

11694 - Should a person call upon Allaah even though Allaah knows his needs?

the question

Some people repeat a hadeeth which says: “His knowledge of my condition means that I do not have to ask Him for anything.” They use this as evidence to say that a person does not need to make du’aa’ to Allaah because Allaah knows the person’s needs. How true is this?

Detailed answer

This idea is a false idea, because it goes against belief in al-qadar (Divine decree) and negates the idea of taking appropriate means, and suggests giving up an act of worship which is the most noble of worship to Allaah.

Du’aa’ is very important. It can change the Divine decree and relieve distress. It is beneficial with regard to what has been decreed and what has not been decreed. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Nothing can change the Divine decree except du’aa’.” (Narrated by Ahmad, 5/277; Ibn Maajah, 90; al-Tirmidhi, 139. Classed as hasan by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Jaami’, 7687. See also al-Saheehah, 145).

And he said: “Whoever has the gate of du’aa’ opened to him, has the gates of mercy opened to him. Allaah is never asked for anything that He gives which is more beloved to Him than being asked for good health and well-being. Du’aa’ is beneficial with regard to what has been decreed and what has not been decreed. So, O slaves of Allaah, you must make du’aa’.” (Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 3548)

And he said: “No precaution can protect against the decree of Allaah. Du’aa’ is beneficial with regard to what has been decreed and what has not been decreed. The du’aa’ meets the calamity that has been decreed and wrestles with it, until the Day of Resurrection.” (Narrated by al-Tabaraani, 2/800 (33). Al-Albaani said in Saheeh al-Jaami’, 7739, (it is) hasan).

Some of those who neglect du'aa', such as some of the Sufis, may use as evidence the hadeeth, "I have no need to ask because He knows my condition". This hadeeth is false and has no basis. The scholars have spoken out against it and explained why it is false.

Al-Baghawi mentioned it in his tafseer of Soorat al-Anbiyaa', pointing out how da'eef (weak) it is. He said: "It was narrated from Ubayy ibn Ka'b that Ibraaheem said, when they tied him up to throw him into the fire, 'There is no god but You, glory be to You, Lord of the Worlds. To You be praise and to You be the sovereignty. You have no partner or associate.' Then they threw him with a catapult into the fire, and Jibreel met him and said, 'O Ibraaheem, do you need something?' He said, 'From you, no.' Jibreel said, 'Then ask your Lord.' Ibraaheem said, 'I have no need to ask because He knows my condition.'"

(Tafseer al-Baghawi Ma'aalim al-Tanzeel, 5/347)

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said concerning this hadeeth:

"The hadeeth 'I have no need to ask because He knows my condition' is false. It contradicts what Allaah said about Ibraaheem al-Khaleel and other Prophets, that they made du'aa' to Allaah and asked of Him. And it goes against what Allaah has commanded His slaves to do, asking Him for the best in this world and the next."

(Majmoo' al-Fataawa, 8/539)

Shaykh al-Albaani said concerning this hadeeth: "It has no basis. It was narrated by some of them as the words of Ibraaheem (peace be upon him) but it is from the Israa'eeliyaat [stories from Jewish sources]. It has no basis among the marfoo' reports [those which go back to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)]."

(Silsilat al-Ahaadeeth al-Da'eefah, 1/28 (21))

Later he said about this hadeeth: "This meaning was adopted by some of those who wrote books of wisdom in the style of the Sufi tareeqahs; they said, your asking from Him – meaning Allaah, may He be exalted – is an accusation against Him."

(Silsilat al-Ahaadeeth al-Da'eefah, 1/29)

Then he said, commenting on this idea: "This is serious misguidance. Did the Prophets (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon them) accuse their Lord when they asked Him for various things?"

(Silsilat al-Ahaadeeth al-Da'eefah, 1/29)