

Istikhara / Decision Prayer

Supplication for Seeking Guidance

Feeling Confused? ...Undecided?



**Follow this proven recipe for success...
it works every time!**

It is natural that in our day-to-day affairs Muslims are confronted with important issues requiring decision making. This is sometimes accompanied by much thinking, anxiety and worry before one is able to decide one way or another, if at all! It is in regard to these types of situations that the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) recommended a voluntary prayer for a person to employ which will enable them to seek from Allah (SWT) (the best decider) guidance in reaching the proper decision over a particular matter.

This is a prayer known in Arabic as Salatul-Istikhara and its importance is such that Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) used to teach his companions about it the same way he used to teach them the verses of the Holy Qur'an. The companion Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) said that the Prophet (pbuh) used to strongly encourage us to practice Istikhara for all our affairs.

The manner of performing this prayer is that the person comes up with a voluntary prayer of two rakaats (units) at anytime during the day or night. Upon completing this the person then recites a private supplication in which he/she seeks the guidance of Allah (swt). This goes as follows:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ، وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ، وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ، وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ
اللَّهُمَّ وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ بِمَا كُنْتُ تَعْلَمُ أَنْ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ (هنا تسمي حاجتك) خَيْرٌ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي فَأَقْدِرْهُ لِي وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ
أَنْ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ (هنا تسمي حاجتك) شَرٌّ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي وَاصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ وَاقْدِرْ لِي الْخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ ثُمَّ ارْضِنِي بِهِ.
(وَيُسَمِّي حَاجَتَهُ)

وَفِي رَوَايَةٍ (ثُمَّ رَضِينِي بِهِ) رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ (1166)

Allahumma inni astakhiruka bi-ilmika wa astaqqdiruka bi qudratika, wa as-aluka min fadlika al-adhim, fa-innaka taqdiru wa la aqdiru, wa taalamu wa la aalam, wa Anta allamul-quiub.

Allahumma in kunta taalamu anna hadhal-amra... (Here the person makes mention of the matter for which guidance is sought, i.e., "should I move, take that job, marry her, etc.") ...**khairun li fi Dinii wa maashi wa aqibata amri, faqdurhu li wa yassirhu li, thumma barik li fihi. Wa in kunta taalamu anna hadha al-amra...** (also at this point the person makes mention of the matter for which guidance is sought) ...**sharrun li fi Dini wa maashi wa aqibata amri, fasrifhu anni wasrifni anhu, waqdur li al-kheyra heythu kanathumma ardhini bihi.**

Which means:

“O Lord, I seek your guidance, through Your knowledge and power; and I ask You of Your great bounties; for You decree and I do not decree; and You know and I know not; You are the Knower of invisible things. O Lord, if You know that this matter (here the person makes mention of the matter for which guidance is sought, i.e., “should I move, take that job, marry her, etc.”), is of benefit to me in my religion, in my livelihood and in its outcome, decide it for me and make it easy for me and then bless it for me. And if You know that this matter (here again the person makes mention of the matter for which guidance is sought) is bad for me in my religion, in my livelihood, and in its outcome, turn it from me and divert me from it and decree good for me wherever it may be and make me pleased with it.”

Having sought Allah’s guidance as above, the person then resumes his/her routine affairs and waits for the due response from Allah. This can appear to the person by way of the feeling you have in your heart about the matter of either confidence or further indecision. Thus, when you feel in your heart a sense of vigor, optimism or confidence about the intended undertaking, you may construe this as a positive response from Allah (swt) and may accordingly proceed forward with the intended undertaking.

If, on the other hand, the opposite is true and your sense of doubt or worries have not cleared, then you may want to avoid the proposed undertaking as it could mean a bad outcome.

Allah (swt) says:

“...It is possible that ye dislike a thing which is good for you, and that ye may love a thing which is bad for you. But Allah knoweth and ye know not.”
(*Qur’an* 2:216)

Indeed the essence of this prayer is to test someone’s trust in Allah, hence, the need to abide by the guidance of Allah whether it means pursuing or abandoning the intended undertaking. Allah also says:

“...and if anyone puts his trust in Allah, sufficient is Allah for him. For verily Allah surely accomplishes His purpose: Verily, for all things has Allah appointed a due proportion.”
(*Qur’an* 65:3)