

When should Salaatul Istisqaa be Performed

Q: salaah-309: Although we require rain, there is no real difficulty that the people seem to suffering. Should people then go out of town to perform the Salaatul Istisqaa?

Answer: If there is a not-too-urgent need for rain, du'aa for rain may be made after the salaahs and during the Jumu'ah Khutbah. However, there will be a need to go out and sincerely repent when the need is intense. This will be when dams, wells and rivers start to dry up; when there is a severe shortage of fodder, when plantations are ruined and the difficulty and concern is apparent amongst the people. People will then proceed out of town where they will make du'aa from their hearts and weep in their du'aa so that Allaah's mercy may be showered forth. When the need is not so intense, people will not be so earnest and the possibility is great that they will return disappointed. The salaah will then become just a joke.

Mathnawi relates an incident of the saafi saint Ahmad who used to take loans from people to feed, his disciples and guests. In this manner, he accumulated many debts. When he fell ill and there was no hope of him recovering, the creditors came to him to seek their dues. As they all waited there for payment (which the saint had no funds to settle), a little boy came along selling sweetmeats. The saint bid him to give sweetmeats to all the creditors waiting there and when he had done so, he asked for the money. "Wait there along with the other creditors," the saint told the boy, "You will be paid when they are paid.

Seeing that he would not be receiving anything, the boy started to weep, saying that his father would hit him for not bringing the money. The saint remained silent as the boy bawled and the creditors were upset to think that the saint had caused the boy so much hurt. They did not have to wait long however because just then someone arrived with a large sum of money as a gift to the saint. He then used the money to settle all the debts. Surprised at all of this, one of the saint's servants asked him about it when they were in privacy. The saint explained, "I made du'aa to Allaah to alleviate the burden of the debts and was told that a weeping person would draw Allaah's mercy and that there was no such person amongst the creditors because their hearts were filled with rage and harshness. It was then the little boy who solved the problem. Whatever the reason for his weeping was, his heart was also hurt and it was this that attracted Allaah's mercy."

After relating this miracle, Hadhrat Roomi RAH. writes:

"The fountains of mercy did not burst forth until the sweetmeat seller did not weep Weeping is so strange that gardens cannot laugh until the clouds weep and the mother's milk will not flow until the child starts to weep If you are ever afflicted with hardship then do weep before Allaah Weep before Allaah to have happiness and pleasure and to have your heart smiling Every tear ends in a smile and the fortunate one is he who looks towards the result of things."

Therefore, people should go out to perform the Salaatul Istisqaa only when conditions are very severe. And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

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