

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Dua and its Etiquettes

By Qazi Fazlullah

While the word “dua” literally means to ask, it technically means invocation and supplication. A creature will invoke only Allah. To invoke any other is called shirk. Allah has said regarding his Messenger and Prophets, “indeed they used to hasten to do good deeds and supplicate us in hope and fear, and they were to us humbly submissive.” And Allah (SWT) ordered us to invoke Him. “And your Lord says, ‘call upon me, I will respond to you: those who disdain my worship will enter hell contemptibly.’” And He accepts dua and responds to it at anytime: “I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon me, so let them respond to me and believe in me that they may be guided.”

It is true that for its acceptance there are a few requirements and prerequisites, and one of these is to call upon Allah humbly: “call upon your Lord in humility and in privacy; indeed He does not like those who exceed the limits.” 7:55

Abu Daud, Tirmizi, Nisa’I, Ibni Maja narrated from No’man ibni Bashir that the Prophet (SAS) said, “dua is Ibadah (worship).” Tirmizi narrated from A’nas that “dua is the love of Ibadah.” Tirmizi also narrated from Ibni Umar that the Prophet (SAS) said, “You the slaves of Allah! Make dua.”

Ibadah is of two types:

1. That which has its appointed time, like the five prayers or fasting in Ramadan.
2. That which has no appointed time, and the Prophet (SAS) recommend it like the nafl prayer. One can perform this type of ibadah at anytime he wishes, except if there is any prohibition, like nafl at sunrise time, sunset time, and when the sun stands in the middle of the day, or like nafl after Fajr prayer or after A'sr prayer. Had there been no prohibition, this restriction would not have applied.

Dua is also Ibadah which does not have an appointed time, and it is recommended. There are certain times and situations during which dua is more likely to be accepted, but one can make dua any time, individually or in congregation.

It has been asked whether one can make dua after prayer and as a group.

This issue requires some juristic prologue. Shariah has its sources: primary and secondary – The primary sources are the Holy Quran, Sunnah, Ijma, or consensus of opinion, and Qiyas, or analogy. Secondary sources are the teachings of the companions, the Shariah of the previous Prophets, customs, usages and conventions, preference or Istehsan (public welfare)

or Istislah, Istishabul Itall (linking to the past), and pre-cautions or Saddaz Zaraii. When Jurists do not find any specific or clear rules in Quran and Sunnah, they then seek secondary sources of Shariah as the solution.

Another important point is that, although Allah has not suspended human intellect totally, but has left a vast field for its intellectual approach and application, In Ibadah the field is restricted so no one can invent an Ibadah of his own, which is a bidah or innovation. The Prophet (SAS) said, “He who innovates something on this matter of ours which is not of it, is rejected.” (Bukhari and Muslim). And Imam Muslim also related, “He who does an act which our matter is not in agreement with, is rejected.”

The words, “which is not of it”, and the words “which our matter is not in agreement with” clearly signify that if it has a base and source in the matter then that is not rejected, but allowed. And Allah said, “And whatever the Messenger has given you, hold it (firmly), and whatever he has forbidden you, then abstain from it, and fear Allah indeed as Allah is severe in retribution.” 59:7

Bukhari and Muslim narrated that the Prophet (SAS) said, “What I have forbidden for you, avoid; what I have ordered you (to do) so do as much as you can of it.” “It was only the excessive questioning of those before you and their disagreeing with their Prophets that destroyed them.”

This verse and Hadith make it clear that what the Prophet did or said to do, may be done, and what he forbade must be avoided. So if there is another thing which he did not do at a specific time, or maybe he had done but it has not been narrated, will this be permissible or recommended practice? This is but a matter of Jurisprudence that as long as there is no negation mentioned by the Prophet or his companions, then that is referred to as permissible or even recommended.

Dari Qutni narrated that the Prophet (SAS) said, "Allah has laid down some duties so do not neglect them; He has set boundaries so do not overstep them; He has prohibited some things so do not violate them, and about some things that he was silent out of compassion for you, not out of forgetfulness, so seek not after them."

This Hadith indicates that where ever the Shari (Allah and the Prophet) is silent regarding an issue, one cannot say it is mandatory or prohibited, and that is why three imams have said, "every thing and every action is Mubah (permissible) except if Shariah has stated otherwise. Imam Abu Hanifa, however, has said this is true except for an act of Ibadah. He says Ibadah needs its source and order in Shariah.

Now, if there is an action introduced by the Jurists, is that a Bidah (innovation)? The Prophet of Allah said, "Whosoever introduced a good

deed in Islam, for him there is the reward of it and another reward equal to it if one practiced the same (Muslim).” Thus, a Bidat will be an act which does not have any basis in Sharia.

The Prophet of Allah used to perform taraweh prayers individually and then performed the same three different nights in Jama'at. And in the time of Abu Bakr, Sahabah used to pray taraweh individually, but the number of rakaat is unclear. When Umar (RA) saw that some people showed laziness in this regard, he gathered people and ordered Ubai ibni Kab to lead them in taraweh praying 20 rakat, and then also lead them in 3 rakat Witr. Thus the Ijma took place, and when Umar saw a good gathering making him happy, he said what a beautiful Bidah this is. It means that every new action is not necessarily a bad Bidah. Yes, he called it Bidah not in a bad sense, but in the meaning of a newly introduced action.

Another example of this occurred in the time of Uthman when he noticed that people were coming late for Jumah prayer. He ordered for an aazan before the one given for Khutbah, and then once again the Ijma took place. These actions were in accordance with Deen, which is why Imam Shafi said that Bidat is of two types, good and bad. So that which is in accordance with Sunnah is appreciated and that which goes against Sunnah is rejected. And Ibni Hazm said that Bidat is a practice not known

from Quran and Sunnah, but these are certain actions upon which there is *sewad* (when the action concerned is originally musbah (permissible) and its aim is good.

The classification of Bidat is related from Salaf like Izzud Din ibni Abdus Salam, Al Qirafi, As Sayuti ash Shami ibnul Arabi, Abu Shamah An Nawawi, Al Aini and others. The scholars have proposed three advantages:

1. Those which Shariah considered, including marriage and eating meat, and its source is in text.
2. Those which Shariah suppressed and abolished, such as usury.
3. Those which Shariah neither considered nor abolished – this does not go against the spirit and object of Shariah, but is in accordance with it, and is not only allowed, but sometimes even recommended.

Imam Tirmidi related a Hadith in this respect: “And that regarding which he (Allah and his Prophet) kept silent about, then that is *afw* (mubah).

Dua is not a thing which is mubah, but rather is a recommended practice without the condition of time, so one can make dua anytime, especially after ibadaat, which brings one close to Allah so he should avail that opportunity and invoke Allah.

The Prophet of Allah used to make dua after ibadaat. He used to make dua at Iftar time and also after Tawaf, Sa'i, Wuqoof (stay at sacred places i.e. Mina, Arafat, and Muzdalafah), and after Jamarat.

As for dua after salah is concerned, no one has ever said, nor can one can say that this is not allowed. Prayer is ibadah and after every ibadah, dua is recommended, as Allah ordered us to recite Suratul Fatiha in each prayer wherein we recite “only you we do worship, and only you we ask for help.”

Imam Tirmidi narrates from Abu Umamah that the Prophet was asked, “Which dua is better heard?” He answered, “That which is made in the last part of the night and after mandatory prayers.” Ibni Abbas and Jalalud Din Muhalli also said in the interpretation of 94:7, “So when one becomes free (from prayer), then make effort in dua.”

Fadl ibni Abbas related that like the Prophet said, “Prayer is two, two rakat. There is *tashahhud* after every two rakat, and submissiveness by raising your hands to your Lord facing your palms. (Tirmidi, Hija'e). Imam Abu Tayyeb Sindhi said it means to raise your hands for dua after prayer – and Imam Nisa-e narrated from A'nas that the Prophet used to stretch his palms open after every prayer (Amalul Yaumi wal lailah).

The Prophet of Allah said to Mu'aaz, "By Allah, I love you, so never miss after every prayer to say, O Allah, empower me for your remembrance, your thanks, and your worship in the best way (Abu Daud, and Nisa'e)." Hafiz ibni Hajar said that Imam Bukhari wrote a chapter on dua after prayer, so that is a rejection to the opinion of those who said that it is not allowed. Then he said in a hadith that the Prophet of Allah used to turn his face to his Sahabah. He also narrated a hadith from Abu Bakr that the Prophet used to say after every prayer, "O Allah, I seek your refuge from disbelief and destitution" (Ahmad, Nisa'e, Tirmidi). This indicates that he used to say this after facing towards the Sahabah.

Mugheerah wrote to Mu'aawiyah that the Prophet (SAS) used to say after prayer, "O Allah, there is no hurdle for what you give, and no giver for what you stopped giving, and no one's effort can avail him anything if you do otherwise." There are many Ahadith in this regard that the Prophet used to make dua after prayer as Abu Dawud narrated from Ali, Bukhari and Tirmizi from Sa'd ibni Abi Waqqas, and Ahmad from Ummi Salmah.

Hafiz ibn ul Qayyum said that there is no source that says that the Prophet has made dua facing Qiblah or turning to his Sahabah. This is his research, and certain scholars have said this is amazing coming from

Hafiz, a great scholar. Aswad al Aamir said, "I prayed Fajr with the Prophet and after he prayed he turned his face towards the people."

Allamah Samhudi narrated from Ibni Umar that when the Prophet of Allah prayed Fajr, he turned to his Sahabah and said, "O Allah bless us in our Madinah, and bless us in our *Mudd* and *Sa* (two types of measurements of grain).

Is dua to be made individually or in congregation?

For us, both are allowed, since dua is proven by the Prophet (SAS), as he ordered his Sahabah to do the same. Now, one cannot imagine that the Prophet (SAS) was making dua and that Sahabah did not join him though they were aware of the blessing of his dua and its acceptance. As for dua in congregation, there are Ahadith regarding it, as Imam Darmi narrated that the Prophet said, "3 people never get together in a dua but it becomes incumbent on Allah not to turn their hands (empty). And Imam Hakim relates that the Prophet (SAS) said, "When a group gets together in dua, some of them make dua and others say *Ameen*, and Allah accepts from all of them. (Kanzul Ummal)

Aisha (RA) said, "That the Prophet used to raise his hands (for dua) till I got tired" (Abdul Razaq). This indicates that she was joining him in dua.

There is evidence that when dua is proven with all its etiquette including raising one's hands and then touching the face.

1. Imam Abu Dawud and Tirmizi narrated from Salman that the Prophet (SAS) said, "Allah is decent, generous, and feels shy of his slave when he raises his hands towards Allah and for Allah to turn it back empty."
2. Ibni Abbas said that the Prophet said, "Ask Allah with the inner side of your palms and not with the back of your hand and when you are done then touch your face with it." (Abu Dawud).
3. Imam Tirmizi wrote a chapter on raising hands in dua and he narrated from Umar that whenever the Prophet raised his hands in dua he never put them down until after he touched his face with them.

Even though dua without raising hands is also allowed, as the Prophet was doing so after eating, whenever he did raise his hands, he touched his face with them, and whenever he made dua without raising hands, he did not touch his face.

4. Abu Dawud narrated from Sa'ib Ibni Yazid from his father that whenever the Prophet raised his hands while making dua, he then touched his face with both hands.

5. Ibn Masud says that “I saw the Prophet in the grave of Abdullah Zulfikar and when his burial was completed, he faced Qiblah and raised his hands.” (Fat’hul Bari).
6. Imam Bukhari narrated that the Prophet asked for water so he could make wudu, and then he raised his hands and said “O Allah forgive your slave Abu Aamir, I saw the whiteness of his arm pits.”
7. Imam Bukhari wrote a chapter on “Raising Hands in dua.” And he quoted two narrations, one from Abu Musa, and another from Ibn Umar that the Prophet raised his hands in dua.
8. Imam Bukhari wrote a Juz (part) on raising hands, and he narrated that the Prophet (SAS) was standing in the cemetery of Baqee and raised his hands. This indicates that raising hands when making dua for the dead is also allowed.

Regarding this Hadith, Imam Nawawi said that it proves that raising hands in dua is recommended – then there are Ahadith in this regard, as Muslim relates from Abu Huraira, that the Prophet (SAS) raised his hands in dua. Bukhari also narrated the same in “Juz Raf’ul Yadain.” Also he narrated from Aishah (RAA) that the Prophet (SAS) raised his hands at the time of the solar eclipse. Imam Nawawi wrote a book by the name of “Al

Majmu” regarding this issue, and he narrated 30 Ahadith relating to raising hands and then touching the face. Then he said that the one who has said that all these Ahadith are confined to their specific places and are not general have made a big mistake. Hafiz Ibni Hajar also said in “Fat’hul Bari” that Ahadith in this regard are many – and what Muslim narrated from Anas that the Prophet (SAS) did not raise his hands but only in “Al Istisqa” (prayer for rainfall), means the way he raised his hands in Istisqa was to his shoulders, while usually he would raise them to his chest. Abdur Razaq narrated from Zuharri that the Prophet (SAS) used to raise his hands up to his chest in dua and then touch his face. This idea is supported with what Ahmad narrated from Ibni Umar that the raising hands above the level of one’s chest is Bidah. The Prophet (SAS) never raised his hands above the level of his chest in dua.

Thus, after all these supporting details, it will be a very brave act of someone to call any of these Bidat (May Allah forgive and forbid). Also, if someone says regarding someone who is not making dua after prayer in a gathering, or if one does not raise his hands in dua on specific occasion, or does not touch one’s face, that this is a sin or a prohibited act. This is also a wrong approach.

We must be careful when we title a Hadith that this is “Saheeh”, or “Daeef”, as this is the job of the specialists in this science, and this is also a matter of research so there will be a Hadith which is Saheeh to one critic and Daeef to another one. Also, as mentioned, every new thing is not Bidah, but rather some acts are not only allowed but needed and recommended. Thus, dua after prayer in a gathering is not a Bidah and it is in fact recommended, as the Prophet did not forbid this in any occasion. However, if some people do the same, one may not condemn them either.

Then, as there are new things for the good of Deen and it's considered a good Hasanah, the scholars considered that as Bidat, “Hasanah”. And in dua the words of Quran and Prophet have its own effect and blessings which is not known to everyone but to “Ulamah” only, therefore it is recommended that the Imam should make the dua with those words and others may say Ameen to have the blessings of those words and of the gathering as well.