



Prayer & Meditation

The power of prayer & meditation



Praise be to Thee, O Lord my God! Thou seest and knowest that I have called upon Thy servants to turn nowhere except in the direction of Thy bestowals, and have bidden them observe naught save the things Thou didst prescribe in Thy Perspicuous Book, the Book which hath been sent down according to Thine inscrutable decree and irrevocable purpose.

I can utter no word, O my God, unless I be permitted by Thee, and can move in no direction until I obtain Thy sanction. It is Thou, O my God, Who hast called me into being through the power of Thy might, and hast endued me with Thy grace to manifest Thy Cause. Wherefore I have been subjected to such adversities that my tongue hath been hindered from extolling Thee and from magnifying Thy glory.

All praise be to Thee, O my God, for the things Thou didst ordain for me through Thy decree and by the power of Thy sovereignty. I beseech Thee that thou wilt fortify both myself and them that love me in our love for Thee, and wilt keep us firm in Thy Cause. I swear by Thy might! O my God! Thy servant's shame is to be shut out as by a veil from Thee, and his glory is to know Thee. Armed with the power of Thy name nothing can ever hurt me, and with Thy love in my heart all the world's afflictions can in no wise alarm me.

Send down, therefore, O my Lord, upon me and upon my loved ones that which will protect us from the mischief of those that have repudiated Thy truth and disbelieved in Thy signs. Thou art, verily, the All-Glorious, the Most Bountiful.

– Bahá' u' lláh

Intone, O My servant, the verses of God that have been received by thee, as intoned by them who have drawn nigh unto Him, that the sweetness of thy melody may kindle thine own soul, and attract the hearts of all men.

Whoso reciteth, in the privacy of his chamber, the verses revealed by God, the scattering angels of the Almighty shall scatter abroad the fragrance of the words uttered by his mouth, and shall cause the heart of every righteous man to throb. Though he may, at first, remain unaware of its effect, yet the virtue of the grace vouchsafed unto him must needs sooner or later exercise its influence upon his soul. Thus have the mysteries of the Revelation of God been decreed by virtue of the Will of Him Who is the Source of power and wisdom.

– Bahá' u' lláh

Why must prayer & meditation lead to action?

“Prayer and meditation are very important factors in deepening the spiritual life of the individual, but with them must go also action and example, as these are the tangible results of the former. Both are essential.”

Shoghi Effendi guided us by saying “It is not sufficient to pray diligently for guidance, but this prayer must be followed by meditation as to the best methods of action, and then action itself.”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá declares “Chant the words of God and, pondering over their meaning, transform them into actions!”

What is the core of religious faith?

Shoghi Effendi starts off by saying “...the core of religious faith is that mystic feeling which unites man with God. This state of spiritual communion can be brought about and maintained by means of meditation and prayer.”

Bahá’u’lláh emphasises “Should a person recite but a single verse from the Holy Writings in a spirit of joy and radiance, this would be better for him than reciting wearily all the Scriptures of God....”

“The most acceptable prayer”, the Báb says, “is the one offered with the utmost spirituality and radiance; its prolongation hath not been and is not beloved by God. The more detached and the purer the prayer, the more acceptable is it in the presence of God.”

And ‘Abdu’l-Bahá concludes that “The prayerful condition is the best of all conditions, for man in such a state communeth with God, especially when prayer is offered in private and at times when one’s mind is free, such as midnight. Indeed, prayer imparteth life.”

What is the power of prayer?

“The reason why privacy hath been enjoined in moments of devotion is this, that thou mayest give their best attention to the remembrance of God....”

“The believers, as we all know, should endeavour to set such an example in their personal lives and conduct that others will feel impelled to embrace a Faith which reforms human character. However, unfortunately, not everyone achieves easily and rapidly the victory over self. What every believer, new or old, should realise is that the Cause has the spiritual power to recreate us if we make the effort to let that power influence us, and the greatest help in this respect is prayer. We must supplicate Bahá’u’lláh to assist us to overcome the failings in our own characters, and also exert our own will-power in mastering ourselves.”

Why meditate?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá addressed 12 January, 1913 “Through the faculty of meditation man attains to eternal life; through it he receives the breath of the Holy Spirit.” “Meditation is the key for opening the doors of mysteries. In that state man abstracts himself; in that state man withdraws himself from all outside objects; in that subjective mood he is immersed in the ocean of spiritual life and can unfold the secrets of things in-themselves.”

“It is an axiomatic fact that while you meditate you are speaking with your own spirit. In that state of mind you put certain questions to your spirit and the spirit answers: the light breaks forth and the reality is revealed.” “This faculty brings forth from the invisible plane the science and arts. Through the meditative faculty inventions are made possible, colossal undertakings are carried out; through it governments can run smoothly. Through this faculty man enters into the very Kingdom of God.”

“The meditative faculty is akin to the mirror: if you put it before earthly objects it will reflect them. Therefore, if the spirit of man is contemplating earthly subjects he will be informed of these. But if you turn the mirror of your spirits heavenwards, the heavenly constellations and the rays of the Sun of Reality will be reflected in your hearts, and the virtues of the Kingdom will be obtained. May we indeed become mirrors reflecting the heavenly realities, and may we become so pure as to reflect the stars of heaven.”

Will God answer all our prayers?

“The true worshipper, while praying, should endeavour not so much to ask God to fulfil his wishes and desires, but rather to adjust these and make them conform to the Divine Will. Only through such an attitude can one derive that feeling of inner peace and contentment which the power of prayer alone can confer.”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá asserts “God will answer the prayer of every servant if that prayer is urgent. His mercy is vast, illimitable. He answers the prayers of all His servants... it is natural that God will give to us when we ask Him. His mercy is all-encircling.

But we ask for things which the divine wisdom does not desire for us, and there is no answer to our prayer. His wisdom does not sanction what we wish. We pray, ‘O God! Make me wealthy!’ If this prayer were universally answered, human affairs would be at a standstill. There would be none left to work in the streets, none to till the soil, none to build, none to run the trains. Therefore, it is evident that it would not be well for us if all prayers were answered. The affairs of the world would be interfered with, energies crippled and progress hindered. But whatever we ask for which is in accord with divine wisdom, God will answer. Assuredly!”

What is the wisdom of prayer?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said the wisdom of prayer is this: “That it causeth a connection between the servant and the True One, because in that state man with all heart and soul turneth his face towards His Highness the Almighty, seeking His association and desiring His love and compassion. The greatest happiness for a lover is to converse with his beloved, and the greatest gift for a seeker is to become familiar with the object of his longing; that is why with every soul who is attracted to the Kingdom of God, his greatest hope is to find an opportunity to entreat and supplicate before his Beloved, appeal for His mercy and grace and be immersed in the ocean of His utterance, goodness and generosity.”

Music

How do I develop thirst for spiritual wealth?

'Abdu'l-Bahá says "The first thing to do is to acquire a thirst for Spirituality, then Live the Life! Live the Life! Live the life! They way to acquire this thirst is to meditate upon the future life. Study the Holy Words, read your Bible, read the Holy books, especially study the Holy Utterances of Bahá'u'lláh; Prayer and Meditation, take much time for these two. Then will you know this Great Thirst, and then only can you begin to Live the Life!"