Benefits From *al-Istikharah* Prayer

Compiled & translated

By

Abbas Abu Yahya

Jabir bin Abdullaah *–RadhiAllaahu anhu-* said the Messenger of Allaah *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam-* used to teach us *al-Istikharah* (a prayer said for seeking blessings in carrying out a decision) for all matters, just like he used to teach us a chapter from the Qur'aan, he would say: If any of you intends to undertake a matter then he should pray two *Rakah* other than an obligatory prayer then he should say

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ ، فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ ، وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ خَيْرٌ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي أَوْ قَالَ عَاجِلِ أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ فَاقْدُرْهُ لِي وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ شَرٌّ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي أَوْ قَالَ فِي عَاجِلِ أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي وَاصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ وَاقْدُرْ لِيَ الْخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ ثُمَّ أَرْضِنِي بِهِ

O Allaah I request of You with Your knowledge, and by Your Power I seek capability, and I ask of you of your great favour, since indeed You are the One who is able while I am not, and You know and I do not, and You are the One who knows the unseen. O Allaah if You know that this matter – here he mentions his need - is good for me in this world and for my living and for the matters of my Hereafter – or he said, for my affairs now and the future – then decree it for me and make it easy for me and bless it for me. And if You know that this matter is evil for me in this world and for my life and for the matters of my Hereafter – or he said, for my affairs now

and the affairs of my future – then turn it away from me and turn me away from it, and decree goodness for me where ever it may be and make me pleased with it.

[Taken from: 'Kalimah Tayyib' by Shaykh-ul-Islaam Ibn Taymeeyah p.115, collected by Bukhari (d.256 A.H.)]

Benefits:

1- Shaykh ul-Islaam Ibn Taymeeyah (d.728) *-Rahimullaah-* said :

'The one who seeks guidance from the Creator and he consults the creation and is firm in his issue, will not have any regret.

Allaah Ta'ala said:

<< and consult them in the matter. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allaah, certainly, Allaah loves those who put their trust (in Him). >> [3:159]

Qatada *-Rahimullaah-* said: 'There are not a people who consult over an issue desiring the Face of Allaah except that they are guided to what leads them to their matter.'

[Hadeeth Salaatul - *al-Istikharah* by Dr. Aasim Qurutee p.50]

[The Connection with *Tawheed*]

2 - Shamsuddeen Muhammad bin Abee Bakr Ibn Qayyim aj-Jawzeeyah (d.751) *-Rahimullaah-* said:

'Allaah compensated the Muslims by giving them this supplication, which is *Tawheed,* and it is being in need of Allaah, servitude of worship, reliance upon Allaah, asking the One in whose Hand is all goodness, Who Alone can turn away evil.

He Alone who, if He opens up Mercy for His slave then there is none who can seclude a person from that mercy, and if He (Allaah) withholds it then none can send mercy to a person whether it is using omens, astrology or lucky stars.

This *Dua'* is the good fortune for the happy person, it is good fortune for the people of happiness and success, those for whom Allaah gave them happiness before, and it is not good fortune for the people of *Shirk* and wretchedness, those whom associate another deity with Allaah, then soon will they come to know.

This *Dua'* includes the confirmation and testification of the existence of Allaah – *Subhanahu wa Ta'ala*. The confirmation and testification of His Perfect Attributes, from the perfection of Knowledge and Capability and universal Will. And it includes the confirmation and testification of Allaah's Lordship and entrustment of this matter to Him – *Ta'ala* – and seeking aid from Him, and relying upon Him, and a person leaves the responsibility from himself and acquits himself from any capability and strength except that it is with Allaah *Ta'ala*. It also includes the acknowledgement of the slave of Allaah of the weakness of his knowledge and his own interests and his own capability upon these things, and his desire for them, and that all of these things are in the Hand of his Guardian and his Originator and his true Lord. . . . .'

Ibn al-Qayyim *-Rahimullaah-* continues:

'So the purpose of *al-Istikharah* is to rely upon Allaah and entrustment to Him and the capability to fulfill the action with Allaah's Capability, His knowledge. And that Allaah chooses good for His slave, and this is from those things which necessitate being pleased with Allaah as the Lord. As a person will not taste the flavour of *Eemaan* if he does not have these things (reliance, entrustment etc), and if he is pleased with destiny after *al-Istikharah* then that is a sign of happiness.'

[Taken from 'Za'ad al-Ma'aad' by Ibn al-Qayyim 2/443-445]

Regarding the importance of *al-Istikharah*

3 – The author: Abdullaah bin Muhammad al-Hamadi says:

'Indeed the human being has been created weak, and is in need of Allaah *-Ta'ala-* in all his matters and that is because a human does not know from where good and evil will occur in the future from incidents and events.

This is why, from the Wisdom of Allaah - *Subhanahu* - and from His Mercy to His slaves, He legislated for them this *Dua'* so that they can come closer to their Lord and that they can seek refuge with Him, and that He will direct them to the path leading towards good and benefits.

Indeed the Muslim slave of Allaah is upon certainty in which there is no doubt that the management of all matters and the execution of them is in the Hand of Allaah *-Subhanahu wa Ta'ala* - and He is the One who destines and executes whatever He wills in His creation.

As Allaah Ta'ala says: << And your Lord creates whatsoever He wills and chooses, no choice have they (in any matter). Glorified be Allaah, and exalted above all that they associate as partners (with Him). And your Lord knows what their chests conceal, and what they reveal. And He is Allaah; *Lâ ilâha illa Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He). His is all praise, in the first (i.e. in this world) and in the last (i.e. in the Hereafter). And for Him is the Decision, and to Him shall you (all) be returned. >> [al-Qassas: 68-70]

'Allaama Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Qurtubi al-Maliki (d. 671 A.H.) *-Rahimullaah-* said:

'Some of the scholars have said: It is not appropriate for anyone to precede upon a matter from the matters of the *Duniya* until he asks Allaah for guidance in the matter by praying two *Rakat Salaat -ul-Istikharah*.' [al-Jamia' al-Hakaam al-Qur'aan (13/202)]

[Following the Sunnah & the Salaf]

Indeed the Salaf as-Salih understood this meaning and would seek guidance from their Lord in all their matters.

[The author brings an example of when Zaynab *–RadhiAllaahu anha-* married the Messenger of Allaah *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam-* and she prayed *al-Istikharah*. The scholars mention that she did this fearing her shortcomings in fulfilling the rights of the Messenger of Allaah.]

Then he continues:

'This is how the Companions *–RadhiAllaahu anhum-* were eager to follow the Sunnah and to rely upon Allaah *-Subhanahu wa Ta'ala-* and seek aid from Him in preceding with their matters.

And we follow the methodology of the Companions and those who came after them from the Salaf as-Salih that is why it is upon us to revive this Sunnah in our lives and rely upon our Lord *-Subhanahu -* for He is The Best Master and The Best Guardian, Disposer of affairs.

[Taken from 'Kashf as-Sitaarah an Salatul-*Istikharah*' p.15-17]

4 – Shaykh Muhammad Hayaat As-Sindi *-Rahimullaah-* (d. 1163 A.H.) said:

'Regarding the saying in the *Dua'*: 'If you know that this matter': This is not a doubt about the knowledge of Allaah Ta'ala, rather it means; the slave's absence of knowledge compared to Allaah's Knowledge *-Subhanahu wa Ta'ala-*, since it is impossible for something to be good, and The all-Knowing and The All-Aware not have knowledge of it.'

[Hasheeyat as-Sindi 'ala Nisa'ee (6/80) [Hadeeth Salaatul *-Istikharah* by Dr. Aasim Qurutee p.40]

[After the Decision has been made]

Shaykh Muhammad bin Umar Bazmool said:

'That *al-Istikharah* is not done when a person is uncertain about the matter at hand; because the Prophet *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam-* said: 'If any of you intends to undertake a matter' and that the whole of the *Dua'* indicates to this point.

So if a Muslim is uncertain about a matter, and he intends to pray *al-Istikharah* , then he should make a choice between the two matters and then pray *al-Istikharah* , and then after *al-Istikharah* he executes that matter, and if it was good then Allaah will make it easy for him and bless him in that, and if it was not good for him, then Allaah turns it away from him and makes easy for him that in which there is good by the permission of Allaah -*Subhanahu wa Ta'ala.*

[Taken from: 'Buggeeyat al-Mutattawa' fee salat at-tattawa' p.105]

5 - What should be done after *al-Istikharah*?

Shaykh 'Aasim al-Qurutee said:

'Shaykh Kamal uddeen Muhammad bin Ali bin AbdulWahid bin az-Zamalakaani (d.771 A.H.) said:

'If a person prays two *Rakah al-Istikharah* for a matter, then he should after that do what appears to him, whether his soul becomes delighted to his own-self or not, since praying *al-Istikharah* is good, even if it does not cause one to be happy with his own self. ……. And there is nothing in the hadeeth that indicates that the soul should become relaxed as a condition for *al-Istikharah* to be accepted.'

['Tabbaqqat ash-Shafa'eeyah al-Kubra' (9/206)]

And Shaykh Muhammad Badr 'Aalaam said:

'And know that the scholars of the past and the present indeed pointed out that it is not conditional for *al-Istikharah* that the person who made *al-Istikharah* sees a dream or that someone speaks to him or something occurs to his heart and mind. But rather Allaah Ta'ala makes his heart incline or lean to the side which causes his heart to be happy and is resolute upon this.'

['al-Badr as-Saaree ila Fayd al-Baari' 2/247-248]

[Seeing a Dream]

Shaykh Muhammad 'AttaAllaah Haneef *-Rahimullaah-* (d. 1408A.H.) said:

'Likewise, there is nothing in the narrations mentioning sleep after *al-Istikharah* prayer or recognizing that which is better for that person of what he may see in a dream.

I bring attention to this, because many of the people claim that *al-Istikharah* is seeking information from Allaah Ta'ala and seeking consultation from Him, so they invent principles for *al-Istikharah* which the Messenger of Allaah *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam-* did not bring. Then if they do not see a dream in their sleep, they go and seek guidance from others whom they think are righteous people. Upon my life, indeed this action of theirs is from a type of fortune telling which the Messenger of Allaah *-sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam-* prohibited and it negates the *Sharia'* aim of *al-Istikharah* .'

He continues: '[That *al-Istikharah* is having] *Tawwakul* (reliance upon Allaah) before the action, and being pleased with it after it. So whoever relied upon Allaah before it, and was pleased with what it fulfilled after *al-Istikharah* then he has established *al-Uboodeeyah* (servitude of worship for Allaah).'

['Taleeqat as-Salafeeyah ala Sunnan an-Nisa'ee' (2/67) [Hadeeth Salaatul -*Istikharah* by Dr. Aasim Qurutee p.61-63]

All Praise belongs to Allaah, may His peace and blessings be upon our final Prophet Muhammad, his family, his Companions and all those who follow his guidance.