

Explaining the Du'ā of Qunūt in the Witr Prayer

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Introduction¹

All praise and thanks are due to Allah. We praise him, seek his help and his forgiveness. We seek protection with him from the evils of our own souls and from our bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, no one can misguide him, and whoever he sends astray, there is no other guide for him. I testify that nothing has any right to be worshipped except Allah alone, having no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is his servant and messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

This is a concise explanation of the du'ā, or supplication that is said during the Witr prayer.² This explanation was given by Muhammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn, may Allah have mercy on him, during his lectures he used to give in the central mosque in Mecca during the blessed month of Ramadan.

¹ The original Arabic text of this book is available online at:
http://www.ibnothaimeen.com/all/books/cat_index_336.shtml

² The *Witr*, or "Odd" prayer is the last prayer one may pray at night, before the morning prayer, consisting of an odd number of units of prayer. The prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to say the Du'á of Qunūt sometimes while standing during the Witr prayer. He would raise his hands while supplicating and would sometimes do it before bowing or after bowing.

The Du'ā

Abū Dāwūd recorded a ḥadīth from al-Ḥasan Ibn 'Alī (رضي الله عنه) that he said: Allah's messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) taught me some words to say³ during the Qunūt of the Witr prayer:

اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنِي فِيمَنْ هَدَيْتَ، وَعَافِنِي فِيمَنْ عَافَيْتَ، وَتَوَلَّنِي فِيمَنْ تَوَلَّيْتَ، وَبَارِكْ لِي
فِيمَا أَعْطَيْتَ، وَقِنِي شَرَّ مَا قَضَيْتَ، إِنَّكَ تَقْضِي وَلَا يُقْضَى عَلَيْكَ، وَإِنَّهُ لَا يَذِلُّ مَنْ
وَالَيْتَ، وَلَا يَعِزُّ مَنْ عَادَيْتَ، تَبَارَكَ رَبَّنَا وَتَعَالَيْتَ

Oh Allah, guide me with those you have guided. Heal me with those you have healed. Care for me with those you have cared for. Bless me in what you have given, and protect me from the evil of what you have decreed. Indeed, you decree while no one decrees against you. Whomever you show loyalty towards will never be humiliated, and whomever you show enmity towards will never be honored. Blessed are you, our lord, and you are exalted far above (any weakness).⁴

³ In order to facilitate the memorization of this Du'ā, the final two pages of this document contain the Arabic text as well as the transliteration and English meanings in a simple, line-by-line format.

⁴ This ḥadīth is recorded by Abū Dāwūd (no. 1425, 1426) and al-Albānī said it is authentic in "Saḥīḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd" (no. 1263). It is also recorded by al-Tirmidhī, "Saḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī" (no. 411), and by al-Nasāī, "Saḥīḥ Sunan al-Nasāī" (no. 1647). The ḥadīth is also recorded by Ahmad (1/199) and al-Dārimī. Ahmad Shākir also said it is authentic in his notes of "Sunan al-Tirmidhī".

The Explanation of:

اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنِي فِيمَنْ هَدَيْتَ

“Oh Allah, guide me with those you have guided.”

Meaning: Guide me to the truth and assist me in acting in accordance with it. Complete, beneficial guidance is that in which Allah combines for a servant both knowledge and action. Guidance without action is of no real benefit. Rather it is even harmful because if a person does not act in accordance with what he already knows, his knowledge becomes evidence against him.

An example of guidance in the form of knowledge but with no action is the verse of Allah:

﴿وَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ فَاسْتَحَبُّوا الْعَمَىٰ عَلَى الْهُدَىٰ﴾

As for Thamūd, we guided them but they preferred blindness over guidance.⁵

Meaning: We clarified the path to them and we conveyed the knowledge to them. However, they preferred blindness over guidance, and from this we seek refuge with Allah.

Also from this type of guidance – simply giving the knowledge and clarifying the truth – is the statement of Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم):

⁵ The Quran, Sūrah Fuṣṣilat, 41:17.

﴿وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ﴾

And certainly, you guide to the straight path.⁶

Meaning: You direct the people to the straight path and teach them about it. As for the other type of guidance which is the granting of success, an example of this type is the verse:

﴿إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ﴾

Indeed, you can't guide whoever you like.⁷

This type is the guidance of granting one success in their deeds. In this case, the messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) is never able to grant someone the success of their good actions as this type of guidance is specific to Allah alone. If the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) were capable of that type of guidance, he would have guided his uncle, Abū Ṭālib. He did try to guide his uncle and even when he was about to die, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said to him:

يَا عَمُّ قُلْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ كَلِمَةً أَشْهَدُ لَكَ بِهَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ

Oh uncle, say, "There is nothing worthy of worship except Allah," – a statement by which I will testify on your behalf before Allah.

⁶ The Quran, Sūrah al-Shūrā, 42:52.

⁷ The Quran, Sūrah al-Qaṣaṣ, 28:56.

But the decree of Allah (عزَّ وجلَّ) had already passed that the prophet's uncle would be from the inhabitants of the Fire, and from this we seek refuge with Allah. So Abū Ṭālib neither said nor believed that nothing has the right to be worshipped except Allah. The last thing he said before dying was that he would remain upon the religion of 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib.⁸ Despite this, Allah allowed his messenger (صَلَّى الله عليه وسلَّم) to intercede for Abū Ṭālib, not just because he was the prophet's uncle, but because he used to continually defend the prophet (صَلَّى الله عليه وسلَّم) and Islam (even though he did not personally accept Islam). So the Prophet (صَلَّى الله عليه وسلَّم) interceded for Abū Ṭālib and as a result of this intercession, he (صَلَّى الله عليه وسلَّم) said about his uncle:

هُوَ فِي ضَحْضَاحٍ مِنْ نَارٍ وَلَوْ لَا أَنَا لَكَانَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ

He is in the lowest part of the fire, and if it were not for me, he would have been in the lowest, deepest part of the fire.⁹

And the Prophet (صَلَّى الله عليه وسلَّم) also said:

لَعَلَّهُ تَنْفَعُهُ شَفَاعَتِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَيُجْعَلُ فِي ضَحْضَاحٍ مِنَ النَّارِ يَبْلُغُ كَعْبِيهِ يَغْلِي مِنْهُ دِمَاغُهُ

Perhaps my intercession will benefit him on the Day of Resurrection so that he will be put into the lowest part of the fire, it reaching only to his ankles, yet from which his brain will boil.¹⁰

⁸ The ḥadīth is recorded by al-Bukhārī (no. 1360, 3884, and 4675) Muslim (no. 24), al-Nasāī (no. 2035), and by Aḥmad.

⁹ The ḥadīth is recorded by al-Bukhārī (no. 3883, 6208) and Muslim (no. 209) as well as by Imām Aḥmad.

¹⁰ The ḥadīth is recorded by al-Bukhārī (no. 3885, 6564) and Muslim (no. 210) and also by Aḥmad.

So when we say in the Du'ā of Qunūt, “Guide us with those you have guided,” we are asking Allah for both types of guidance: the guidance of knowledge and the guidance of being successful in our actions. As an example, the following verse also includes both of these types of guidance:

﴿ اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴾

Guide us to the straight path.¹¹

So when anyone says this du'ā he should sincerely call to mind that he is asking for both types of guidance: the guidance of the correct knowledge and the guidance of acting in accordance with it.

As for the wording, “...with those you have guided,” this is a way of seeking nearness to Allah by mentioning his favors on others in that he guided them. So we also ask him to bestow the same favor upon us and guide us. In other words, we ask you (Allah) for guidance, and receiving it is only by virtue of your mercy, your wisdom, and your past favors as you have guided others.

¹¹ The Quran, Sūrah al-Fātiḥah, 1:5.

The Explanation of:

وَعَافِنِي فِيمَنْ عَافَيْتَ

“Heal me with those you have healed.”

Meaning: Heal us from the sicknesses of the heart as well as the physical sicknesses of the body. So my brother, you must sincerely bring to mind that while you are calling upon Allah, he will heal you of both the diseases of the body and those of the heart. And it must be understood that the diseases of the heart are much worse than physical diseases. For this reason, some people say while supplicating, “Oh Allah, do not make our problems and tribulations in our religion.”

The bodily diseases and sicknesses are well-known, yet the diseases of the heart come from two main sources:

1. Diseases of vain desires, and they originate from one's personal likes and dislikes.
2. Diseases of doubts and uncertainties, and they originate from ignorance.

As for the first, the diseases of one's personal desires, a person may know the truth, yet may not want to follow it due to some personal preferences that are contrary to the teachings the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) came with.

And as for the second diseases, that of doubts and false assumptions due to one's ignorance, it is when an ignorant person does incorrect actions while assuming they are

correct. This disease is extremely dangerous. So you ask Allah for healing and immunity from both the diseases of the body and of the heart, which are the sicknesses of doubts and false assumptions, and vain desires.

The Explanation of:

وَتَوَلَّيْنِي فِيمَنْ تَوَلَّيْتَ

“Care for me with those you have cared for.”

Meaning: Be a close, watchful companion and ally to us. This type of companionship or guardianship is of two types, a general type of guardianship and a specific type. The specific type is particular to the believers only as Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) says:

﴿اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْلِيَاؤُهُمُ
الطَّاغُوتُ يُخْرِجُونَهُم مِّنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا
خَالِدُونَ﴾

Allah is the ally, guardian of those who believe. He brings them out from darkness into light. And those who disbelieve, their allies, guardians are their false gods. They take them out of light into darkness. Those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein.¹²

So you ask Allah for this special type of alliance, guardianship, and companionship which includes his protection. It also includes Allah granting success to the person in following what Allah loves and is pleased with.

As for the general type of guardianship, it includes everyone; Allah is carefully watching over every person as He says:

¹² The Quran, Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2:257.

﴿ حَتَّى إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَكُمْ الْمَوْتُ تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لَا يُفَرِّطُونَ ﴾

**...until when death comes to one of you, our messengers (angels) take him,
and they never fail in their duties.¹³**

This is general for everyone. Then Allah says in the next verse:

﴿ ثُمَّ رُدُّوا إِلَى اللَّهِ مَوْلَاهُمُ الْحَقُّ أَلَا لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَهُوَ أَسْرَعُ الْحَاسِبِينَ ﴾

**Then they are returned to Allah, their true lord. Unquestionably, the
judgment is his, and he is the swiftest in taking to account.¹⁴**

However, when we say, “Oh Allah, care for me with those you have cared for,” we want the specific type of alliance and companionship and it includes both protection and the success in following what Allah loves and is pleased with.

¹³ The Quran, Sūrah al-An'ām, 6:61.

¹⁴ The Quran, Sūrah al-An'ām, 6:62.

The Explanation of:

وَبَارِكْ لِي فِي مَا أُعْطِيتَ

“Bless me in what you have given...”

The Arabic word بَرَكَةٌ (*barakah*) “blessing” literally means an abundance of anything good that is continuous. The scholars even trace this word and its meaning back to the word بِرْكَةٌ (*birkah*) which means a large amount of water or any wide container or gathering of water that is constantly filled with water. Similarly, the word blessing means a continuously large amount of good. So the meaning of this statement is: Send blessings down upon everything you have given me.

The wording, “...in what you have given...” is comprehensive including anything Allah has given us of wealth, children, knowledge, and anything else Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) has bestowed upon us. So you ask Allah to put blessings in all of that. If Allah does not put blessings in what he has given you, you would surely be prevented from a great amount of good.

How many people have a wealth in abundance, yet it is as if they live in poverty? This is because they gain no real benefit from their wealth; they simply collect it and never benefit from it. This is the result of the blessings being removed from it.

Likewise, many people have lots of children and grandchildren, yet their children do not benefit their parents in anything due to their disobedience and ungratefulness. Such people have not been blessed in their children.

You also find some people to whom Allah has given a great amount of knowledge, yet it is as if he is illiterate. You see no traces of knowledge upon him in his worship, in his character, in his manners, nor in the way he treats others. Rather, his knowledge may even increase him in arrogance and considering himself to be above the rest of Allah's worshippers, belittling and humiliating them. Such a person does not realize the one who bestowed this knowledge upon him is none other than Allah. You see that he never benefits people with his knowledge, neither with lessons, nor advice, nor with writings. On the contrary, he is exclusively centered only upon himself. This is without doubt a great loss, even though religious knowledge is one of the most blessed things Allah gives to a servant. One reason for this is that when you teach others and spread this knowledge among people, you are rewarded from several different perspectives:

1. When you spread this religious knowledge, you are spreading the religion of Allah (عز وجل). So you work for the sake of Allah, opening people's hearts with knowledge.
2. From the blessings of spreading knowledge and teaching it is that by doing so, there is the preservation and protection of Allah's legislation (religious laws). If it weren't for the passing on of knowledge, the legislation would not have been preserved.
3. Also from the blessings of spreading knowledge is that when you teach others, you do them a great deal of good. You give them insight into the religion of Allah. And when that person then worships Allah with knowledge and insight, you are rewarded with similar rewards he is given because it was you who directed him

towards a particular good deed, and the one who directs another to do something good is just like the one who actually does it.¹⁵

Also, by spreading and teaching religious knowledge, one's own knowledge increases. It is known that anyone who teaches a particular knowledge to people, his knowledge in that subject will increase. This is because in teaching, one is recalling what he previously learned and memorized as well as learning new things that he must prepare. To this meaning, there is a famous (Arabic) proverb regarding wealth, "It increases by spending it often, and it decreases if held in a tight fist." Similarly, if knowledge is withheld and not taught, it will eventually decrease.

¹⁵ A proof of this is the ḥadīth recorded by Muslim (no. 1893), al-Tirmidhī (no. 2671), Abū Dāwūd (no. 5129), and by Aḥmad in which the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

مَنْ دَلَّ عَلَى خَيْرٍ فَلَهُ مِثْلُ أَجْرِ فَاعِلِهِ

Whoever directs someone to do something good, he will have a reward like the one who actually did it.

The Explanation of:

وَقِنِي شَرَّ مَا قَضَيْتَ

“...and protect me from the evil of what you have decreed.”

Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) decrees for good things to happen and things that seem bad. As for his decreeing that which is good, it is that which is totally and absolutely good in itself, the decree of it and decision of it, and in whatever results from it.

An example of Allah's decree in something good would be the decree and decision to provide mankind with sustenance, safety and security, tranquility, guidance, support, etc. These are all good in their decree and their results.

As for Allah's decree in something bad, it is actually good in its decree (Allah makes decisions only based on the highest level of wisdom) even though it may result in something bad.

An example of this latter type would be a drought when a land is without of rain. This results in something bad (hardships upon the people), yet Allah's decreeing it is good. And how is decreeing a drought something good? Is someone were to ask, “Allah decreed and decided to put us through a time of drought; the livestock die and the crops are ruined, so how is this good?”

To this we reply: Listen to this statement of Allah (عز وجل):

﴿ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي
عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ﴾

Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by (as a result of) what the hands of people have earned so that he may let them taste part of what they have done so that perhaps they may return (in repentance).¹⁶

In this case, the decree is for the utmost good and the most praiseworthy reason – the people returning to Allah, returning from sinning against him to his obedience. So the initial and immediate result may be bad, yet the initial decree and decision is actually good.

It should be noted that the words, “what you have decreed” here means whatever bad results may come from what you decreed. Indeed, Allah would only decree something that results in a bad outcome due to his complete, perfect and praiseworthy wisdom. The wording here does not mean, “Your bad decree” because the decree and decision of Allah is never bad or evil in itself. For this, the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) once said while praising his lord:

وَالْخَيْرُ كُلُّهُ فِي يَدَيْكَ وَالشَّرُّ لَيْسَ إِلَيْكَ

The good, all of it, is in your two hands, and evil is not attributed to you.¹⁷

¹⁶ The Quran, Sūrah al-Rūm, 30:41.

¹⁷ This is part of a long ḥadīth recorded by Muslim (no. 771), al-Tirmidhī (no. 3422), al-Nasāī (no. 897), Abū Dāwūd (no. 760), and by Aḥmad.

So evil is never associated with or attributed to Allah.

The Explanation of:

إِنَّكَ تَقْضِي وَلَا يُقْضَى عَلَيْكَ

“Indeed, you decree while no one decrees against you.”

Allah decrees and decides both the legislative decree (that which he likes and commands but that may or may not happen) and the universal decree (that which he may or may not like, yet he decrees that it must happen). Allah decrees and decides everything that happens due to His infinite, perfect wisdom.

As for the wording, “no one decrees against you,” this means that there is no one besides Allah that can decree anything over and beyond his will. So the servants will never judge or make any decision over Allah’s decision, yet Allah will certainly judge them. And He will question his servants, and no one will ever question him as he says:

﴿لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْأَلُونَ﴾

He is not to be questioned about what He does, but they will be questioned.¹⁸

¹⁸ The Quran, Sūrah al-Anbiyā, 21:23.

The Explanation of:

وَأِنَّهُ لَا يَذِلُّ مَنْ وَالَيْتَ

“Whomever you show loyalty towards will never be humiliated.”

This sentence and the next one (“Whomever you show enmity towards will never be honored”) both provide more explanation and details of our previous request, “Care for me with those you have cared for.” If Allah watches over and guards a person as a companion would, then he would definitely never be humiliated. On the contrary, if He were to show enmity towards someone, such a person would never be honored. So this requires us to seek honor only from Allah alone and we fear and seek refuge from being dishonored and disgraced before Allah. It is not possible for one to be truly humiliated and disgraced when Allah has become his companion and guardian. The important thing is to try and achieve this type of companionship with Allah. Yet, how does one gain His companionship and loyalty?

This kind of allegiance, companionship, and loyalty is achieved by actualizing two significant characteristics, both of which have been clarified by Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) in his book:

﴿أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ﴾

Indeed, for the close allies of Allah there will be no fear upon them, nor will they grieve – those who believe and are constantly, fearfully conscious (of Allah).¹⁹

Of these two characteristics, one occurs in the heart and one upon the limbs. **“Those who believe”** is in the heart, and **“...and are constantly, fearfully conscious (of Allah)”** occurs upon the limbs. So when the heart and limbs are pure and correct, people gain this alliance and companionship by virtue of these two characteristics. However, it is not obtained by those who merely claim to be close companions of Allah such as priests or monks, or those who innovate into the legislation of Allah that which is foreign to it, claiming, “We are Allah’s close, chosen ones!”

So this companionship and loyalty from Allah which honors the servant is contained within these two great attributes: the true and correct belief (*īmān*)²⁰ and the constant, fearful consciousness of Allah (*taqwá*).²¹ The famous scholar of Islam, Ibn Taymiyyah, said regarding this verse (**“Those who believe and are constantly, fearfully conscious (of Allah)”**), “Whoever is a true believer who constantly remains conscious of Allah, then Allah will be an ally, a guardian, and a companion to him.” This is correct because the Quran also indicates this.

¹⁹ The Quran, Sūrah Yūnus, 10:62-63.

²⁰ *īmān* is to have the correct belief in Allah, his angels, his Books, his messengers, the last day, and to believe in Allah’s pre-decree of everything, the good and bad of it. This was reported in a ḥadīth recorded by Muslim (no. 8). *īmān* also consists of a belief in the heart, a statement on the tongue, and actions of the limbs.

²¹ A famous successor to the companions, Ṭalq Ibn Ḥabīb, was asked the meaning of *taqwá* to which he replied, “*Taqwá* is that you act in obedience to Allah, hoping for his mercy, upon a light from Allah; and *taqwá* is that you leave acts of disobedience to Allah out of fear of him, upon a light from Allah.” This narration was reported by Ibn Abī Shaybah in “Kitāb al-*īmān*” (no. 99) and al-Albānī declared it to be authentic.

The Explanation of:

وَلَا يَعْزُّ مَنْ عَادَيْتَ

“...and whomever you show enmity towards will never be honored.”

Meaning: Whoever is an enemy to Allah will never be honored. On the contrary, he will taste humiliation, regret, and failure. Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) says:

﴿مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِلَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَالَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ﴾

Whoever is an enemy to Allah, his angels, his messengers, Jibrīl and Mīkāl (two honored angels), then Allah is an enemy to the disbelievers.²²

Every disbeliever is in disgrace and worry. For this, if the Muslims actually possessed the true honor of Islam, the dignity of religion and the alliance and loyalty of Allah, the disbelievers would not be in the position they are now in which we find ourselves humiliated under them. We secretly look to them with honor and respect, while looking amongst ourselves with disgrace and shame. This is because most Muslims today unfortunately do not truly adhere to their religion, nor do they sincerely seek to correctly learn it. They rely solely upon the materialistic things of this life and its adornment. For this, we have been afflicted with such disgrace that the disbelievers are honored among themselves. However, we believe that the disbelievers are the enemies of Allah and that He has prescribed disgrace and shame upon all of His enemies as He says:

²² The Quran, Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2:98.

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحَادُّونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ فِي الْأَذَلِّينَ ﴾

Indeed, those who oppose Allah and his messenger, they are the most humiliated.²³

This is something confirmed and destined to take place. Then Allah (تعالى) says:

﴿ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَأَغْلِبَنَّ أَنَا وَرُسُلِي إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴾

Allah has decreed, “I will surely overcome, I and my messengers.” Indeed, Allah is powerful, exalted in might.²⁴

So whoever opposes Allah will eventually be humiliated and will never truly be honored except in the sense of someone imagining that honor is in that which the disbelievers have. As for the one who believes that the real honor and dignity is not obtained except by the close companionship and allegiance to Allah and by remaining steadfast upon his religion, then such a person sees those who disbelieve in Allah as none other than the most disgraced of Allah's creatures.²⁵

²³ The Quran, Sūrah al-Mujādilah, 58:20.

²⁴ The Quran, Sūrah al-Mujādilah, 58:21.

²⁵ It should be understood that although the disbelievers will be disgraced for their rejection of Allah and his messengers and their denying Allah's sole right of all worship, this is not justification for individual Muslims to take it upon themselves to pass judgment and seek to criminally harm them by any means.

The Explanation of:

تَبَارَكَتَ رَبَّنَا وَتَعَالَيْتَ

“Blessed are you, our lord, and you are exalted far above (any weakness).”

This is a form of praising and glorifying Allah by mentioning these two noble descriptions. All blessings are attributed to Allah as he is the possessor and provider of all blessings. “Blessed are you,” meaning: your goodness is unlimited and it encompasses the entire creation. Blessing, as we have previously mentioned, is anything good and continuous.

Our statement, “our lord,” confirms that we are addressing our lord, the only one worthy of all worship.

Our statement, “and you are exalted far above (any weakness),” contains the concept of Allah actually being high above, both personally and as a description in that his attributes are the highest characteristics.

So He is personally high above all creation and this concept of the highness of Allah is a personal, never-ending description. As for His rising over the throne, this is a description of action which occurs by his will and decision. The throne is the greatest of all creation, and over it Allah rose in a manner that befits his majesty and greatness. We do not seek to learn “how” this rising is,²⁶ nor do we believe it to be similar to or resembling the way

²⁶ When asked about “how” Allah rose over his throne, the famous Imam Mālik replied, “The word *istiwā*, rising over, is not unknown, the ‘how’ of it is not comprehensible. Believing in it is required, and asking about it is an

any of creation would rise over something. The righteous predecessors (*al-Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*) were unanimously agreed upon this belief based upon its supporting evidences in the Quran, the Sunnah, the intellect, and the natural inclination of all people.

As for the highness of Allah's characteristics and attributes, this means Allah alone possesses the highest, most complete and perfect attributes and descriptions. And there is no deficiency whatsoever with any of them.

With that, this concise explanation of the Du'ā of Qunūt is complete by the success of Allah. May Allah send His peace and prayers upon our prophet, Muhammad, and upon his family, his companions, and his followers until the Day of Judgment.

innovation..." See "Siyar 'Alām al-Nubalā" by al-Dhahabī (8/100-101), "al-Asmā was-Ṣifāt" by al-Bayhaqī (page 515) and al-Ḥāfiṭh (Ibn Ḥajr) declared it to be acceptable in "Fath al-Bārī" (13/407).

Questions & Answers Regarding the Du'ā of Qunūt

Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn, may Allah have mercy on him, was asked:

Question: Is it permissible to add additional words to this du'ā which the prophet (ﷺ) taught al-Ḥasan Ibn 'Alī (رضي الله عنه)?

Answer: There is no problem should a person wish to increase this Du'ā of Qunūt during the Witr prayer with additional words. If he were alone (in prayer), then he may also supplicate with whatever words he likes. However, it is preferable for a person to choose comprehensive and general supplications as the prophet (ﷺ) used to supplicate with comprehensive, general supplications and other times would supplicate with more specific ones. It is also incumbent upon the one leading the prayer to not prolong it upon the people so as to not put a burden or hardship upon them.²⁷

Question: Ibn al-'Uthaymīn, may Allah have mercy on him, was also asked about a person who supplicates to Allah yet is not immediately answered. He may say, "I supplicate but it is not answered."

Answer: All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and I send peace and prayers upon our prophet, Muhammad, upon his family, and upon his companions. I ask Allah (سبحانه) to bestow upon my brothers and me success in following that which is correct in the principles of faith, statement, and action.

²⁷ Taken from "Majmū' Fatāwā wa Rasā'il" (14/138).

Allah (تعالى) says:

﴿ وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ ﴾

And your lord said, “Call upon me, I will answer you.” Indeed, those who reject my worship will enter hell humiliated, disgraced.²⁸

The questioner says he supplicates to Allah yet Allah does not respond to him. So this reality presents a problem and confusion for him when compared with this noble verse in which Allah promises to answer the one who calls upon him, and Allah never breaks a promise. The answer to this is that there are conditions that must be fulfilled for one's supplication to be answered.

The First Condition: Sincerity to Allah in that the person sincerely calls upon Allah alone, turning to him with an attentive and truthful heart. He must be earnest while asking him, knowing with certainty that Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) is completely capable of responding to his call, and hoping and expecting him to answer.

The Second Condition: The person must feel that while supplicating, he is in dire need of Allah (عز وجل), and that Allah alone is the only one who hears and answers the call of the one calling upon him.

²⁸ The Quran, Sūrah Ghāfir, 40:60.

As for someone calling upon Allah while feeling himself self-sufficient without Allah and not in dire need of him, yet he merely supplicates out of habit or to test the effect, then such a person is not worthy of a response.

The Third Condition: The person must take all precaution to avoid eating anything forbidden because eating that which is impermissible prevents one's supplications from being answered as has been established in an authentic ḥadīth that the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ طَيِّبٌ لَا يَقْبَلُ إِلَّا طَيِّبًا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ أَمَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِمَا أَمَرَ بِهِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ فَقَالَ:

Indeed, Allah is good and only accepts that which is good. And Allah commands the believers with the same things he commands the messengers; he said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ﴾

Oh you who believe, eat of the good things we have provided for you and be grateful to Allah if it is him that you worship.²⁹

And He (عز وجل) says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُلُ كُلُوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا إِنِّي بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ﴾

Oh messengers, eat from the good foods and work righteousness. Surely, I know what you do.³⁰

²⁹ The Quran, Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2:172.

ثُمَّ ذَكَرَ الرَّجُلُ يُطِيلُ السَّفَرَ أَشْعَثَ أَغْبَرَ يَمُدُّ يَدَيْهِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ يَا رَبِّ يَا رَبِّ وَمَطْعَمُهُ حَرَامٌ وَمَشْرَبُهُ حَرَامٌ وَمَلْبَسُهُ حَرَامٌ وَغُذِيَ بِالْحَرَامِ فَأَنَّى يُسْتَجَابُ لِذَلِكَ؟

He (the prophet) then mentioned a man who, having traveled far, is messy and dusty. He stretches his hands to the sky saying, “Oh lord, oh lord,” yet his food is forbidden (ḥarām) and his clothes are forbidden. He is nourished by that which is forbidden, so why would he be answered?³¹

The prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) excluded such a man from being answered even though he actually fulfilled some of the physical means by which supplication is answered, and they are:

1. Raising the hands towards the sky, meaning to Allah, because he is above the heavens, above the throne. Stretching out the hands to Allah is one of the means of having one's supplication answered and this has been reported in a ḥadīth:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَيٌّ كَرِيمٌ يَسْتَحْيِي إِذَا رَفَعَ الرَّجُلُ إِلَيْهِ يَدَيْهِ أَنْ يَرُدَّهُمَا صِفْرًا خَائِبَتَيْنِ

Indeed, Allah is shy and generous. He is shy, when a man raises his hands to him, to return them empty and rejected.³²

2. This man supplicated to Allah using the name “lord” by saying, “Oh lord, oh lord.” Seeking nearness to Allah by this name is also one of the ways servant has his

³⁰ The Quran, Sūrah al-Mu'minūn, 22:51.

³¹ The ḥadīth was recorded by Muslim (no. 1015).

³² Recorded by al-Tirmidhī (no. 3809) and al-Albānī said it is authentic in “Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī” (no. 2819), Abū Dāwūd, “Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd” (no. 1320), Ibn Mājah “Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Ibn Mājah” (no. 3117), and by Aḥmad.

supplication answered. The lord is the creator, the owner, and the arranger of all affairs. In his hand is the control of the heavens and earth. For this reason, you find that most of the supplications in the noble Quran contain this name:

﴿ رَبَّنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا
وَكُفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ رَبَّنَا وَآتِنَا مَا وَعَدْتَنَا عَلَى رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ
الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ فَاسْتَجَبَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا أَضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِنْكُمْ
مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَى بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ فَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَأُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأُودُوا فِي
سَبِيلِي وَقَاتَلُوا وَقُتِلُوا لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ ثَوَابًا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ ﴾

Our lord, indeed, we have heard a caller (Prophet Muhammad) calling to faith, saying, “Believe in your lord,” so we have believed. Our lord, so forgive us our sins and remove from us our misdeeds and cause us to die with the righteous people. Our lord, and grant us what you promised us through your messengers and do not disgrace us on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed, you do not fail in your promise. And their lord responded to them, “Never will I allow to be lost the work of any worker among you, whether male or female; you are all of one another. So those who immigrated, driven out from their homes, harmed in my cause, fought, or were killed – I will surely remove from them their misdeeds, and I will surely admit them into gardens beneath which rivers flow as a reward from Allah. And Allah has with him the best reward.”³³

³³ The Quran, Sūrah Āli-‘Imrān, 3:193-195.

So seeking nearness to Allah by using the name, “lord” is one of the ways a person can ensure his supplication is responded to.

3. This man (in the ḥadīth on pg. 28) was traveling and most of the time, traveling on a journey is a time in which supplications are answered. This is because when one is journeying, he usually feels a sense of need and reliance upon Allah more than when he is at home, safe and secure with his family. This was even more so especially traveling during those times.

The prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) mentioned in the ḥadīth that this man was, “...messy and dusty,” meaning that he was not in the normal state he usually is and it was as if the most important thing to him at that time was turning to Allah and supplicating to him no matter what state he was in, whether untidy and dusty or comfortable in luxury. And this state of being messy and dusty may have some affect on one’s supplication being responded to due to the ḥadīth in which the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said that Allah descends to the lowest heaven on the day of ‘Arafah, boasting to the angels of those who stand and supplicate to him, saying:

انظروا إلى عبادي أتوني شعثًا غبرًا

“Look at my servants. They have come to me (even while) uncombed and dusty.”³⁴

³⁴ Recorded by Aḥmad (no. 7049).

Even while fulfilling all of these means of having his supplication answered, they did not benefit him at all because his food was forbidden, his clothing forbidden, and he was completely nourished by forbidden means. So the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “So why would he be answered?”

So these are some conditions that, when not fulfilled, may cause one's supplication to seem unanswered. However, if they are fulfilled and still Allah does not immediately respond to the caller, then that is because of a certain reason and Allah's wisdom that he knows yet the caller may be unaware of. And it is possible that we love and want something but it is really bad for us. So if one tries his best to fulfill the conditions of supplication, yet he feels he is not immediately responded to, then it may be that Allah will instead prevent some greater evil from befalling him, or he may save the reward and response until the Day of Resurrection on which he will repay with increased rewards. So if he fulfills the conditions but is still neither answered due to Allah's wisdom nor is a greater evil prevented from afflicting him, then he will be given a reward twice – once for his act of worship by supplicating to Allah alone, and once for his trouble and grief of not having his supplication immediately answered. So Allah will save for him that which is greater and more complete.

Also, one must not consider the response to his supplication to be slow for this is actually one of the ways of preventing supplications from being accepted and answered. This is based on a ḥadīth in which the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

يُسْتَجَابُ لِأَحَدِكُمْ مَا لَمْ يَعْجَلْ يَقُولُ دَعَوْتُ فَلَمْ يُسْتَجَبْ لِي

Each of you will be answered as long as he is not hasty, saying, "I supplicated but it was not answered for me."³⁵

So a person should not try to rush the response. He should also not despair and then stop supplicating. Rather, he should persist in calling upon Allah because each time someone supplicates to him, it is a form of worship by which he draws nearer to Allah and is thus rewarded.

So, my brother, you must stay constant on sincerely calling upon Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) alone in all of your affairs, the general and specific, the minor and critical matters. And even if there was nothing other than the fact that calling upon Allah is worship, then it would definitely be worthwhile for a person to remain steadfast on this action. And with Allah lies all success.

³⁵ This *Hadeeth* is recorded by Al-Bukhaaree (no. 6340), Muslim (no. 2735), At-Tirmithees (no. 3387), Abu Daawood (no. 1484), Ibn Maajah (no. 3853) and by *Imaam* Ahmad.

The Du'ā of Qunūt

1	اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنِي فِيمَنْ هَدَيْتَ
	Allāhumma ihdinī fīman hadayt
	Oh Allah, guide me with those You have guided
2	وَعَافِنِي فِيمَنْ عَافَيْتَ
	wa 'āfinī fīman 'āfayt
	And heal me with those you have healed
3	وَتَوَلَّنِي فِيمَنْ تَوَلَّيْتَ
	wa tawallanī fīman tawallayt
	And care for me with those You have cared for
4	وَبَارِكْ لِي فِيمَا أَعْطَيْتَ
	wa bārik lī fīmā ā'ṭayt
	And bless me in what you have given
5	وَقِنِي شَرَّ مَا قَضَيْتَ
	wa qinī sharra mā qaḍayt
	And protect me from the evil of what you have decreed

6	إِنَّكَ تَقْضِي وَلَا يُقْضَى عَلَيْكَ
	innaka taqḍī wa lā yuqḍá ‘alayk
	Indeed, you decree while no one decrees against you
7	وَأِنَّهُ لَا يَذِلُّ مَنْ وَالَيْتَ
	wa innahu lā yadhillu man wālayt
	And whomever you show loyalty towards will never be humiliated
8	وَلَا يَعْزُّ مَنْ عَادَيْتَ
	wa lā ya’izzu man ‘ādayt
	And whomever you show enmity towards will never be honored
9	تَبَارَكْتَ رَبَّنَا وَتَعَالَيْتَ
	tabārakta rabbanā wa ta‘ālayt
	Blessed are you, our lord, and you are exalted far above (any weakness)