

RAMADAN

IMMERSION



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Al Afuww العفو

- A dua that we should make in anticipation of Laylatul Qadr includes this name.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

- We often translate Al Afuww as Allah being The Pardoner.
- Another name of Allah that has to do with forgiveness is الغفور.
 - مغفرة is similar to سترة in Arabic
 - Prophet SAW recommended putting a sutra (cover) between ourselves and others when we are praying so that they may cross in front of us, even if it is a blade of grass.
 - Our ستر is similar to our عورة, it's the part of our body that we cover.
 - The name Ghafoor has to do with covering our sins.
 - We are asking Allah to cover our misdeeds when calling upon Him as Ghafoor.
 - With this type of forgiveness, the sin is still there, but it's forgiven.
 - Al Afuww is different from Al Ghafoor.
- Afa means to erase from existence
 - Imagine a beach with footprints when the water washes it away - there is no trace of them.
- Allah loves to forgive in this way, completely erasing our sins.

Witnesses to Our Deeds

- There's different things that bear witness to the actions that we undertake.
 - When invoking Al Afuww, we are asking Allah to erase from the existence of these things
- Our limbs on the Day of Judgment will speak.
 - We should think of this in two ways: we should stay away from what's bad, but also engage in good.
 - There's so much that will be covered by just our limbs.
 - Our feet will say where we walked to.
 - Our eyes will say what we looked at.
 - Our ears will say what we heard.
- Rumi said, "raise your words, not your voices. It's the rain that makes the flowers grow, not thunder."
- The earth that we stand on will also bear witness for our deeds.
 - It will speak of what we did upon the earth.
 - This is one reason we change our spot when praying a sunnah prayer after the fard prayer. More of the earth will testify to our good deed.
- Allah says in the Qur'an that there are guardians for us. These are the angels on our shoulders.
 - They are described as كرامًا كاتبين
 - They are noble and they are writing.
 - The records they are writing in will also bear witness.
 - During Laylatul Qadr or other times the angels are in gatherings of good, what are the angels doing? They want to witness what's happening.
 - Haya isn't just about modest clothes. Haya in our tradition is about Allah not finding us in places He wouldn't want us to be in and Allah finding us in places we should be in.
 - On Laylatul Qadr, we can still be in these gatherings even if we are not at the masjid or with other people. It's a metaphysical experience, we can do it alone in our homes too.

- Hadith: The Quran is a حُجَّة (proof) for or against us.
- When we call upon Allah as Al Afuww with the dua mentioned, it means, Ya Allah, erase from all of these things (that bear witness) the presence of my sins.
- It can be difficult to live with things that we have done, knowing all of our previous sins and shortcomings.
 - When we are calling upon Al Afuww, we are also asking Allah to help us to come to terms with what we have done.
 - Shaytan doesn't just try to make us do sins, he also wants us to despair in Allah's mercy after our sins.
- We are not the ones saying that Allah loves to forgive and erase our sins. The best of creation, Prophet SAW, is the one who told us that Allah loves to forgive in this way.

Actualizing This Name

- There is a hadith about a man who was owed a lot of money forgave people for all of their debts. When he stands in front of Allah on the Day of Judgment, Allah will say, "you can't be more afuww than Me." Because the man embodied this characteristic, Allah forgives him for everything he did.
- Forgiving is not really for the one who is being forgiven, forgiveness is for the forgiver.
 - It ends bitterness, anger, and resentment.
 - We are traversing a bridge, starting in a place of agitation, and ending at a place of contentment.
 - The forgiver is the one benefiting from that forgiveness.
- If someone has wronged us, we don't want to carry toxicity in our hearts, but we also don't want to complicate the process by assuming something is wrong with ourselves if we struggle to forgive them.
- We also want to acknowledge that if we do not forgive people at all, there is something wrong.

- We should try to forgive those who we interact with daily.
- We never want to owe someone something. We should own up to our mistakes and wrongdoings against people.
- Allah will not give us someone else's restitution without their forgiveness.
- Remember in the last ten days of Ramadan - if there is someone who is waiting for us to say sorry, we should say sorry to them.
 - We shouldn't expect people to always accept our apologies, because it can be hard. We just need to focus on seeking that forgiveness.
 - It can take time to heal from being wronged.
- Embedded in this name is the recognition that there will come a time of judgment, there is something bigger than this world.
- In the last ayah of Surah Baqara, afuww is mentioned as a verb.

وَأَعْفُ عَنَّا وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا وَأَرْحَمْنَا

- The mufasssireen say that when we say **وَأَعْفُ عَنَّا** we are asking forgiveness for the things we could have done but didn't do. When saying **وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا**, we are seeking forgiveness for the things we shouldn't have done, but did. When we say **وَأَرْحَمْنَا** we are acknowledging that it is only Allah's rahma that will be the key to Jannah.
- Rahma, as we discussed previously, is not just mercy. It is rooted in compassion, love, and mercy.
- We should now live in this world, remembering that for simple good deeds we do, our limbs will be a witness.
 - Even a smile is a charity, as the Prophet SAW said.
 - The Prophet SAW said that the best of us are those that greet those they know and those they don't know.
 - We want our teeth to say on the Day of Judgment, "Your servant used me to bring glad tidings to Your creation."
- The Prophet SAW would do istighfar over 70 times in a day, although he was already forgiven.

- It's empowering to acknowledge that there's things we do well, and things we can do better.
- If we make this dua and there are people we need to seek forgiveness from, we should take the opportunities we have to seek their forgiveness.
 - We need to be willing to walk down the path that Allah gives us to pardon others.
 - When we are saying **أُهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ**, we are not asking Allah to just show the path to us, we are asking that we are given the path to be able to walk upon it.
- In order to be a recipient of this forgiveness, we need to first set things straight with the creation.