

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Al-‘Āfiyah—How to ask Allāh for Wellbeing, Safety and Security in these Difficult Times

By Abu Khadeejah Abdul-Wāhid Alam¹

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all creation. May Allah extol the Messenger in the highest company of Angels and grant him peace; and likewise, his family, his Companions and all those who truly follow him until the Day of Resurrection.

From the greatest of the blessings of Allah (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) upon a servant is that He grants him wellbeing and safety in this life and in the

¹ Based on an article by Shaikh Khālid Adh-Dhufiri (may Allah preserve him).

Hereafter—wellbeing and safety from desires and diseases, from shirk and kufr², from innovations and disobedience and from all types of sicknesses and ailments—whether in himself, his parents, his wife, his children, his wealth, his possessions, his life and that which affects his Hereafter.

'Ubaidullāh bin Mihsan (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) narrated that Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

مَنْ أَصْبَحَ مِنْكُمْ آمِنًا فِي سِرْبِهِ مُعَافَى فِي جَسَدِهِ عِنْدَهُ قُوَّةٌ
يَوْمِهِ فَكَأَنَّمَا حِيزَتْ لَهُ الدُّنْيَا

“Whoever among you wakes up in the morning secured in his dwelling, healthy in his body, having his food for the day,

² Polytheism and unbelief.

then it is as if the world has been gathered for him.”³

Here, we see that the Prophet (ﷺ) has gathered between safety, security and well-being of the body and he (ﷺ) made it the essence of what is important in the worldly matters. So, whoever does not take advantage of these blessings by showing obedience and servitude to Allah (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) after He has given them wellbeing, security, good health and free time is a person who is lost and devoid of goodness. Ibn ‘Abbās (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

نِعْمَتَانِ مَغْبُورٌ فِيهِمَا كَثِيرٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ الصِّحَّةُ وَالْفَرَاغُ

³ Tirmidhi, no. 2346. Declared to be hasan by Al-Albāni.

“There are two blessings which many people lose out on: health and free time.”⁴

The importance of al-’āfiyah (wellbeing) is reported plentifully from the Prophet of Mercy, our Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) wherein he would encourage his Ummah to supplicate to Allah for al-’āfiyah (wellbeing) and to humble themselves to Allah (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) and make du’ā that He perfects His blessing of wellbeing upon His believing worshipper.

Look, for example, at this advice of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) to his uncle Al-’Abbās (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ).

عَنِ الْعَبَّاسِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ قَالَ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ عَلِّمْنِي شَيْئًا أَسْأَلُهُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ قَالَ سَلِ اللَّهَ الْعَافِيَةَ فَمَكَثْتُ أَيَّامًا ثُمَّ

⁴ Bukhāri, no. 6412.

جِئْتُ فَقُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ عَلِّمْنِي شَيْئًا أَسْأَلُهُ اللَّهَ فَقَالَ لِي يَا عَبَّاسُ يَا عَمَّ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ سَلِ اللَّهَ الْعَافِيَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ

Al-'Abbās bin Abdul-Muttalib said: "I said: 'O Messenger of Allah, teach me something that I may ask Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) for.'

He (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: **'Ask Allah for al-'āfiyah (wellbeing).'**

So, I remained for a day, then I came back and asked again: 'O Messenger of Allah, teach me something that I may ask Allah for.'

So, he (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said to me: **'O Abbās, O uncle of the Messenger of Allah! Ask Allah for al-'āfiyah in the world and in the Hereafter.'**⁵

⁵ Tirmidhi, no. 3514.

The Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) would forbid the people from wishing to meet evil and would often remind them to ask for wellbeing:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ لَا تَتَمَنَّوْا لِقَاءَ الْعَدُوِّ وَأَسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ الْعَافِيَةَ فَإِذَا لَقَيْتُمُوهُمْ فَاصْبِرُوا وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ الْجَنَّةَ تَحْتَ ظِلَالِ السُّيُوفِ

“O people, do not wish for an encounter with the enemy and pray to Allah to grant you wellbeing (al-’āfiyah). But when you have to encounter them, exercise patience and you should know that Paradise is under the shade of the swords.”⁶

The Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) would ask for al-’āfiyah, wellbeing and security each morning and evening as is reported from Ibn ‘Umar (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا) that Allah Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)

⁶ Muslim, no. 1742.

would never off this supplication in the morning and late afternoon:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَافِيَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَفْوَ
وَالْعَافِيَةَ فِي دِينِي وَدُنْيَايَ وَأَهْلِي وَمَالِي اللَّهُمَّ اسْتُرْ عَوْرَاتِي وَآمِنْ
رُوعَاتِي اللَّهُمَّ احْفَظْنِي مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِي وَعَنْ يَمِينِي
وَعَنْ شِمَالِي وَمِنْ فَوْقِي وَأَعُوذُ بِعَظَمَتِكَ أَنْ أُغْتَالَ مِنْ تَحْتِي

“O Allah, I ask you for security in this world and in the Hereafter: O Allah! I ask you for forgiveness and security in my religion and my worldly affairs, in my family and my property. O Allah! conceal my faults, and keep me safe from the things I fear. O Allah! Guard me in front of me and behind me, on my right hand and on my left, and from above me, and I seek protection in your Greatness from receiving unexpected harm from below me.” Abu Dawūd

said: "Wakee' said: Meaning, being swallowed by the earth."⁷

Whoever is given al-'āfiyah has received a great amount of goodness and has achieved an immense blessing from Allah (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى). And if Allah gathers for His believing obedient servant wellbeing with pardon, forgiveness and concealment of his faults, then that is a truly tremendous bounty upon Him from the Lord (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) of all creation.

Mu'ādh bin Rafā'ah reported from his father who said: Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) stood on the minbar (pulpit) and wept. He then said: "Our Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) stood on the minbar in the first year after the Hijrah and wept, and then said:

⁷ Abu Dawud, no. 5074. Declared saheeh by Al-Albāni.

سَلُوا اللَّهَ الْعَفْوَ وَالْعَافِيَةَ فَإِنَّ أَحَدًا لَمْ يُعْطَ بَعْدَ الْيَقِينِ خَيْرًا مِنَ
الْعَافِيَةِ

“Ask Allah for pardon and al-’āfiyah, for verily, no one has been given anything better, after the certainty [of belief], than al-’āfiyah.”⁸

Supplicating for al-’āfiyah is from the greatest of supplications and the best of what a person can ask for from his Lord (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى). Abu Hurayrah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) narrated that Allah’s Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: “There is not a supplication that is made by a person better than:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْمُعَافَاةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ

⁸ Tirmidhi, no. 3558, declared saheeh by Al-Albāni.

“O Allah, I ask You for wellbeing and security in this world and in the Hereafter.”⁹

The Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) forbade people from supplicating for punishment to be hastened upon themselves. Instead a person should ask Allah for wellbeing, security and safety in this world and in the Hereafter. Anas bin Mālik (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) narrated that the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) visited a man who had grown as weak as a new born chick. So, the Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said to him: **“Did you not make du’ā to Allah for anything regarding this affliction?”**

He replied: **“Yes. I supplicated saying: Impose punishment upon me earlier in this**

⁹ Ibn Mājah, no. 3851, declared saheeh by Al-Albāni.

world, that which you would impose upon me in the Hereafter.”

Thereupon, Allah’s Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: **“Glorified be Allah, the One free of all imperfections! You have neither the strength nor the ability to take that upon yourself. Why did you not say instead,**

اللَّهُمَّ آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

“O Allah, grant us good in the world and good in the Hereafter, and save us from the torment of Fire.” Then the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) made this supplication for him and he was cured.¹⁰

Allah’s Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used seek refuge with Allah (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) by mentioning His attributes. So, he would seek refuge in Allah’s

¹⁰ Muslim, no. 2688.

Mu'āfāt (His Security, Safety and Wellbeing) from being struck by His anger and punishment. 'Ā'ishah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا) said: "I noticed the Messenger of Allah (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was missing one night, and I found him when he was prostrating with his feet held upright, and he was saying:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِرِضَاكَ مِنْ سُخْطِكَ وَأَعُوذُ بِمُعَافَاتِكَ مِنْ
عُقُوبَتِكَ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْكَ لَا أَحْصِي ثَنَاءً عَلَيْكَ أَنْتَ كَمَا
أَثْنَيْتَ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ

"O Allah, I seek refuge in your pleasure from Your wrath, I seek refuge in your Safety and Security (Mu'āfāt) from your punishment, and I seek refuge in You from You. I cannot enumerate your praise, for You are as You have praised yourself."¹¹

¹¹ An-Nasā'ee, no. 1100.

And he (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) would seek refuge with Allah from a good state being altered to a bad one:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ زَوَالِ نِعْمَتِكَ وَتَحَوُّلِ عَافِيَتِكَ وَفُجَاءَةِ
نِقْمَتِكَ وَجَمِيعِ سَخَطِكَ

“O Allah, I seek refuge in You from the withdrawal of your blessings, and the change of your safety and security of me, and from the suddenness of your wrath, and from your every displeasure.”¹²

It is seeking protection with Allah and seeking His aid and being humble before Him that will lift from the Muslims these afflictions, diseases and tribulations. The affair is with Allah, the Most High. This world is His possession as

¹² Muslim, no. 2739.

is the Hereafter, His alone—He is our Lord, and there is no true Lord besides Him.

وَإِنْ يَمَسُّكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ ۗ وَإِنْ يَمَسُّكَ
بِخَيْرٍ فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

“And if Allah touches you with harm, none can remove it but He, and if He touches you with good, then He is Able to do all things.”

وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ ۗ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ

“And He is the Irresistible, above His slaves, and He is the All-Wise, Well-Acquainted with all things.” (Al-An’ām: 17-16)

From the mightiest of affairs that repel afflictions and prevent them even before they occur is returning to Allah (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى), and to fear Him as He deserves to be feared, to be humble before Him, to obey Him and His Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) as you have been commanded

—and to abandon sinful behaviour and to hasten towards piety.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمَمٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِالْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَضَرَّعُونَ

“Verily, We sent Messengers to many nations before you, O Muhammad—and We seized them with extreme poverty or loss in wealth, loss in health and with calamities so that they might believe with humility.”

فَلَوْلَا إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوا وَلَكِن قَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ
الشَّيْطَانُ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

“When Our Torment reached them, why then did they not believe with humility? But their hearts became hardened, and Shaitan beautified to them that which they used to do.” (Al-An’ām: 42-43)

A Muslim should be constant in supplicating to Allah and seeking His protection and refuge. The Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used to supplicate to Allah by saying¹³:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْبَرَصِ وَالْجُنُونِ وَالْجُذَامِ وَمِنْ سَيِّئِ
الْأَسْقَامِ

¹³ Abu Dawud, no. 1554.

“O Allah! I seek refuge in You from leukoderma¹⁴, insanity, leprosy¹⁵ and from [all] terrible diseases.”

May Allah make us from the sincere followers of the Prophets, and true worshippers of Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ), able to control our desires and to be patient upon hardships suffering. Allah (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) stated:

¹⁴ Vitiligo also called as leukoderma is an autoimmune disorder wherein the immune system of the body attacks the healthy cells and, in turn, starts affecting the body. The condition is characterised by white patches on the skin that develops as a result of melanocytes within the skin.

¹⁵ Leprosy is an infectious disease that causes severe, disfiguring skin sores and nerve damage in the arms, legs, and skin areas around the body. The disease has been around since ancient times.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ
الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُم لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

“Indeed, Allah orders justice, good conduct and giving generously to relatives. And He forbids immorality, evil deeds and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded.” (An-Nahl 16:90)

And all praise is for Allah the Lord of all creation—and peace and blessing be upon the Messenger, his family, his Companions and all those who truly follow him until the Day of Resurrection.

أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ ذَنْبٍ فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ
هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ