

SUMMER IMMERSION

DIVINE ADDRESS



Mufti Abdul Rahman Waheed

SESSION 4

Du'a of Submission

إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا
أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٦٣﴾

Inna salati wa nusuki wa mahyaya wa mamati lillahi Rabbi al-'alamin. La sharika lahu wa bidhalika umirtu wa ana awwalu al-muslimin.

Say, "Indeed my prayer, my sacrifice, my life, and my death are all for Allah—Lord of all worlds. He has no partner. So I am commanded, and so I am the first to submit." (6:162-163)

- This du'a mentions four specific things in a deliberate, progressive sequence that broadens our submission to Allah.
- It transitions from a single act of worship to all acts of worship, to our entire life, right up until the moment of death.
- 1. Salah:
 - إِنَّ صَلَاتِي (Inna ṣalātī): Indeed, my prayer.
 - Allah explicitly mentions Salah first. It serves as the foundation of Islam.
 - A believer's journey begins with Salah, which establishes discipline in all other aspects of life. It is the first obligation after Tawhid (declaring the Oneness of Allah).
 - Claiming to be a Muslim means surrendering to Allah. If someone cannot dedicate just a few minutes to pray five times a day, how can they truly surrender their entire life to His will?"

- Salah is what teaches us submission to Allah before life demands our submission in other things.
- If we truly love Allah, our daily prayers are the first proof of our servitude to Him.
- Umar ibn al-Khattab commented: The reason why Allah brought Salah first in this ayah is because whoever preserves it and guards it, has preserved his entire religion and everything else he has preserved. Whoever neglects it, will be even more neglectful of everything else.
 - Meaning, discipline in Salah naturally translates to discipline in everything else.
- Salah must anchor our daily lives. Prioritizing our prayers in their established times should be the very first focus of our day, preceding all other worldly matters.
- Allah does not need our prayers; rather, we are the ones who need Him. Every time we hear the adhan, it is a gentle reminder to pause and ask ourselves: will we answer Allah's call before everything else?
- If we don't reorient our hearts around Salah we will slowly drift away from the Deen.
- Ibn Qayyim notes the struggle with performing Salah:
 - A person who is at the beginning of their journey to Allah finds acts of ibadah burdensome because his heart has not yet developed intimacy with their Lord. But once his heart becomes intimate with Allah, the burdens disappear and the prayer becomes the coolness of his eyes, it becomes his strength and his delight.
- The struggle isn't with the prayer itself, but with a heart that hasn't yet tasted its sweetness. This spiritual joy comes to those who remain steadfast, guarding their Salah consistently until Allah opens the door to that sweetness.

- There will be days when worship feels difficult, but we have to push through it out of love for Allah. Allah loves us and is always waiting for us to return to Him.
- 2. Sacrifice:
 - وَنُسُكِي (Wa nusukī): And my rites of sacrifice (or acts of worship).
 - Nusuk — Refers to sacrifice; specifically used for the sacrificing of an animal.
 - The scholars mention although it is associated with animal sacrifice, it refers to every act of worship.
 - Performing acts of worship for the sake of Allah requires sacrifice. The only path to get close to Allah is through sacrifice.
 - The word also represents the greatest financial act of worship; zakat. Zakat is frequently paired with Salah, with the two acts of worship appearing side-by-side consecutively in numerous Qur'anic verses.
 - Nusuk is asking: What are you willing to surrender for the sake of Allah? As believers, we must be prepared to let go of anything for Him.
 - True worship always demands sacrifice, which is the essence of nusuk. It requires the willing surrender of our own desires and attachments purely for the sake of Allah.
 - According to Imam Abu Hanifa, haggling over the price of the animal intended for sacrifice is makruh (disliked). This is because one is negotiating the money intended for the sake of Allah.
 - Imam ar-Razi notes that the word nusuk is linked to Lillah (for Allah). This connection highlights that everyone naturally sacrifices for something.

- We have to make sure our sacrifices are dedicated to Allah first. When we give up something for Allah, we actually end up gaining so much more in return.
- 3. Existence:
 - وَمَحْيَايَ (Wa maḥyāya): And my living.
 - Submission is not limited to only acts of worship. This is an all-encompassing declaration that represents a complete, unwavering dedication of one's entire existence to Allah (i.e., work, relationships etc.).
 - Nothing exists outside Allah's guidance. There is no separation between Deen and daily life. Islam provides the ultimate framework for every aspect of our existence.
 - A believer must reframe every decision through one primary lens: does this choice bring me closer to or further from Allah?
 - Ensuring our choices are rooted in Allah and His Deen is essential to living a life free of regret.
- 4. Death:
 - وَمَمَاتِي (Wa mamātī): And my dying.
 - Just as we envision the life we want to build in this world, we must also envision how we want to depart from it.
 - This goes beyond a general wish for Husn al-Khatimah. It is defining the precise manner in which we wish to leave this life.
 - It is a request to Allah: "Allow me to die _____.\" (e.g., in a state of prostration).
 - This shows us that there's no retirement from worship. We are called to pray, sacrifice, and dedicate our entire existence to Allah until our final breath.

- Imam ar-Razi notes that Allah begins with the easiest thing to dedicate and ends with the hardest.
- Meaning, in this ayah, Allah gradually increases His expectations of us over time. He starts by asking for manageable acts of worship, like establishing prayer, before ultimately asking us to dedicate our entire lives to His purpose.
- **لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ** (Lillāhi Rabbil-‘ālamīn): For Allah, Lord of all the worlds.
 - It signifies that supreme ownership, authority, and ultimate judgment over all creations belong to Allah alone. This serves as a reminder that He is the ultimate Lord of all realms.
- **لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ** (Lā sharīka lahu): He has no partner.
 - This is a declaration of the Oneness of Allah, emphasizing that everything belongs to Allah, and He has no partner.
 - It establishes that there is no partner in our Salah, sacrifice, life and death — they are directed solely to Allah.
 - Scholars say, "Be with Allah without any partners, and be with the people without yourself."
 - Everything we do should be solely for the sake of Allah — this prevents disappointment and shifts our focus from results to rewards.
 - For example, while the Prophet (ﷺ) ultimately wanted all of humanity to embrace Islam, he continued to preach and guide others simply for the sake of Allah, regardless of whether he saw results in his lifetime.
- **وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ** (Wa bi-dhālika umirtu): And of this I have been commanded.
 - It means that the Prophet (ﷺ) himself was directed by Allah to carry out, proclaim, or submit this specific instruction of declaring his absolute devotion to Allah.

- وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ (Wa ana awwalul-muslimīn): and I am the first of the Muslims (those who submit to His will):
 - One of humanity's greatest deceptions is the mistake of confusing the act of merely sharing knowledge (da'wah) with actually living it.
 - Allah reminds us that the primary beneficiary of knowledge is the seeker themselves. Before it can be shared outwardly, knowledge must first change us from within.
 - Every revelation was first absorbed into the Prophet's heart before it was shared with humanity; he was always the first student before becoming a teacher.
 - The Qur'an serves as a mirror; each verse requires deep self-reflection before outward application. This is exactly why the Companions studied in precise increments of ten verses — mastering the meaning and implementation of each passage before progressing to the next.
 - Believers should strive to develop an 'Awwal Mindset'. This is a transformative approach to personal and spiritual development, aligning seamlessly with 'Awwalu Muslimin'.
- These are the two foundational principles:
- 1. First principle: The First — Be the first to do something
 - You are the first recipient of every reminder.
 - Before offering advice, counsel, or correction to others, internalize the lesson yourself.
 - True transformation starts from within. You cannot guide others if you do not actively practice what you preach.
 - 2. Second principle: Excellence — Excel in everything you do
 - Lead by example. Strive to be the pioneer in righteous actions rather than a passive follower.

- Take the initiative in goodness and strive for perfection.
- Aim to set the standard for quality and devotion in both worldly and spiritual endeavors.
- In the Qur'an, Allah highlights As-Sabiqun — the forerunners. Rooted in the Arabic word sabaqa (to be the first), this title honors those who lead the way in faith and virtue. Allah calls on believers to embody this spirit by racing toward good deeds and eagerly seeking His forgiveness.
 - Narrated Abu Hurairah: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said,

"لَوْ يَعْلَمُ النَّاسُ مَا فِي النِّدَاءِ وَالصَّفِّ الْأَوَّلِ، ثُمَّ لَمْ يَجِدُوا إِلَّا أَنْ يَسْتَهْمُوا عَلَيْهِ لَاسْتَهَمُوا، وَلَوْ يَعْلَمُونَ مَا فِي التَّهَجِيرِ لَاسْتَبَقُوا إِلَيْهِ، وَلَوْ يَعْلَمُونَ مَا فِي الْعَتَمَةِ وَالصُّبْحِ لَأَتَوْهُمْ مَا وَلَوْ حَبَوًا."

"If the people knew what is the reward of making the call (for the prayer) and (of being in) the first row (in the prayer), and if they found no other way to get this privilege except by casting lots, they would certainly cast lots for it. If they knew the reward of the noon prayer, they would race for it, and if they knew the reward of the morning (i.e. Fajr) and `Isha prayers, they would present themselves for the prayer even if they had to crawl to reach there. (Sahih al-Bukhari)

- The Prophet (ﷺ) established this mindset to encourage believers never to aim low in faith. He taught that Paradise has 100 levels, and to always seek the absolute pinnacle — Al-Firdaus Al-A'la.
- Allah rewards the pursuit of excellence; He loves it when we put our absolute best and excel in what we do.
- The metric of Awwalu Muslimin is asking yourself:
 - What piece of knowledge do I possess today that I know far better than I practice?
 - If Allah were to ask me about one lesson I've learned I've learned and heard repeatedly but I don't act upon it. What would it be?

- What's easier for me? Giving someone sincere advice or sincerely accepting advice when it is directed at me.
- The concept of Awwalu Muslimin teaches us openness to guidance. It demonstrates that receiving guidance is an ongoing process. No matter how guided we feel, we always require more.
 - Allah said:

وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَءَاتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ

As for those who are 'rightly' guided, He increases them in guidance and blesses them with righteousness. (47:17)

- Guidance and correction go hand in hand; being open to correction is an essential part of continuous growth.
- The Qur'an itself preserves instances where Allah corrected the Prophet (ﷺ), showing that true guidance requires humility and the willingness to be corrected.
- Accepting sincere advice and guidance gracefully — especially when offered out of love — is a powerful way to grow, as it allows us to learn from correction rather than feeling defensive.