

98445 - When a Muslim says du'aa', should he start with du'aa' for himself or for others?

the question

What should a Muslim do regarding du'a, should he start by making du'a for himself or for all Muslims first? I noticed the du'as in the holy Quraan start by self then others. Like in the following ayah: "Our Lord! Forgive us, and our brethren who came before us into the Faith, and leave not, in our hearts, rancor (or sense of injury) against those who have believed. Our Lord! Thou art indeed Full of Kindness, Most Merciful.".

Detailed answer

Firstly:

The custom of ending recitation of one or more verses from the Qur'aan with the phrase Sadaqa Allaahu'l-'Azeem (Allaah the Almighty has spoken the truth) has no basis in the Sunnah. We have discussed the ruling on this issue in the answer to questions no. [2209](#) and [10119](#).

Secondly:

It is mustahabb for the Muslim to put himself before others when saying du'aa', and there is evidence for that including the following:

1 – It was narrated that 'Abd-Allaah ibn Mas'ood (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "When one of you prays, let him say: al-Tahiyyatu Lillaahi wa'l-salawaatu wa'l-tayyibaat; al-salaamu 'alayka ayyuha'l-nabiyyu wa rahmat-Allaahi wa barakaatuhu; al-salaamu 'alayna wa 'ala 'ibaad-illaah il-saaliheen (All compliments, prayers and good words are due to Allaah; peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the mercy of Allaah and His blessings; peace be upon us and upon the righteous slaves of Allaah). For if you say that it will reach every righteous slave in the heavens and on earth. (Then say:) Ash-hadu al-laa ilaaha ill-Allaah wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadaan 'abduhu

wa rasooluhu (I bear witness that there is no god except Allaah and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger)."

Narrated by al-Bukhaari (797) and Muslim (402).

Al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar al-Asqallaani (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

The words "al-salaamu 'alayna (peace be upon us)" are taken as evidence that it is mustahabb to start with oneself when saying du'aa'. In al-Tirmidhi there is a saheeh hadeeth from Ubayy ibn Ka'b which says that when the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) mentioned anyone and prayed for him, he would start with himself. The original version is in Muslim. Another example is the words of Nooh and Ibraaheem (peace be upon them) as it says in al-Tanzeel.

Fath al-Baari (2/314)

2 – The lengthy hadeeth of Ibn 'Abbaas about the story of Moosa and al-Khidr (peace be upon them both) – which is the report which al-Haafiz referred to and said that it is in al-Tirmidhi and the original version is in Muslim. In it, it says:

"Then they proceeded until they came to some boys who were playing, and al-Khadr went straight to one of them, and killed him. Moosa (peace be upon him) was greatly distressed by that and said: 'Have you killed an innocent person who had killed none? Verily, you have committed a thing Nukr (a great Munkar — prohibited, evil, dreadful thing)!' The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Were it not that he was too hasty he would have seen wondrous things, but he was seized with fear of blame for his companion. Moosa said: 'If I ask you anything after this, keep me not in your company, you have received an excuse from me.' If he had been patient he would have seen wondrous things." He (the narrator) said: When he mentioned any of the Prophets he would start with himself: "May Allaah have mercy upon us and upon my brother."

Al-Nawawi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

Our companions said: This shows that it is mustahabb for a person to start with himself when saying du'aa' concerning matters of the Hereafter. As for worldly matters, proper etiquette is to show preference to others and put others before oneself.

Sharh Muslim (15/144)

Al-Suyooti (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

Hence they recommended that the one who is supplicating should start with du'aa' for himself before he says du'aa' for others, because that is more likely to receive a response, as he will be more sincere, more submissive towards Allaah, more eloquent in expressing his need, and less likely to have a feeling of pride and self-admiration. This is the way of the Prophets and Messengers. ... and he quoted some of their du'aa's, which we shall quote below.

Al-Shamaa'il al-Shareefah (p. 139).

3 – It was narrated that Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) passed by the graves of Madeenah and he turned to face them and said: "Peace be upon you, O inhabitants of the graves. May Allaah forgive us and you. You have gone ahead of us but we will follow you."

Narrated by al-Tirmidhi (1053); he said: (it is) hasan ghareeb. Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi.

Imam al-San'aani (may Allaah have mercy on him) said, discussing what is learned from this hadeeth and another, similar report:

These two ahaadeeth indicate that when a person says du'aa' for someone or prays for forgiveness for him, he should start with du'aa' for himself and asking for forgiveness for himself. This is indicated in many Qur'aanic du'aa's: "Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren" [al-Hashr 59:10] and "and ask forgiveness for your sin, and also for (the sin of) believing men and believing women" [Muhammad 47:19] and others.

Subul al-Salaam (2/243).

4 – This is the way of the Prophets (peace be upon them). For example:

(a) The Prophet of Allaah Moosa (peace be upon him):

“Moosa (Moses) said: ‘O my Lord! Forgive me and my brother, and admit us into Your Mercy, for you are the Most Merciful of those who show mercy’”

[al-A’raaf 7:151]

(b) The Prophet of Allaah Nooh (peace be upon him):

“ ‘My Lord! Forgive me, and my parents, and him who enters my home as a believer, and all the believing men and women. And to the Zaalimoon (polytheists, wrongdoers, and disbelievers) grant You no increase but destruction!’”

[Nooh 71:28]

(c) The Prophets of Allaah Ibraaheem and Ismaa’eel (peace be upon them):

“Our Lord! And make us submissive unto You and of our offspring a nation submissive unto You, and show us our Manaasik (all the ceremonies of pilgrimage — Hajj and ‘Umrah), and accept our repentance. Truly, You are the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful.

129. “Our Lord! Send amongst them a Messenger of their own (and indeed Allaah answered their invocation by sending Muhammad ﷺ, who shall recite unto them Your Verses and instruct them in the Book (this Qur’aan) and Al-H (full knowledge of the Islamic laws and jurisprudence or wisdom or Prophethood), and purify them. Verily, You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise”

[al-Baqarah 2:128, 129]

(d) The Prophet of Allaah Ibraaheem (peace be upon him):

(i)

“O my Lord! Make me one who performs As-Salaah (Iqamat-as-Salaah), and (also) from my offspring, our Lord! And accept my invocation.

41. “Our Lord! Forgive me and my parents, and (all) the believers on the Day when the reckoning will be established”

[Ibraaheem 14:40, 41]

(ii)

“And (remember) when Ibraaheem (Abraham) said: ‘O my Lord! Make this city (Makkah) one of peace and security, and keep me and my sons away from worshipping idols”

[Ibraaheem 14:35]

5 – It is also the action of the believers:

“And those who came after them say: ‘Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful”

[al-Hashr 59:10]

And Allaah knows best.