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ عِنْدَكَ اَنْ تَجْعَلَ الْقُرْآنَ الْعَظِيْمَ ،
رَبِيْعَ قَلْبِيْ وَنُوْرَ بَصَرِيْ وَجَلَاءَ حُزْنِيْ وَذَهَابَ هَمِّيْ .

O Allah ! I am Your bondman, born of a bondman and a bondwoman of Yours. You hold my forelock in Your hand. I am wholly at Your command, and Your disposal is just. I invoke You by (Your) Every name—that by which You have called Yourself, or that which You have revealed in Your Book, or taught to any of Your creatures, or retained in Your unrevealed knowledge—that You make the Glorious

Qur'ān a vernal bliss for my heart, a light for my eyes, a cure for my grief, and an antidote for my apprehension.¹

Comprehensive representation of Human needs

Man's needs are countless. To choose from them is extremely difficult for a suppliant, and to include all is impossible. In such a situation which of his needs shall he place before his Lord and which leave out? Let us consider our own case: should an opportunity to express our needs come our way, we would feel utterly perplexed and afterwards confess in the words of Ghalib, an Urdu poet: "So many of my wishes were fulfilled, but no, not so many after all!"

But, look! how the Prophet has collectively represented humanity (provided that it rests on pristine and pure nature) and covered human needs in their totality:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْحَلِيمُ الْكَرِيمُ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ،
وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، أَسْأَلُكَ مُوجِبَاتِ رَحْمَتِكَ، وَعَزَائِمَ
مَغْفِرَتِكَ، وَالْغَنِيمَةَ مِنْ كُلِّ بَرٍّ، وَالسَّلَامَةَ مِنْ كُلِّ إِثْمٍ، لَا تَدْعُ
لِي ذَنْبًا إِلَّا غَفَرْتَهُ، وَلَا هَمًّا إِلَّا فَرَجْتَهُ، وَلَا حَاجَةً هِيَ لَكَ
رِضَى إِلَّا قَضَيْتَهَا يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ.

There is no god but Allah, the Benign, the Munificent. Adored be Allah, the Lord of the

1. *Tabrāni*: on the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd.

Magnificent Throne, and all praise be to Him, the Sustainer of the worlds. (O Allah !) I ask of You that which may assure Your mercy and (which may) help to secure Your forgiveness. I beg (of You) a trophy of every virtue, and a security against every vice. Leave not a sin of mine which You have not forgiven, nor an anxiety of mine which You have not removed, nor a need within Your pleasure which You have not satisfied, O, You the Kindest of the kind¹ !

In another supplication he says :

اللَّهُمَّ أَصْلِحْ لِي دِينِي الَّذِي مَوْعِظَتُهُ أَمْرِي، وَأَصْلِحْ لِي دُنْيَايَ
الَّتِي فِيهَا مَعَاشِي، وَأَصْلِحْ لِي آخِرَتِي الَّتِي فِيهَا مَعَادِي، وَاجْعَلِ
الْحَيَاةَ زِيَادَةً لِي فِي كُلِّ خَيْرٍ، وَاجْعَلِ الْمَوْتَ رَاحَةً لِي مِنْ
كُلِّ شَرٍّ.

O Allah ! Keep right for me my religion which is a security of my interest, and keep right for me my worldly career in which lies my sustenance, and keep right for me my Hereafter to which I must return and make my life an increase in all that is good for me, and death a release from all that is evil.²

Everlasting Pleasure

How greedy of delight and happiness man is, but his vision is short and limited. He craves for fleeting

1. *Tirmidhi* : On the authority of 'Abdullah bin Abi Awwā

2. *Muslim* : On the authority of Abū Huraira.

pleasure and hankers after transitory joy. The Prophet teaches man through his supplications the important lesson that the thing really worth asking for is the everlasting pleasure and never-ending happiness and that the truly desirable thing is the peace of the Hereafter and the bliss of the sight of Allah.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ نِعْمًا لَا يَفْدُ، وَقُرَّةَ عَيْنٍ لَا تَقْطَعُ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ
الرِّضَاءَ بِالْقَضَاءِ، وَبِرَدِّ الْعَيْشِ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ، وَلَذَّةَ النَّظَرِ إِلَى
وَجْهِكَ، وَالشَّوْقَ إِلَى لِقَائِكَ.

O Allah ! I seek a blessing which is not discontinued, and a coolness of eyes which does not end. I pray that I may gladly accept Your dispensation and be blessed with the equanimity of bliss after death, with the delight of a glimpse of Your Countenance, and with a longing to be with You.¹

Psychological Insights in Supplications

Good manners are a great blessing, second only to the wealth of faith. Could the Prophet of Allah who, giving tidings of himself, had said: "I was sent to perfect the grace of manners," fail to realize the importance of good manners and lose sight of their subtleties and fine distinctions? A large part of the Prophet's supplications relates to moral and virtuous behaviour. Such ethical realities and psychological insights figure in these

1. *Mustadrak* : On the authority of 'Ammār bin Yāsir.

supplications as should make regular topics of deep study for scholars of ethics and psychology.

Let us first read a comprehensive supplication of the Prophet and then study his other supplications relating to different human morals. He prays in a post-midnight supplication :

اَللّٰهُمَّ اهْدِنِيْ لِاَحْسَنِ الْاَعْمَالِ وَاَحْسَنِ الْاَخْلَاقِ، لَا يَهْدِيْ
لِاَحْسَنِهَا اِلَّا اَنْتَ، وَقِنِيْ سَيِّئَ الْاَعْمَالِ وَسَيِّئَ الْاَخْلَاقِ، لَا
يُقِيْ سَيِّئَهَا اِلَّا اَنْتَ .

O Allah ! Guide me to the best of deeds and to the best of manners, for none can guide me to them except You ; and save me from bad deeds and bad manners, for none can save me from them except You.¹

A look in a mirror makes man feel the symmetry of his form and the truth of the Quranic phrase "the best of moulds" (*ahsan-i-taqwīm*). In this matter also the Prophet has emphasized the importance of morality and taught how the graces of conduct are to be prayed for along with the graces of appearance, for man is the vicegerant of Allah by having both of them in him. The Prophet looks at himself in the mirror and prays :

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ، اَللّٰهُمَّ كَمَا حَسَنْتَ خَلْقِيْ فَحَسِّنْ خُلُقِيْ .

1. *Al-Nassai* : On the authority of Jābir.

Praise be to Allah. O Allah ! As You created me in grace of form, create in me grace of manner, too.¹

The ideal life or "good life" (*hayāt-i-tayyiba*) achieves its perfection through a combination of faith, health, and good manners. The prophet supplicates :

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ صِحَّةً فِي إِيمَانٍ وَإِيمَانًا فِي حُسْنِ خُلُقٍ .

O Allah ! I seek of You health with faith, and faith with virtuous manners.²

In another supplication he says :

وَأَسْأَلُكَ لِسَانًا صَادِقًا وَقَلْبًا سَلِيمًا وَخُلُقًا مُسْتَقِيمًا .

And I seek of You a truthful tongue, a secure heart, and righteous manners.³

Some Delicate Aspects of Morality

In addition to these general and comprehensive supplications regarding moral conduct, the Prophet has made supplications for such other moral virtues (and has thus drawn the attention of his followers to their importance and the special care they deserve from them) which are not only extremely subtle and delicate but are also the mark of moral perfection. A sign of moral excellence

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1. *Musnad Ahmad* : On the authority of Umm Salma.
 2. *Mustadrak Hākim* : On the authority of Abū Huraira.
 3. *Tirmidhī* : On the authority of Shaddād bin Aws.

and perfect humaneness, nobility and piety, is that one loves the humble and the helpless. Those who treat the wealthy and the powerful with regard and love are common, but those who love the poor and the destitute are rare. This love for the desolate and the resourceless is the highest grade of morality and wholly depends on a capability which God alone grants. The Prophet says in a supplication :

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ فِعْلَ الْخَيْرَاتِ وَتَرْكَ الْمُنْكَرَاتِ وَحُبَّ الْمَسَاكِينِ.

O Allah ! I seek of You practice of virtuous deeds, renunciation of vices, and love of the destitute.¹

It is customary in this world for man to consider others inferior and himself superior. Only those select souls are saved from this malady who have attained self-discipline and who are the recipients of Allah's grace. A close examination would reveal that very few souls are able to steer clear of self-adoration and self-conceit, as, to use the words of Iqbāl, "Lurking in the chambers of the heart, desire draws its cherished images." One should sincerely seek Allah's protection against this malady because it is difficult to diagnose and still harder to get rid of it. The Prophet, who was sincerity-incarnate, supplicates to Allah for himself in the following words

1. *Mustadrak Hākim* : on the authority of Thawbān.

and thus instructs his followers :

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي صَبُورًا وَاجْعَلْنِي شَكُورًا، وَاجْعَلْنِي فِي عَيْنِي
صَغِيرًا وَفِي أَعْيُنِ النَّاسِ كَبِيرًا.

O Allah ! Make me one greatly patient and (one) greatly thankful, and belittle me in my own sight and elevate me in the sight of others.¹

A harmony between one's outer self and inner self and the beauty and gracefulness of both are divine blessings and are such special riches for the bestowal of which one should sincerely supplicate to Allah. The greatest teacher of morals, Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) says in a supplication :

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ سِرِّي خَيْرًا مِنْ عَلَانِيَتِي، وَاجْعَلْ عَلَانِيَتِي صَالِحَةً

O Allah ! Make my inner self better than my outer self, and let my outer self be virtuous.²

It is further detailed in this supplication :

اللَّهُمَّ طَهِّرْ قَلْبِي مِنَ التَّفَاقُ، وَعَمَلِي مِنَ الرِّيَاءِ، وَلِسَانِي مِنَ
الْكُذْبِ، وَعَيْنِي مِنَ الْخِيَانَةِ، فَإِنَّكَ تَعْلَمُ خَائِنَةَ الْأَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِي
الْصُّدُورُ.

O Allah ! Purge away duplicity from my heart,

1. *Kanzul 'Ummāl* : on the authority of Buraida.

2. *Tirmidhi* : on the authority of 'Umar.

and hypocrisy from my deed, and untruth from my tongue, and dishonesty from my eye. For verily You know unlawful glances of eyes and what hearts hide.¹

Representing the Hearts

The Prophet of Humanity (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) has represented so thoroughly the over-all needs of mankind in his supplications that people in all times and climes till the Doomsday shall find in them an interpretation of their hearts, a representation of their thoughts, and a provision for their peace. Through them they shall also become aware of such needs which hardly come to one's mind. The following supplication is a relevant example :

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ مُنْكَرَاتِ الْأَخْلَاقِ وَالْأَعْمَالِ وَالْأَهْوَاءِ
وَالْأَدْوَاءِ، نَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا اسْتَعَاذَ مِنْهُ نَبِيُّكَ مُحَمَّدٌ ﷺ،
وَمِنْ جَارِ السُّوْمِ فِي دَارِ الْمُقَامَةِ، فَإِنَّ جَارَ الْبَادِيَةِ يَتَحَوَّلُ، وَغَلْبَةُ
الْعَدُوِّ، وَكَيْدُ الْأَعْدَاءِ، وَمِنْ الْجُمُوعِ فَإِنَّهُ يُنْسَى الضَّجِيعُ، وَمِنْ
الْحِيَانَةِ فَإِنَّهَا تُنْسَى الْبَطَانَةُ، وَأَنْ نَرْجِعَ عَلَى أَعْقَابِنَا، أَوْ نُفَنَّنَ
عَنْ دِينِنَا، وَمِنْ الْفِتَنِ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ، وَمِنْ يَوْمِ السُّوْمِ
وَمِنْ لَيْلَةِ السُّوْمِ، وَمِنْ سَاعَةِ السُّوْمِ وَمِنْ صَاحِبِ السُّوْمِ.

1. *Kanzul 'Ummāl* : on the authority of Umm Sa'id.

O Allah ! I seek Your refuge from immoral manners and actions and desires and diseases, and we seek Your protection from everything Your Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) has sought protection from,¹ and from a bad neighbour in the place of permanent residence (for a fellow-traveller separates at some point), and from the domination of the adversary, and from the reproaches of enemies, and from hunger as it is a bad bed-fellow, and from misappropriation as it is a bad confidant, and from recanting from our religion or apostatizing under duress, and from all trials external or internal, and from the evil day, and from the evil night, and from the evil hour, and from an evil companion.²

Abundance of Provision

Who does not need provision? But how many persons are aware of the fact that the greatest need of abundance in provision arises in old age when the strength to bear hardships and difficulties declines, the ability to earn livelihood peters, and the faculties become feeble, and the desire for comfort and affluence grows stronger? The teacher of wisdom, Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) thus imparts

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1. This sentence is on behalf of those of the Prophet's followers who would approach Allah with this supplication.
 2. *Tirmidhi* ; on the authority of Abi 'Omāma and others

this wisdom :

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ أَوْسَعَ رِزْقِكَ عَلَيَّ عِنْدَ كِبَرِ سِنِيَّ وَانْقِطَاعِ عُمُرِي .

O Allah ! Increase my provision most in my old age and near the severance of my life.¹

Success of the Last Part of Life

Provision is not all. The last part of man's life should be the best and most successful in all respects. The Prophet supplicates to Allah :

وَاجْعَلْ خَيْرَ عُمُرِي آخِرَهُ، وَخَيْرَ عَمَلِي خَوَاتِمَهُ، وَخَيْرَ أَيَّامِي يَوْمَ أَلْقَاكَ فِيهِ .

Make the last part of my life its best, and let my last action be my best, and let my best day be the day I meet You.²

Unexpected Bounty and Unanticipated Affliction

Bounty and happiness are very pleasing, but when they come unexpectedly and all of a sudden, they are pleasing in a unique way. Similarly, if affliction is a thing to be sought refuge for once, sudden affliction is to be sought refuge from a hundred times. Those who have ever suffered from sudden misfortune know the shock of it. But how many think about it and are practically able to seek Allah's refuge from it? The Prophet does not miss it in his comprehensive supplications : he

1. *Mustadrak* : on the authority of 'Aisha.

2. *Tabrānī* : on the authority of Anas.

asks for the former and seeks protection from the latter. He says:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ خَيْرَ الْخَيْرِ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ خَيْرِ الشَّرِّ.

O Allah ! I ask You for unexpected good and seek Your protection from unanticipated evil.¹

Hardship After Comfort

Similarly, impoverishment, destitution, resourcelessness and adversity following pleasure, affluence, happiness and joy become a trial so unbearable that man should seek God's refuge from such a plight. The Prophet seeks Allah's protection against it :

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ زَوَالِ نِعْمَتِكَ وَتَحَوُّلِ عَافِيَتِكَ وَخَيْرِ النَّفَقَاتِ.

O Allah ! I seek Your refuge from the cessation of Your bounty, the recession of Your security, and the suddenness of Your revenge.²

Age of Incapacity

Men have always wished to live long and they keep praying for one another's long life. But the age in which man's faculties fail and when he becomes disabled, decrepit, and dependent on others, is something from

1. *Kitābul Adhkār An-Nawawī* : on the authority of Anas.

2. *Muslim* and *Abū Dā'ūd* : on the authority of 'Abdullāh bin 'Amr bin al-ʿĀs.

which he should seek Allah's protection. The Prophet submits to his Lord :

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْعَجْزِ وَالْكَسَلِ وَالْجُبْنِ وَالْهَرَمِ وَمِنْ أَنْ أُرَدَّ إِلَى أَرْدَلِ الْعُمُرِ .

O Allah ! I take refuge with You from spiritlessness, lethargy, cowardice and senility, and from reaching an age of decrepitude.¹

Covetous Ego and Unprofitable Knowledge

People consider acquisition of wealth and provision as their chief aim, but they do not realize that no amount of riches and resources would suffice a covetous person. An ego that is never gratified is a curse for man, nay, for the whole world. The Prophet has sought Allah's refuge from it and enjoined us to do the same. Likewise, the knowledge that does not create in man Allah's fear and piety and fails to benefit the people, and the ruthless heart, that is devoid of Allah's fear are things against which man should seek Allah's protection, for they have done him more harm than even his enemy. The Prophet has collected them all in the following supplication :

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ قَلْبٍ لَا يَخْشَعُ، وَدُعَاةٍ لَا يُسْمَعُ،
وَمِنْ نَفْسٍ لَا تَشْبَعُ، وَمِنْ عِلْمٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ، أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ
مَوْلَاهُ الْأَرْبَعِ .

1. *Bukhārī and Muslim*

O Allah ! Be You my refuge from the heart that does not fear, from the supplication that is not answered, from the ego that is never contented, and from the knowledge that does not benefit. I seek Your protection from all these four.¹

Fundamental Needs of Life

A fair provision and fair residential accommodation is a fundamental and genuine need of man. At no time does its importance decrease. In the present age it has become so much more pressing that it has developed into an acute social problem. However, the fact remains that the real problem is not of the largeness of a house, but of its sufficiency of room and of man's having a feeling of its spaciousness. Without this feeling of spaciousness, an ambitious person shall find even the largest house narrow and insufficient. This obsession of belittling things and never considering them sufficient is pressing the present civilization and its economic structure as an insoluble problem. The Prophet, endowed with special prudence, supplicates to Allah not for abundant provision and a large house, but for sufficiency of provision and spaciousness in home—a difference men of deep insight would not fail to notice. He says :

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِيْ ذَنْبِيْ، وَوَسِّعْ لِيْ فِيْ دَارِيْ، وَبَارِكْ لِيْ فِيْ رِزْقِيْ.

O Allah ! Forgive my transgression and grant me

1. *Tirmidhī* and *Nassāī* : on the authority of 'Abdullāh bin 'Amr bin al-'Ās.

spaciousness in my home and bounteousness in my provision.¹

Traveller's Needs and Feelings

Travel is an inevitable need of life. Muslim should not take any important step nor make any important move without a supplication and prayer for his well-being. It becomes all the more necessary in an exceptionally important matter, such as going out on a journey, that he supplicates and prays a great deal for Allah's favour. A traveller leaves behind his home and kin, and in the course of his long journey comes upon new places and new people. He is away from his home and people for a period of time. His heart is full of anxieties and expectations. Matters such as worry concerning what is left behind, expectation regarding what lies ahead, preparation for the journey, weariness of the way, remoteness of the destination, and concern for the objectives of the journey keep his mind and heart occupied. At each of these stages he needs Allah's help and protection. Look! how fully the Prophet has covered the traveller's needs and feelings in the following brief supplication? It would be difficult to come up with a supplication more comprehensive than this even if great thought and consideration were to go into its making.

1. *Nasā'i*: on the authority of Abū Mūsā Al-Ash'ari.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ فِي سَفَرِنَا هَذَا الْبِرَّ وَالتَّقْوَى، وَمِنْ الْعَمَلِ مَا تَرْضَى، اللَّهُمَّ هَوِّنْ عَلَيْنَا سَفَرَنَا هَذَا وَاطْوِ عَنَّا بُعْدَ الْأَرْضِ، اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ الصَّاحِبُ فِي السَّفَرِ وَالْخَلِيفَةُ فِي الْأَهْلِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ وَعْثَاءِ السَّفَرِ وَكَآبَرِ الْمُنْظَرِ وَسُوءِ الْمُنْقَلَبِ فِي الْأُمَلِ وَالْمَالِ

O Allah! We seek from You in our journey goodness, piety, and what pleases You of action. O Allah! Make this journey of ours easy and reduce for us the distance of the land. O Allah! You are the Companion of the journey and the Caretaker of the family. O Allah! Be my refuge from the hardship of journey, unpleasant sight, and returning to family and property in loss.

But going on a journey is not the only occasion for supplication and due preparation. When entering a new place of human habitation, one should supplicate to Allah for the good of it. Tradition has it that whenever the Prophet entered any new place, village or town, he would say thrice, "O Allah! Grant us Your bless-

ings here," (اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ لَنَا فِيهَا) and then add,

1. *Muslim, Tirmidhī, Abū Dā'ūd*: on the authority of 'Abdullāh bin 'Amr bin al-'Ās.

“O Allah ! Grant us of its provision” (اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنَا جَنَامًا)

In fact, a traveller (specially when he also bears a message and gives a call) is greatly in need of the love of all the residents of that place so that he feels at home there and his message is well-received by them. But a true and devoted Muslim should, according to his religion and belief, have love for only those who adhere to Faith and virtue. That is the reason why the Prophet prays:

وَحَبِّنَا إِلَى أَهْلِهَا وَحَبِّ صَالِحِي أَهْلِهَا إِلَيْنَا.

O Allah ! Endear us to those who live in it and endear the pious among them to us.¹

A New day and a New Night

A journey, or any important stage of it, does not alone deserve a Muslim's supplication and prayer for Allah's blessings. Each new day and new night of man's life merit his seeking of Allah the good of that day or night and His protection against the evil of that day or night. He should supplicate for an ample share in the blessings, illuminings, and achievements of that day or night. He should affirm that sovereignty is Allah's and testify to this fact at every change and regeneration. There is a tradition that the Messenger of Allah used to

1. *Tabrānī Fil Awsat* : On the authority of Ibn 'Umar

say the following :

أَمْسِيَا وَآمَسِ الْمَلِكُ اللَّهُ، وَالحَمْدُ 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 الْكَسَلِ وَسُوءِ الْكِبَرِ، رَبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عَذَابٍ فِي النَّارِ وَعَذَابٍ فِي الْقَبْرِ.

This night has come upon us in the state that we, nay the whole universe, are Allah's. And all praise is for Him. There is no deity except Him. He is One. There is no partner with Him. His is the sovereignty and to Him is due all praise and He has power over all things. Lord ! I seek the good of this night and of the night to come, and pray for protection against the evil of this night and of the night to come. My Sustainer ! You be my refuge from lethargy and the evil of senility. Lord ! grant Your protection against the chastisement of hell and the agony of the grave.¹

Likewise, the Prophet used to say the above supplication in the morning with the following change :

أَصْبَحْنَا وَأَصْبَحَ الْمَلِكُ اللَّهُ... الخ.

1. *Jam'a-ul-Fawā'id* : On the authority of Abī Mālik.

The morning has come upon us in the state that we, nay the whole universe, are Allah's (till the end of the supplication).

According to another tradition, the Messenger of Allah has taught this morning supplication :

أَصْبَحْنَا وَأَصْبَحَ الْمَلِكُ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ خَيْرَ
هَذَا الْيَوْمِ، فَتَحَهُ وَنَصَرَهُ، وَنُورَهُ وَبَرَكَتَهُ، وَهُدَاهُ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ
مِنْ شَرِّ مَا فِيهِ وَمِنْ شَرِّ مَا بَعْدَهُ.

This morning comes upon us in the state that we, nay the whole universe, are Allah's, the Sustainer of the worlds. O Allah ! I beseech You for the good of this day, its success, support, light, bounty, and guidance, and seek Your shelter against the evil of this day and the evil to come later.¹

Mischief of the Self

The thing one should dread most and profusely seek Allah's protection from is the evil of his own self. The world has seen big disasters come through man's own evil : greatest material and spiritual losses are brought about by the mischief of the self. The Prophet has sought Allah's protection from it time and again. He submits in

1. *Muslim, Tirmidhi, Abū Dā'ūd* : On the authority of Ibn-Mas'ūd.

one of his morning supplications :

اللَّهُمَّ فَاطِرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ، عَالِمَ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ، أَنْتَ رَبُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ، وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَشْهَدُونَ، إِنَّكَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، فَإِنَّا نَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ أَنْفُسِنَا، وَمِنْ شَرِّ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ وَشَرِّكُمْ، وَأَنْ نَقْتَرِفَ سُوءًا أَوْ نَجْعَرَ إِلَى مُسْلِمٍ .

O Allah : Creator of the earth and the heavens and Knower of the seen and the unseen ! You are the Lord of everything. Angels also bear witness that there is no god but You. So we turn to You for shelter from the evil of our selves, and from the evil of and association with the accursed Satan, and from the mischief that we may do to ourselves or another Muslim.¹

Another supplication of the holy Prophet is in these words :

اللَّهُمَّ قِنِّي شَرَّ نَفْسِي، وَاعِزِّمْ لِي عَلَى رُشْدِ أَمْرِي .

O Allah ! Protect me from the evil of myself and grant me courage to set right my affairs.²

Yet another supplication reads like this :

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيْثُ ، أَصْلِحْ لِي شَأْنِي كُلَّهُ، وَلَا تَكِلْنِي إِلَى نَفْسِي طَرَفَةَ عَيْنٍ .

1. *Jam'a-ul-Faw'aid* : On the authority Abi Mālik.

2. *Abū Da'ūd* : On the authority of Ibn 'Umar.

O You the Ever-Living, the Ever-Existent ! I beseech You in the name of Your mercy to set right all my affairs and not to deliver me to myself even for a movement.¹

Fear of Allah and Trust in Him

The most invincible fort of security and refuge from this evil of self and sin is the fear of Allah. Likewise, the only thing to mitigate the severity of calamities is trust in Him. That is why the Prophet supplicates thus :

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَقِمْ لَنَا مِنْ خَشْيَتِكَ مَا تَحَوَّلُ بِهِ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ مَعَاصِيكَ ،
وَمِنْ طَاعَتِكَ مَا تُبَلِّغُنَا بِهِ جَنَّتِكَ ، وَمِنَ الْيَقِيْنِ مَا يُهَيِّئُ بِهِ عَلَيْنَا
مَصَائِبَ الدُّنْيَا .

O Allah ! Grant us such a share from the fear of You as should stand between us and our sins, and such a share from the obedience of You as should lead us to Your paradise, and such a share from the trust in You as should lighten for us the sufferings of the world.²

Source of Mischief and Sin

A source of man's mischiefs and sins and an important and strong factor responsible for them is the love of the world, and regarding its achievements as the highest aim of life : "The love of the world is the height

1. *Tirmidhi* : on the authority of Anas.

2. *Tirmidhi* : On the authority of Ibn 'Umar.

of all wrong-doing." The prophetic taste and temperament are very well revealed in these words : "O Allah ! There is no life but the life of the Hereafter," and also "And verily the house of the Hereafter is for the living." The same supplication is expressed as under :

وَلَا تَجْعَلِ الدُّنْيَا أَكْبَرَ مِمَّنَّا، وَلَا مَبْلَغَ عَلَيْنَا، وَلَا غَايَةَ رَغْبَتِنَا،
وَلَا تُسَلِّطْ عَلَيْنَا مَنْ لَا يَرْحَمُنَا.

And (O Lord !) let this world not be our greatest aim, nor the end of our knowledge, nor the limit of our aspiration ; and appoint not over us one who is not kind to us.¹

Love of Allah is Real Remedy

A true love of Allah is a power which makes religion easy, desirable, and lovable, arouses the natural aversion for sins, purges out the love of the temporal world from the very fibres of being, topples down its greatest glories from view, and gives a firm stand and reassurance in face of great trials. The heart that knew of this love, no grandeur could ever daunt, no beauty could ever bewitch it. As Iqbal says :

It estranges the heart from Here and Hereafter ;
What a marvellous thing is the pleasure of Love !

A formal relation or a legal tie can never replace true love; for mere form or legality leaves loopholes and finds backdoors, knows of wilful interpretations and legal hair-splittings, and gets bored and grows weary. True

1. *Tirmidhi* and *Nassai* : On the authority of Ibn 'Umar.

love, on the other hand, knows no misconstruing, no exhaustion, no boredom, for it is the wound as well as the balm, the path as well as the destination. A Persian poet says:

Lovers know not the journey's exhaustion ;
Love itself is the path, love the destination !

Love of Allah

The Prophet has prayed Allah ardently for bestowing on him this love for Him. The words of a supplication are :

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ حُبَّكَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ نَفْسِي وَ أَهْلِي وَمِنْ الْمَاءِ الْبَارِدِ .

O Allah ! Make Your love dearer to me than my life and my family, and (dearer than) cool water.¹

Another supplication reads :

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ حُبَّكَ أَحَبَّ الْأَشْيَاءِ إِلَيَّ، وَ اجْعَلْ خَشْيَتَكَ أَخَوْفَ الْأَشْيَاءِ عِنْدِي، وَ أَطْلَعْ عَنِّي حَاجَاتِ الدُّنْيَا بِالشَّقْوَى إِلَى لِقَائِكَ، وَ إِذَا أَقْرَرْتَ عَيْنَ أَهْلِ الدُّنْيَا مِنْ دُنْيَاهُمْ فَأَقْرِ عَيْنِي مِنْ عِبَادَتِكَ .

O Allah ! Make Your love dearest of all things to me and Your fear most formidable of all things to me, and sever worldly needs from me by blessing me with eagerness to meet You ; and while You have

1. *Tirmidhī* : on the authority of Abī-Dardā' and Ma'āz.

kept the eyes of worldly people cool with their world,
keep my eyes cool with Your worship.¹

Another supplication is worded :

اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِي حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يَنْفَعُنِي حُبُّهُ عِنْدَكَ ، اللَّهُمَّ فَمَا
رَزَقْتَنِي بِمَا أَحِبُّ فَاجْعَلْهُ قُوَّةً لِي فِي مَا نَحِبُّ ، اللَّهُمَّ وَمَا زَوَيْتَ عَنِّي
بِمَا أَحِبُّ فَاجْعَلْهُ فَرَاغًا لِي فِي مَا نَحِبُّ .

O Allah ! Grant me Your love and the love of one whose love is beneficial for me in Your view. O Allah ! As You have given me of what I like, make it my strength in (seeking) what You like. O Allah ! Whatever You have withheld from me of what I like, make it a cause of increase in what You like for me.²

Allah's Help and Favour

But this love, this submission, this ability to pray, and this riches of remembrance and gratitude depend entirely on Allah's favour and help. That is why the beloved Prophet of Allah once instructed a dear companion in these affectionate words :

يَا مَعَاذُ وَاللَّهِ إِنِّي لَأُحِبُّكَ أَوْصِيكَ يَا مَعَاذُ ! لَا تَدْعُ بِي فِي
دُبُرِ كُلِّ صَلَاةٍ أَنْ تَقُولَ : اللَّهُمَّ أَعْنِي عَلَى ذِكْرِكَ وَشُكْرِكَ
وَحُسْنِ عِبَادَتِكَ .

1. *Kanzul 'Ummāl* : on the authority of Abi Mālik.

2. *Tirmidhi* : on the authority of 'Abdullāh bin Yazīd al-Ansārī.

O Ma'āz ! By Allah I love you indeed. I enjoin on you, O Ma'āz, not to miss the following supplication at the end of any of the five obligatory prayers :
 "O Allah ! Help me with my remembrance of You, my gratefulness to You, and my righteous worship of You.¹

Evidence of a Secure Heart

These are the supplications of Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be on him). They are charged with the light and faith of prophecy, the knowledge and wisdom of the prophets, and full splendours of the perception of the divine which characterizes all prophets (peace be on them) of God. At the same time, they are indicative of the special distinction of Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be on him), the best of Allah's messengers. As the truthful heart of 'Abdullāh bin Salām testified at the very sight of the Prophet's face: "By God ! This cannot be the face of a liar", so would affirm every righteous heart after reading these supplications that they could not be the utterance of anybody but a prophet. Rūmī, the gnostic poet, bears witness to both :

Bliss for the heart which aches with His love,
 The Prophet's face and voice—each a miracle !

The biographical subjects relating to the Prophet, his actions, and his moral graces are a means of identifying and recognizing the perfection of his prophethood and its realms of knowledge. Similarly are his supplications both an evidence and a miracle of his messengership.

1. *Abū Dā'ud* and *Nassāi* : on the authority of Ma'āz ibn Jabal.

How fortunate are the people who, by virtue of being the followers of the Prophet and the recipients of the prophetic inheritance, have received in the form of these supplications riches of the bliss of Here and Hereafter and keys to the blessings and bounties of the Unseen. And what a great misfortune and what a failing of spirit it would be if this great gift were not availed of by them !¹

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1. At this point it is quite natural to state that one of the many losses that those who deny the authenticity of the prophetic Traditions suffer, is their inability to benefit from the Prophet's supplications and his actual words as recorded in the Traditions. The doubts that they have about the correctness and the faithful transmission of the actions and sayings of the Prophet naturally debar them from benefiting from this priceless treasure and using it as a means of supplicating to Allah and expressing their needs to Him. This should be a sufficient penalty for them.

ISLAM AND THE EARLIEST MUSLIMS TWO CONFLICTING PORTRAITS

This latest work of Maulana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi seeks to present an sketch of the earliest, ideal era of Islam, the period of the Holy Prophet and His companions in the light of beliefs, religious traditions and writings of the doctors of two major sects of Muslims, Ahl-e-Sunnat Wal Jama'at and the Ethna Ashari sects, which project two contradictory portraits of Islam and its earliest adherents. It has been left to the discretion, common sense, prudence and better judgement of the readers to decide which of the two portrayals is upheld by the Quran as well as historians, Muslims and non-Muslims, and which of the two presentations of Islam befit the Prophet held to be the most successful Messenger of God as well as the religion laying a claim to show the path of godliness and virtue to all races and nations in every time and clime. pp. 72, price Rs. 10-00 ; Urdu version Rs. 6-00 ; Arabic Rs. 12-00 ; Persian under print.

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