



DUA OF WITR PRAYER (AL-QUNUT)

By Basharith Alikhan

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْتَعِينُكَ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُكَ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِكَ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ
عَلَيْكَ وَنُثْنِي عَلَيْكَ الْخَيْرَ وَنَشْكُرُكَ وَلَا نَكْفُرُكَ
وَنَخْلَعُ وَنَتْرُكُ مَنْ يَفْجُرُكَ اللَّهُمَّ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَلكَ
نُصَلِّي وَنَسْجُدُ وَإِلَيْكَ نَسْعَى وَنَحْفِدُ نَرْجُو رَحْمَتَكَ
وَنَخْشَى عَذَابَكَ إِنَّ عَذَابَكَ بِالْكَفَّارِ مُلْحِقٌ

O Allah, indeed we seek assistance from You and ask forgiveness from You, and we believe in You and Trust in You, and we send You good praises, and we thank You and do not disbelieve in You, and we renounce and disavow those who sin against You. O Allah, we worship You alone and for You we offer prayers and prostrate ourselves, and towards You we strive and rush towards good. We hope in Your mercy and fear Your punishment. Indeed, Your punishment will overtake the disbelievers.

[Ibn Abi Shayba]*

DISCUSSION POINTS

- This dua expresses our relationship with Allah Most High and our desire to seek His forgiveness and mercy. The Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) regularly recited this supplication during his witr prayer, which is a mandatory (wajib) prayer that is performed any time after Isha and before Fajr.

- The Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) would most commonly offer this prayer after the night (tahajjud) prayer in the last third of the night. This time is extremely meritorious as Allah Most High, out of love for those that are praying to Him at this time, comes to the closest heaven and answers their prayers [Bukhari and Muslim].
- If we are not confident about getting up in the middle of the night, then this prayer should be offered after Isha. In one narration, the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) asked Abu Bakr and Umar (Allah be pleased with them) when they pray the witr prayer. Abu Bakr (Allah be pleased with him) used to pray it right after the Isha prayer while Umar (Allah be pleased with him) prayed it in the latter portion of the night, after tahajjud. The Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) commented that Abu Bakr (Allah be pleased with him) has taken the way of caution and Umar (Allah be pleased with him) has taken the way of firm will [Abu Dawud, Ahmed].
- We remind ourselves in this supplication that it is only Allah Most High that we beseech for help and forgiveness from our many sins. He is the only One we worship and pray towards. He is the One whom we trust will guide us towards what is best for us.
- With sincerity and humility, we hope in the mercy of Allah Most High, without which we would be lost in this world and the Hereafter. We also fear His punishment and wrath that will destroy those that are unjust.
- This balance of hope and fear is an extremely important concept in Islam. It compels us to avoid sin out of fear of displeasing our Lord, but also to never lose hope in the mercy of Allah Most High in the event that we may slip and make a mistake.

*NOTE: Imam Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shaybah (may the mercy of Allah be upon him) was a prominent and early scholar of Hadith. He was, in fact, a teacher of Imam Bukhari, Imam Muslim and other Hadith scholars and is mentioned frequently in their chains of narration. This wording of the Dua of Qunut is narrated through many Aathaar, or statements of the Companions. These include narrations from 'Abdullah ibn Masud, Umar, Uthman, 'Ubayy ibn Ka'b, and others (Allah be pleased with them). The presence of these narrations, through multiple authentic chains, has given the jurists (Fuqaha) the ability to categorize this dua as a noble Sunnah.