

DUA (SUPPLICATION) (PART 4 OF 4): EVEN PROPHETS FEEL DISTRESS AND TURN TO GOD

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In the past three articles about dua (i.e. supplication) we have learned many righteous and inspiring things. We know that dua is the weapon of the believer, therefore, there is no need to resort to despair, or anger, because sharing our grief with God is a way of relieving and overcoming burdens. We have learned that dua is the essence of worship and that there is an etiquette when supplicating God for anything, both in times of need and when we praise and thank Him. We have discussed the way some dua seemingly go unanswered, and finally today, in our fourth and final part, we will look at the way the Prophets made dua.

As we know the Prophets throughout time always had special and close relationships with God. They turned to Him in times of distress and need, and they never forgot to praise and thank Him for the countless blessings in their lives. The Prophets were aware of the importance of patience and gratitude and above all their relationships with God were bonds formed due to their complete and utter submission to His will. However, even with such trust and love they still at times became scared or distressed, and felt alone and overwhelmed.

Consequently, the Prophets turned to God and called on Him to make them patient and steadfast, they asked for help in this life and bliss in the next. They called on God to make their families and companions righteous and patient, and to make themselves and all around them, grateful and serene. Although God loves us to turn to Him and speak the words that flow from our hearts, the words of the Prophets are more complete and submissive to God's will, then we could hope to be. Supplicating God with the duas found in the Quran and the authentic traditions of Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, is a righteous and comforting practice.

When Adam and Eve were expelled from heaven Adam turned to God in repentance.

"Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You forgive us not, and bestow not upon us Your Mercy, we shall certainly be of the losers."(Quran 7:23)

Humankind continues to make mistakes and commit sins but we only harm ourselves. Our sins and mistakes do not harm God. However if God does not forgive us and have mercy on us, we will surely be among the losers.

When Prophet Jonah awoke in the belly of the whale he thought he was dead and was lying in the darkness of his grave. He felt around him and realised that this was not a grave but the belly of the giant whale. He was afraid and raised his voice calling out to God.

“None has the right to be worshipped but you oh God, far removed are you from every imperfection and truly I have been one of the wrongdoers!” (Quran 21:87)

Throughout his life Prophet Job was put through many trials and tests by God but he remained steadfast, patient and was constantly turning to God for forgiveness. Even when he felt at his most helpless he did not complain but turned to God and begged for forgiveness. He said:

“Verily distress has seized me and You are the Most Merciful of all those who show mercy.” (Quran 21:83)

The Quran relates to us the stories of the prophets in order that we might learn from them. They are worthy role models and their lives are not so different from our own. How many times has each one of us sunk to the ground or into a chair in despair? How many times have we felt so physically or mentally exhausted that it seems we will be unable to go on for even one more second?

Prophet Moses was forced to flee Egypt and walk out into the desert to face an unknown future. After walking for more than a week across the burning sands, he came to an oasis. It was there that this man of honour helped the women at the well before flinging himself under a tree and calling out to God for help.

Moses knew that God was the only One who could deliver him from his predicament, so he turned to God and before his supplication was finished help was on its way. Moses was probably hoping for a slice of bread or a handful of dates but instead God gave him safety, provisions and a family.

“My Lord! Truly, I am in need of whatever good that You bestow on me!” (Quran 28:24)

There are lessons for humankind throughout the story of Prophet Moses. When Moses was sent by God to confront Pharaoh, he was afraid that he would not be able to live up to God's demands, but instead of complaining or despairing Moses turned to God and made dua.

***“O my Lord! Open for me my chest (grant me self-confidence, contentment, and boldness). And ease my task for me; and make loose the knot (the defect) from my tongue, (remove the incorrectness of my speech) that they understand my speech.”
(Quran 20:25-28)***

After Moses learned of the great evil his people had committed by building the golden calf, he was angry. However, even amidst such wrongdoing he called upon God to have mercy upon them all.

“You are our Protector, so forgive us and have Mercy on us, for You are the best of those who forgive. And ordain for us good in this world, and in the Hereafter.” (Quran 7:155-156)

King (and Prophet) Solomon was acutely aware of the power of God. He always praised God for any condition that he was put in. He said, **“All praise and thanks is due to God” (Quran 27: 15)**. Solomon also understood that no power or strength would be his, unless he requested it from God. He made dua and asked for a kingdom that would never be surpassed. God granted his request and Prophet Solomon reigned over an empire the like of which we cannot imagine.

“He said, “My Lord! Forgive me, and bestow upon me a kingdom such as shall not belong to any other after me. Verily, You are the Bestower.”(Quran 38:35)

These duas are a small example of how the Prophets made dua. Their stories and their duas are found throughout the Quran. When we read the stories of Prophets Solomon, Joseph, Jacob or Abraham we find that they, and all of the Prophets completely submitted to God. They raised their hands in supplication and requested help from God Alone.

As believers we must never forget that God hears our duas and supplications, and answers. Sometimes the wisdom behind the answers is beyond our comprehension but God desires only good for us. Putting our trust in God and submitting to His will allows the believer to weather any storm, and to stand tall in the face of adversity. We are never alone.

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