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Question 10: What is The Purpose of Prayers of Ayaat?

Question: Why should one perform Prayers of ayaat at during lunar and solar eclipse, earthquake, storms or thunder?

Answer: Performing Prayers of ayaat during lunar and solar eclipse is due to two main reasons:

(1) Usually the Sun, Moon and their working is astonishing for man. The shining (golden) rays of the sun give life to all the animals and plants. The moon moves according to its accurate and disciplined way and with its first ray reduces the darkness on the Earth and brightens it for us.

These great and surprising things had a great effect on the past people and a belief was created in their mind that apparently if these (Sun and moon) have power on animals, plants and trees they also affect the destiny of people and they are their creators; and from that time worship of Sun and Moon came into existence and people started having faith in them. They accorded divinity to the Sun and the Moon while it belongs only to the Lord Who actually is the absolute Creator of this whole Universe.

The greatest blow dealt by Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) on these false beliefs was that all the planets and heavenly bodies were subservient to the law and system of the universe.[1]

The setting of those shining bodies and their going away in darkness is the biggest proof of their limitations; and when a thing itself is limited and subservient to other things and does not have the power to continuously give light to the Earth it proves that it is not God and it is itself a creature.

The eclipse of Sun and Moon is a sign that they are creatures and to be limited in front of the Creator is itself a proof and from this we come to know that these planets that give light to other creatures, do not have much power. That is the reason that sometimes some things come and stand in front of them and stops them from performing their duties.

That is why the Solar and Lunar eclipse is the best proof of their being creatures and being limited before the Almighty Allah.

When we see the Solar and Lunar eclipse (an incident which shows that these bodies are under a strong and supernatural power, such an incident creates faith about the real Creator in our hearts, in Whose power the Sun and the Moon and the whole Universe is under Him) so it is necessary for us at that time to convert this faith into practice and by praying the ayaat prayers put our forehead in the holy court and show our inner beliefs.

That is why Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) on the setting of those luminary bodies concluded what we conclude from the solar and lunar eclipse, and promptly said:

"Surely I have turned myself, being upright wholly to Him who originated the heavens and the earth, and I am not of the polytheists.[2]

(2) Whenever there are some heavenly phenomena and extraordinary things occur, many people try to find refuge and to remove the effects of these incidents, think some way out.

Islam has made it compulsory to perform the ayaat prayers during Solar and Lunar eclipse so that people may remain away from superstitions and divert their attention and intelligence towards the fact that He is the source of all the phenomena in the Universe. This Prayer gives one peace of mind against such incidents.

1. Surah Anam 6:76-78
2. Surah Anam 6:80

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