



Du‘ā’

To do or not to do, that is the question

Du‘ā’ (supplication) is an essential part of worship in Islam. In fact, it is the essence of worship, the purpose of worship and the actual fact of worship itself. *Du‘ā’* can help avert calamities and suffering by intercepting ruin and misfortune, by the will of Allah ﷻ. There are numerous Prophetic Narrations (*ḥadīths* of the Beloved Messenger of Allah, Muḥammad ﷺ) proving this fact. One such *ḥadīth* tells us that there is nothing more valuable to Allah ﷻ than *du‘ā’*.

Du‘ā’ may be made at any time of the day, in any place and in any noble situation. It may be made by a person individually or collectively in a congregation. One may make a supplication to the Almighty before any other prayer as well as after its performance. There are no specific hindrances in the Sharī‘ah that may obstruct one from making a *du‘ā’* to Allah ﷻ, but, nevertheless, one must at all times observe the etiquettes of *du‘ā’* in order to win its acceptance with the Creator.

I would like to draw your attention to one disturbing issue regarding *du‘ā’* that is beginning to afflict the Muslim Ummah as a whole. There are certain individuals and groups who now declare the collective *du‘ā’* after the congregational prayers as *bid‘ah sayyi‘ah* (evil innovation), and that it has no legal status in the Sharī‘ah, and therefore it is alien to Islam. They try to justify their views by stating that it is due to the *ṣalāh* itself being a supplication that another supplication after it would be totally unnecessary, non-beneficial and ill-founded. They comment that there is no evidence that the Noble Apostle ﷺ had ever made a collective supplication to the Almighty after the obligatory congregational prayer, and that some of those who claim to follow the Ḥanafī school of Fiqh see no evidence that Imām Abū Ḥanīfah *raḥmatu ‘Llāhi ‘alayhi* had ever done likewise. They even go to the extent of the erroneous claim that the respective Imām had forbidden such an act. Such ill-founded allegations are becoming a contemporary commonality.

The following is a Muslim’s answer to the false claims of the exponents and supporters of the anti-*du‘ā’* cult, based on Islamic jurisprudence, which may help to erase any misunderstandings regarding this issue.

There are mainly three ingredients to this issue that, when put together, create a brew that these people object to. Firstly, that it must be a *du'ā'*; secondly, that it must be collective, and thirdly, that it must be immediately after a *farḍ* (definite obligatory) congregational prayer.

It is highly unfortunate of the exponents that they have yet to produce evidence in support of their claim. In Islam, no act or omission is forbidden unless there is evidence against its action or omission, and we shall explain this basic rule later on. First and foremost, we deem it necessary to see the Word of Allah ﷻ, that is the Glorious Qur'ān, and extract the guidance it offers to mankind in general, and to us Muslims in particular, with special respect to this issue.

Evidences in Support of Collective Supplication after Obligatory Congregational Prayers

Evidence from the Glorious Qur'ān

Allah ﷻ says in His Glorious Book, the Majestic Qur'ān:

1. “*ujību da'wata 'd-dā'i idhā da'ā-nī*”¹

(I answer the supplication of the one who supplicates whenever he makes supplication to Me)

Allah ﷻ loves to give and to forgive, which is why He incessantly encourages His believers to call to Him so that He may answer their call. He is always seeking their supplication so that He may attend to their needs. This is the *sunnah* of Allah *la* ﷻ.

In this verse, Allah ﷻ has promised to answer the call of the caller whenever that caller makes a supplication to Him, and please note that there is no statement of restriction here. It is a very general and open verse encouraging us to call to Him unequivocally and unrestrictive of time, place or noble activity. The noble activity may include anything from helping a neighbour take out his rubbish, to the *ṣalāh* in congregation. In short, there is nothing here that prohibits the Muslims from making a supplication to Allah ﷻ after the congregational prayer.

2. “*inna Rabbī qarībun-mujīb(un)*”²

(Verily, my Lord is near, responsive [to supplications])

This verse also encourages us to call to Him whenever and wherever we can, as often as possible and in all decent places, and that He shall answer our call. There is nothing of restrictive nature here either to ask us to refrain from making a collective supplication to Allah ﷻ after the prayer in congregation.

3. “*wa qāla Rabbu-kum 'ud'ū-Nī astajib la-kum*”³

(And your Lord said, “Make supplication to me, I shall acknowledge [it] for you”)

Again, the Mighty Creator ﷻ promises to answer our supplication whenever we make one to Him.

In all three (3) verses above, it is important to note that not one hint is given to discourage us from making a collective *du‘ā’* after the congregational prayer to Allah ﷻ. On the contrary, we have been asked to supplicate to Him frequently and abundantly, irrespective of whether that *du‘ā’* is said before or after the prayer, individually or collectively.

Evidence from the Beautiful Sunnah

1. It was related by Thawbān ﷺ who said: “When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had completed his prayer, he would seek forgiveness thrice and say:
“*Allāhumma Anta ’s-Salāmu, wa min-Ka ’s-Salāmu, tabārakTa yāDha ’l-Jalāli wa ’l-Ikrām(i)*”⁴
(O’ Allah! You are Peace, peace is from You, most blessed are You O He who is Full of Might and Nobility.)

In this *ḥadīth*, we see the Companion ﷺ talking about the *ṣalāh* of the Prophet ﷺ and what he (ﷺ) would do upon its completion. There is no evidence that this was not a congregational prayer nor anything implying or expressing that this *du‘ā’* was not collective.

2. It was related by Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqāṣ ﷺ that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would recite the ‘ta‘awwudh’ (seeking refuge of Allah ﷻ) at the end of every prayer in these words:
“*Allāhumma innī a‘ūdhu bi-Ka mina ’l-jubni wa a‘ūdhu bi-Ka min an uradda ilā ardhalī ’l-‘ūmri wa a‘ūdhu bi-Ka min fitnati ’d-dunyā wa a‘ūdhu bi-Ka min ‘ādhābi ’l-qabr(i)*”⁵
(O Allah! I do seek refuge with You from cowardice, and I do seek refuge with You from that I may reach weak old age, and I do seek refuge with You from the tribulation of the world, and I do seek refuge with You from the torment of the grave.)”

Please also see comments to *ḥadīth* number 1.

3. It was related by Abū Amāmah ﷺ who said that it was asked (from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ), “O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)! Which supplication is the most accepted?”
He (ﷺ) replied, “[The *du‘ā’* made] in the depth of the last portion of the night and at the end of the *fard* (definite obligatory) prayers.”⁶

Here, the Beloved Messenger of Allah ﷺ has told us that the most acceptable *du‘ā’* is the one made after the definite obligatory prayers., and obviously, the definite obligatory prayers have been encouraged to be performed in congregation with other Muslims. The *du‘ā’*, therefore, is most likely to be in congregation with other Muslims

also, i.e. of collective nature. He ﷺ did not restrict the *du 'ā'* to be of an individual nature, nor did He ﷺ prohibit us from making a supplication collectively. In short, this *ḥadīth* alone is a direct proof of the authenticity of the collective supplication after congregational obligatory prayers.

4. Sayyidunā Nu'mān ibn Bashīr ؓ says that the Blessed Messenger ﷺ said:

“*ad- du 'ā' u huwa 'l- 'ibādah*”⁷

(The supplication is [in itself] worship.)

The opposition say that worship is supplication itself, whereas here it says that the supplication is worship; quite the opposite of what the Nūrun min Nūr i'l-Lāh ﷺ said. We, however, as Muslims, do not negate either, for worship, that is the *ṣalāh*, is definitely a *du 'ā'*, but that does not contradict the belief that any *du 'ā'* made outside of the *ṣalāh* cannot be worship. Indeed, collective congregational *ṣalāh* is a collective congregational *du 'ā'*, and collective congregational *du 'ā'* after the *farḍ* congregational prayers is also *ibādah* (worship).

5. Sayyidunā Anas ؓ reported that the Blessed Messenger ﷺ said:

“*ad- du 'ā' u mukhku 'l- 'ibādah*”⁸

(The supplication is the essence of worship.)

Worship includes the *ṣawm* (fasting), the Ḥajj , the recitation of the Qur'ān, the calling of the *adhān*, the helping of the needy, the assisting of a neighbour, the seeking of knowledge, the speaking of the truth, the acting in honesty and sincerity and, of course, the performance of the *ṣalāh* (be it in congregation or solitary). Where the essence of worship is the supplication, which may more commonly be understood with the example of ‘the icing on the cake’, one may very well ask how it may be that the *ṣalāh* in congregation may not constitute worship, which it definitely does. It is therefore very much necessary that we, as Muslims, remain steadfast in our beliefs and practices and never cease to regard the *du 'ā'* as the *mukh* of *ibādah*, i.e. the icing on the cake, with special reference to the prayer in congregation.

This discussion has the potential to continue much further in favour of true Islamic beliefs but the lack of space is quite restrictive in this regard. Nevertheless, the five (5) narrations that we have mentioned above should be more than enough to prove the essence and the practical importance of the supplication after the obligatory prayers, including those in congregation. Moreover, never has any *ḥadīth* crossed my eyes whereby the Noble Apostle ﷺ may have, either directly or indirectly, asked us to refrain from making a collective *du 'ā'* to our Lord and Sovereign, Allah the Almighty, after the definite obligatory prayers.

Evidence from *al-Qawā'id al-Fiqhiyyah* (Islamic Legal Maxims)

“*aṣlu 'l-ashyā'i al- 'ibāḥah*”

This is one of the basic rules of Fiqh and every learned Muslim has encountered it during his studies and legal research. It means that everything in Islam is permitted, basically speaking of course, but then there are some factors that act upon it making that permissible act either *farḍ* (definite obligation), *wājib* (incumbent), *sunnah* (prophetic example), *mustaḥabb* (recommended), *makrūh* (detestable) or *ḥarām* (forbidden), etc.

This Islamic legal maxim is a well-known rule upon which the legal structure of Islamic rulings and injunctions are based. It means, in short, that everything that we say, do, think, eat, drink, etc. is basically a permissible act. That act is rendered *farḍ* when there is solid evidence rigorously stressing upon its performance, and it becomes *ḥarām* when there is solid evidence rigorously stressing upon its abstinence. Likewise do we find the other rulings of *al-kirāhah*, *as-sunnah*, *al-wujūb*, etc. However, when we do not find any form of evidence howsoever that may apply any given act to any specific ruling then such an act shall always be considered as *mubāḥ*, meaning ‘permissible’ because that is its general condition.

From this point of view alone, the *du‘ā’* after the *farḍ* prayers in congregation is *mubāḥ*, that is, permissible, basically speaking of course. Now, we must do a little research to see whether there do exist any rulings that may have an impact on this act and thereby cause to influence its basic *ibāḥah* category of ruling. We encounter the aforementioned *ḥadiths* that consequently elevate the status of the supplication from mere permissibility, that is *mubāḥ*, to being *sunnah*. We do not, however, find anything on the contrary, but would welcome evidence that opposes this Muslim view.

The opposition claim that the collective supplication may not be justified in Islam because, as they claim, the Prophet ﷺ ‘did not do it’.

Now, first of all we must deal with this statement of ‘did not do it’. The simple answer to this is that the mere not doing of an act by the Prophet ﷺ does not nullify it, nor does that prohibit such an act. There are many acts that we do daily which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ‘did not do’. Why do we then do them? How do we justify them? Does Islam specifically announce that only those acts must be done that were done by the Prophet of Allah ﷺ otherwise abstained from? Does the Sharī‘ah say that we must not do everything that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not do? If so, where then would the categories of *mandūb*, *mustaḥabb*, *nāfil* and even *mubāḥ* stand?

Evidence from Custom, Tradition and Contemporary Practises

Urf means custom, and it is one of the important sources of Islamic Jurisprudence, the Sharī‘ah. It comes into use when formulating new laws or by-laws where we fail to find anything of express nature, or implied for that matter, in the Blessed Qur’ān, the Noble Sunnah and other more important sources.

Today, there are billions of Muslims around the globe who supplicate to the Creator of this vast universe individually as well as collectively. They supplicate to Him before going to bed as well as their first act when they wake up. They supplicate to Him before doing anything of good nature as well as after they have accomplished doing something

noble. They even supplicate to Him after the optional as well as after the obligatory prayers, as individuals and in congregations. Now, we may very well ask, are they all wrong? Do they do something of a forbidden nature? If not *sunnah*, is it not even *‘urf*? Is it *ḥarām* to make a *du‘ā’* to Allah ﷻ as they do, that is collectively after the *farḍ* congregational prayers?

Conclusion

The majority of the Muslims all around the globe do not disallow the collective supplication to Allah ﷻ, after the definite obligatory prayers, but rather, they deem it a noble act and encourage it among themselves. This includes the *madhhabs* of Imām ash-Shāfi‘ī *‘alayhi’r-raḥmah*, Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal *‘alayhi’r-raḥmah*, Imām al-Mālik ibn Anas *‘alayhi’r-raḥmah*, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah *‘alayhi’r-raḥmah*, and others.

The individuals and groups of opposition have made a claim which is baseless and misleading from an Islamic point of view. To prove his claim, they must bring forth evidence from a reliable source such as a direct saying of the respectable Imām Abū Ḥanīfah *‘alayhi’r-raḥmah* or documentary evidence from any form of literature related to the respective Imām.

The Beloved Messenger of Allah ﷺ is reported to have said:

*“al-bayyinatu ‘ala ’l-mudda ‘ī...”*⁹

(The burden of proof lies on the plaintiff)

If the opposition do have such a claim with respect to an article of Sharī‘ah, especially the *ibādāt* aspect of Islam, we would like to see some solid documentary evidence, in the absence of which we shall continue to practise upon the age-old Islamic legal maxim: *“aṣlu ’l-ashyā’i al-ibāḥah”* (originally, everything is permissible), the verses of the Glorious Qur’ān and the guidance of the Noble Sunnah, as our Muslim predecessors, the honourable Awliyā’, the respectable Fuqahā’, the Usūliyyūn, the ‘Ulamā’, the Tābi‘is, the Imāms and the Ṣaḥābah have been doing for centuries.

I have tried to keep this as brief and as comprehensive as possible with respect to the understanding of our respectable opposition and to the subject-matter of what they have decided to propagate. There are many evidences I could have presented here to justify the claim of the Ahl as-Sunnah wa ’l-Jamā‘ah and to prove the truth of Islam, but the length of the answer with respect to the lack of importance of the question would not have proven useful. Besides, the claim of these people, being baseless as it is, requires background and a foundation. The foundation presented by the respectable brother is a mere surface under which no firm platform can be found. Nevertheless, I have taken some precious time in presenting the views of Islam and of the Muslims to them and we leave them to reconsider their position and stance and to reassess which side they are on.

We have evidence that the Noble Apostle ﷺ made supplication to Allah ﷻ after the definite obligatory prayers which is why he asked us to do likewise. We have evidence that the common practise of the Ahl as-Sunnah wa ’l-Jamā‘ah, that is the majority of the

Muslims of the world, is to make supplication to Allah ﷻ after every definite obligatory prayer and in congregation. The majority of the Muslims on an issue of Islamic Jurisprudence is never wrong and there are many *ḥadīths* to prove it.

The collective supplication is justified from the Qur’ān, the Sunnah, the Ijmā‘ (Consensus of the Muslims), the contemporary practises of the majority of the Muslims, etc.

We do not, however, have evidence that the Blessed Messenger ﷺ ever prohibited us from making *du‘ā’* collectively after definite obligatory prayers, nor does the Qur’ān prohibit us, nor do we have evidence that Imām Abū Ḥanīfah *raḥmatu ‘Llāhi ta‘ālā ‘alayhi* forbade us from doing so. The al-Qawaa‘id al-Fiqhiyyah are also a positive expression of this.

From where, therefore, we ask, do these learned brothers get the notion that such a *du‘ā’* is prohibited? Where is their evidence? Their claim needs proof; where is it? Does the Qur’ān justify their claim? Does the *sunnah* help them? Will they manage to seek refuge in the *qiyās*? Where does it say that al-Imām al-A‘zam Abū Ḥanīfah *‘alayhi ‘r-raḥmah* prevented us from doing so? To sum it up in one question; How do they justify the prohibition of the collective supplication to Allah ﷻ after the obligatory prayers in congregation?

¹ Holy Qur’ān, Sūrat al-Baqarah (2), Verse 186

² Holy Qur’ān, Sūrat Hūd (11), Verse 61

³ Holy Qur’ān, Sūrat al-Mu‘min (40), Verse 60

⁴ Muslim, Kitābu ‘l-Masājid, Ch. 26

⁵ Bukhārī, Kitābu ‘l-Jihād, Ch. 25

⁶ Tirmidhī, Kitābu ‘d-Da‘awāt, Ch. 79

⁷ Abū Dāwūd

⁸ Kanz al-‘Ummāl

⁹ al-Aḥkām as-Sultāniyyah (al-Māwardī), pp. 80; Subulu-s-Salaam, Part 4, pp. 119; It has also been related by al-Bukhārī, al-Muslim and al-Bayhaqī; See also The Complete Forty Ḥadīth (Imām an-Nawawī)