

Tafseer Al-Baqarah (2: 186)

From the book, Introduction to the Tafseer of the Quran,

by the Ameer of Hizb ut Tahrir, the eminent jurist and statesman, Ata Bin Khalil Abu Al-Rashtah:

﴿وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِي إِذَا دَعَانِي فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ﴾

“And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided.” [TMQ Al-Baqarah:186]

It is reported by Ibn abi Hatim that a Bedouin asked Rasool (saaw) “Is our Lord near, so that we call him silently or far away so that we call him loudly?” The Prophet (saaw) remained silent and Allah (swt) revealed the Ayah, ﴿وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ﴾ **“And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near.”** [Dur manthoor 469/2; Tabari 158/2]

In this ayah, Allah (swt) informs us that He (swt) is near and responds to the Dua of the supplicant when he calls upon. Allah (swt) listens to the dua of his servant and nothing is concealed from Him. He (swt) responds to him and does not disappoint him. Allah (swt) is so near to his servants that such that He hears and sees in the manner that Allah (swt) said to Musa and Haroon (alayhuma asalaam), ﴿إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ أَسْمَعُ وَأَرَى﴾ **“Indeed. I am with you both; I hear and I see”** [Surah Taha: 46]. And the Prophet (saaw) said, «قال الله تعالى أنا مع عبدي ما ذكرني **Allah, the Most High says: ‘I am with my slave when he remembers me and his lips move with my mention.’** [Ibn Majah: 3783; Ahmed 540/2]

Then Allah, the Most Exalted, commands His servants that whilst invoking Him, they should believe in him, obey him and abide by his Shariah and not to invoke him, whilst disobeying him. Their Dua will draw them nearer to Allah, when they undertake all the means that make their Dua answerable. Allah (swt) said, ﴿فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ﴾ **“So let them respond to me and believe in me, so that they might be led alright.”** [TMQ Al-Baqarah:186]

The Benefit of Dua:

Here we need to consider some matters related to Dua, so that the matter is clear for the servant that supplicates to Allah (swt).

1. Dua is a Worship (Ibadah) and it is the brain of worship. Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ﴾ **“And your Lord says, "Make Dua to Me; I will respond to you." Indeed, those who disdain My worship will enter Hell [rendered] contemptible.”** [Surah Ghafir:60]

Here Allah (swt) referred to Dua as worship, as He (swt) said, ﴿عِبَادَتِي﴾ **“my worship”** after He mentions, ﴿ادْعُونِي﴾ **“Make Dua to Me.”** This is like the saying of Prophet (saaw), «الدعاء مخ العبادة» **“The Dua is the brain of worship”** [Tirmidhi 3293 ; Ahmed 271/4].

The Dua is Worship and Allah (swt) loves the servant who supplicates to Him with insistence in His Du'a. RasulAllah (saaw) said, «إن الله يحب الملحين في الدعاء» **“Indeed, Allah**

(swt) loves the insisting persons in du'a" [1 أن فيه] أخرج الطبراني في الدعاء بسند رجاله ثقات إلا أن فيه [1 (فتح الباري: 95/11) عن عائشة رضي الله عنها مرفوعاً (فتح الباري: 95/11) Reported by Tabarani in his Chapter of Dua with a chain of trusted men where it is Marfu (مرفوعاً) Raised in Attribution to RasulAllah) from Aisha (ra). Fath al Baari: 95/11]. Whosoever does not make Dua, he has lost much of the good deeds and whoever refrains from making Dua to Allah (swt) due to his arrogance, then he is one of those about whom Allah (swt) said, **“They will surely enter Hell in humiliation!”** [Surah Ghafir: 60] i.e. they are humiliated, disgraced and small.

2. Allah (swt) clarified to us that whilst making Dua, we should respond to His command, adhere to the Shariah and follow His Messenger (saaw). Allah (swt) said, **﴿فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَيُؤْمِنُوا﴾** **“So let them respond to Me and believe in Me, so that they may be rightly guided.”** [Surah Al-Baqara 2:186]. RasulAllah (saaw) said, **«يدعو الله ومأكله من حرام»** **“He supplicates to Allah but his food and drink are of Haram. So how can his du'a be answered?”** [Tirmidhi 2195, Ahmed 328/2, Muslim 1015, Darami 300/2]

3. The fact that Dua is Worship does not mean abandoning the means. This is clarified in the Quran and the Sunnah. Allah (swt) said, **﴿فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ﴾** **“So let them respond to Me and believe in Me, so that they might be rightly guided.”** [Surah Al-Baqara 2:186] i.e. they are guided to undertake the means to achieve so that the Dua is answerable.

RasulAllah (saw) prepared the army in Badr, arranged the soldiers in their respective positions and prepared well for the battle. Then afterwards he (saaw) entered the hut, seeking support from Allah. He supplicated to the extent that Abu Bakr (ra) would say to him (saaw), **“Only a part of this Dua is enough for you, O Messenger of Allah.”** [Seerah of Ibn Hisham 626/2].

When the Messenger (saw) was given permission to make Hijrah from Makkah to Madinah he utilized all the humanly possible means at his disposal to succeed, whilst making Dua to Allah (swt) to keep the Quraysh away from him, to save him from their plots and allow him to reach Madinah safely.

So instead of going north towards Madinah directly, he (saaw) first went south and hid in the Cave of Mount Thawr with Abu Bakr (ra). He (saaw) used to receive news about the Quraysh and about what they were planning through 'Abd arRahman (ra) b. Abu Bakr (ra). When he (saaw) returned to Makkah, he (saaw) made Abu Bakr's son follow behind him to cover the tracks with his cattle in order to fool the Kuffar of Quraysh. He (saaw) stayed there for three days until the search died down and then he (saaw) began his journey to Madinah Al-Munawwarah. RasulAllah (saaw) did all this while confident that he will reach Madinah safely. He (saaw) replied to Abu Bakr (ra) when the latter feared Quraysh would find them, when he (ra) saw them in front of the Cave. Abu Bakr (ra) said, **“They will see us if they just look down towards their feet.”** RasulAllah (saaw) replied, **«ما ظنك باتنين الله ثالثهما»** **“What do you think about the two with whom the third is Allah?”** [Bukhari: 3380, Muslim: 4295, Tirmidhi: 3021, Ahmed 4/1]. Allah (swt) said, **﴿فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثَانِيَ اثْنَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ﴾** **“Allah has already aided him when those who disbelieved had driven him out [of Makkah] as one of two, when they were in the cave and he said to his companion, ﴿لَا تَحْزَنُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا﴾** **“Do not grieve; indeed Allah is with us.”** [Surah at-Tawba 9:40]

Also he (saaw) said to Suraqah who was on the verge of capturing RasulAllah (saaw) and Abu Bakr (ra) in their Hijrah, so as to lead the Quraysh to them and claim reward.

RasulAllah (asaw) told him, «بأن يرجع وله سوارا كسرى» **“Let him go back for he shall have the imperial bangles of Kisra”** [Rawd Al-Unuf fi Tafsir ibn Hisham By Sahli: 233/2]

RasulAllah (saaw) used to act upon the means, so that we may emulate him (saaw). Whilst he (saaw) was making Dua to save him (saaw) from the kuffar, the Quraish, and to foil their plots, he (saaw) left his house at night and found the kuffar surrounding his house, so he threw some dust in their faces. [Seerah Ibn Hisham, page 483]

He (saaw) was confident that Allah (swt) would respond to his (saaw) Dua and turn them away from him (saaw). This is how they were overtaken by sleep, whilst RasulAllah (saaw) left. Hence making Dua does not mean to neglect the necessary means. Instead the Dua should accompany the means.

The one who wants the Khilafah to be re-established should not be just content with making Dua to achieve it. Rather he should work with the people who are working to establish the Khilafah and make Dua to Allah for its speedy return. He should make Dua to Allah (swt) with insistence, whilst at the same time he should take all the necessary means for it.

This applies to all actions. He acts sincerely for Allah's sake and remains honest to RasulAllah (saaw), makes Dua and imploring Allah (swt) in his Dua. Indeed, Allah (swt) is the One Who hears and responds to the call.

4. Allah (swt) answers the one who makes Dua and answers the distressed servant when he makes Dua. Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ﴾ **“And Your Lord said: Invoke Me, I will respond to your invocation”** [Surah Ghafir: 60]

Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِي إِذَا دَعَانِي﴾ **“And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me”** [Surah Al-Baqara 2:186]. Allah (swt) said, ﴿أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ﴾ **“Is He [not better than your gods] who responds to the distressed one, when he calls upon Him and Who removes the evil”** [Surah An-Naml: 62]

Answering the Dua has a Shariah meaning as clarified by RasulAllah (saaw), «ما من مسلم يدعو الله - عز وجل - بدعوة ليس فيها إثم ولا قطيعة رحم إلا أعطاه الله بها إحدى ثلاث خصال: إما أن يعجل الله له دعوته، وإما أن يدخرها له في الآخرة، وإما أن يصرف عنه من السوء مثلها. قالوا: إذن نكثر. قال: الله أكثر» **“Any Muslim who makes a supplication containing nothing that is sinful and nothing that involves breaking ties of blood relationships, will be given for it by Allah one of these three things: He may accept his request, or save its reward for him in the next world, or turn away from him an equivalent amount of evil.”** Those who heard it said, “We would, then, make many supplications.” **The Prophet (saw) replied, “Allah is more than ready to answer what you ask”** [Ahmed: 18/3, Adab Al- Muftrath by Bukhari: 713]. And RasulAllah (saaw) said, «لا يزال يستجاب للعبد ما لم يدع باثم أو قطيعة رحم ما لم يستعجل. قيل: يا رسول الله، وما الاستعجال؟ قال: «The Dua of the servant will be answered if he does not ask for the cutting of blood ties and is not impatient, It was asked: O Messenger of Allah, what is impatience? He said: impatience is when the servant says, 'I supplicated but my Dua was not heard' and so he becomes distressed and leave making supplication.” [Muslim 4918, Tirmidhi 3303]

Therefore, answering of Dua does not necessarily occur in this world. Sometimes, it occurs in this world, sometimes it is saved for the Hereafter, where the reward is so great, and sometimes the equivalent amount of evil is turned away.

We should make Dua to Allah (swt). If we are honest, sincere and obedient, then we can be confident of an answer, as was clarified by the Messenger of Allah (saw)

5. Answering the Dua does not mean that it changes the Qadr or what was written in the Lawhul Mahfooz (اللوحة المحفوظة Protected Decree) or it is against the Knowledge of Allah. I.e, Answering the Dua does not mean that Allah (swt) did not know the Dua of His servant before and His response to Dua. Similarly, it does not mean that the Dua was not recorded in the Protected Decree. It should not be said how does Allah (swt) respond to the Dua, whilst the Qadr of Allah (swt) is already completed, since He (swt) is eternal and the Writing in the Protected Decree is done with?! It should not be said that the Dua and its answering are not new matters about which Allah (swt) had no knowledge.

The matter is as follows: Qadr is the Knowledge of Allah (swt) i.e. the Kitaabah (كتابة Writing) in the Protected Decree. Everything is written in that, since He (swt) is Eternal. Hence, Allah (swt) knows that this person will make Dua and it was written in the Qadr of Allah that this person will ask such and such and the realization of it will be such and such. Hence Dua is not a new thing that Allah (swt) did not know of previously, or that was not written in the Protected Decree. Similarly, all of the answering is recorded in the Protected Decree and Allah (swt) knows what is Unseen and everything that His servant does, whether his speech or his actions. Everything was recorded before, since He (swt) is eternal. Hence, Allah knows the Dua of the servant and it was recorded. What the answering of Dua by Allah (swt) would be is also recorded.

Du'a and its answering are not beyond the Knowledge of Allah (swt). Instead, the occurrence of both is recorded in the Protected Decree. Allah (swt) knows both the Unseen and the witnessed. Allah (swt) said, ﴿لَا يَغْزُبُ عَنْهُ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ﴾ **“Not absent from Him is an atom's weight within the heavens or within the earth”** [Surah as-Saba:3].

6. Allah (swt) clarifies Dua between verses regarding Fasting. The occurrence of the explanation between the verses is for the sake of highlighting it. The Hikmah (حكمة Wisdom) of mentioning Dua between the verses of Fasting is that the Dua made in the month of Ramadhan is more likely to be answered. Indeed, the month of Ramadhan is the month of sincerely worshipping Allah (swt) and the fasting person is closer to Allah (swt) such that his **Dua is more likely to be answered. As the RasulAllah (saaw) said, الإمام: «ثلاثة لا ترد دعوتهم: العادل والصابر حتى يفتتروا المظلوم ويرفعها الله فوق الغمام يوم القيامة وتفتح لها أبواب السماء ويقول: بعزتي وجلالي «There are three whose supplication is not rejected: the just leader. The fasting person when he breaks his fast, and the supplication of the oppressed person; Allah raises it up above the clouds and opens the gates of heaven to it. And the Lord says: «بعزتي وجلالي لأنصرك ولو بعد حين» “By My Might and Glory, I shall surely aid you, even if it should be after a while.”** [Tirmidhi: 3522 who said this hadeeth is Hasan, Ahmed 305/2]

Hence the mentioning of Dua between the verses of Fasting indicates the urgency of making Dua in the month of Ramadhan, its importance and the glad tidings of its answering. Allah (swt) is near and responds to Dua.