

The Prophet's guidance on treating one bitten (by an animal) by reciting Al-Fātihah

In the *Sahihain* [also *At-Tirmidhi*, *Ibn Mājah* and *Ahmad*] it is narrated that Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri said, "Some of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ went on a journey till they reached some of the Arab tribes (at night). They asked the latter to treat them as their guests but they refused. The chief of that tribe was then bitten by a snake (or stung by a scorpion) and they tried their best to cure him but in vain. Some of them said (to the others), 'Nothing has benefited him, will you go to the people who

resided here at night, it may be that some of them might possess something (as treatment).' They went to the group of the companions (of the Prophet ﷺ) and said, 'Our chief has been bitten by a snake (or stung by a scorpion) and we have tried everything but he has not benefited. Have you got anything (useful)?' One of them replied, 'Yes, by Allāh! I can recite an Islamic prayer formula, but as you have refused to accept us as your guests, I will not recite the Islamic prayer formula for you unless you fix for us some wages for it.' They agreed to pay them a flock of sheep. One of them then recited (The chapter *Al-Fātihah*): 'All the praises are for the Lord of the Worlds' and puffed over the chief who became alright as if he was released from a chain, and got up and started walking, showing no signs of sickness. They paid them what they agreed to pay. Some of them (i.e., the Companions) then suggested to divide their earnings among themselves, but the one who performed the recitation said, 'Do not divide them till we go to the Prophet ﷺ and narrate the whole story to him, and wait for his order.' So, they went to Allāh's Messenger ﷺ and narrated the story. Allāh's Messenger asked:

« وما يُدْرِكُ أَنهَا رُقِيَّةٌ »

"How did you come to know that the chapter *Al-Fātihah* could be recited as an Islamic prayer formula?"

Then he added:

« قَدْ أَصَبْتُمْ؛ اقْتَسِمُوا وَاصْرِبُوا لِي مَعَكُمْ سَهْمًا »

"You have done the right thing. Divide (what you have earned) and assign a share for me as well."

It is a well-known fact that certain types of speech have a profound effect and benefit that experience testifies to. So how about the Words of the Lord of the Worlds that are as preferred to the creation's speech as Allāh is preferred above His creation? Allāh's Words contain the ultimate cure, the perfect immunity, correct guidance and an encompassing mercy, that if it was revealed to a mountain, it would turn to dust in appreciation of Allāh's Glory. Allāh said:

﴿ وَنَزَّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴾

"And We send down of the *Qur'ān* that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe (in Islāmic Monotheism and act on

﴿ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴾

"Allāh has promised those among them who believe (i.e., all those who follow Islāmic Monotheism, the religion of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ till the Day of Resurrection) and do righteous good deeds, forgiveness and a mighty reward (i.e., Paradise)." (48:29)

What could one think of the opening of the Qur'ān (*Al-Fātihah*, the first chapter) that is not comparable to any Verse or chapter revealed in the Qur'ān, the Torah, the Gospel or the Zabur (that was revealed to Prophet Dawūd عليه السلام). The *Al-Fātihah* contains the general meaning of all the Divine Books sent down by Allāh. It contains Allāh's Names and Attributes, such as Allāh, the *Rabb* (Lord), *Ar-Rahmān* (Most Merciful) and *Ar-Rahīm* (Most Beneficent). It also affirms Resurrection, Allāh's Oneness in Lordship. It also mentions the creation's dependence on Allāh's help and guidance and that He Alone grants such bounties. It also contains the best and most beneficial supplication that the creation needs: being guided to the Straight Path that entails acquiring knowledge of His Names and Attributes, worshipping Him alone, obeying His Commands, refraining from His prohibitions and staying firm on this path until death. It also contains the kinds of creation that are divided into those who have acquired the bounty of knowing the Truth, and who prefer and implement its implications. On the other hand, there are those who have earned Allāh's Anger by avoiding the truth after knowing it and there are those who are led astray from the True Path. These are the camps that the creation is divided into. Also, the *Al-Fātihah* affirms Predestination and the Commandments of the religion, Allāh's Names and Attributes, Resurrection and Prophethood. It also purifies the heart and mentions Allāh's Justice and Generosity. It also refutes all types of innovations and evil methods. We mentioned all these virtues for the *Al-Fātihah* in our book that explains it, *Madariju As-Salikin*. Certainly, a chapter that contains all these virtues and benefits deserves to be used as a cure for disease, as well as an antidote for poisonous stings.

Indeed, *Al-Fātihah* is the best cure because it contains sincere servitude to Allāh, praising Him, relating all bounties to Him, seeking His help and support, and invoking Him for all types of advantages, such as the correct guidance that brings about benefit and fends off torment.

It was reported that the part in *Al-Fātihah* that contains the Islamic prayer formula is what Allāh said:

﴿ إِنَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴾

"You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for everything)." (1:5)

Indeed, these are mighty powerful words that contain the strongest medicine contained in this chapter. These words entail sincere dependence and reliance on Allāh, seeking refuge and help from Him and showing meekness and need of Him. Consequently, these words contain the best goals to seek, which is worshipping Allāh Alone. Also they contain the best method to acquire these goals, that is, invoking Allāh for His support so that one achieves these goals.

While I was in Makkah, I once fell sick and had no access to a doctor or medicine. So I used to seek a cure in The *Al-Fātihah* by sipping a drink from the well of Zamzam that I recited the *Al-Fātihah* on. I found complete cure in this method and I used to rely on it whenever I felt pain. This cure always helped me.

There is a wonderful secret in using the *Al-Fātihah* as an Islamic prayer formula to treat poisons, and Allāh has created a cure for every disease as we have stated. Venomous beasts have a special effect on their victims with their evil souls. Furthermore, the weapon that the venomous beasts use is the needle that they use to sting and inject the venom into their victims. Likewise, the person who is applying the Islamic prayer formula will have a positive effect on the person receiving the Islamic prayer formula, thus enhancing his chances of a speedy recovery by Allāh's will. In this case, the victim will feel that his strength and resolve are enhanced with the Islamic prayer formula and the divine remedy, similar to the relation that exists between regular medicine and the sick person. Also, the wetness and the air contained in the spit of the person who recites the Islamic prayer formula, that contains the supplication and the remembrance of Allāh, will all enhance the chances of recovery. Since the person who recites the Islamic prayer formula recites it with both his heart and mouth, then adding some of the air and moisture that exists inside his body through the spit will maximize the effectiveness, power and strength of the remedy. Certainly, this mixture of heart and soul used in the divine remedy works just as regular

medicine works on the body.

The person who applies the Islamic prayer formula has an advantage over the evil forces (including poisonous snakes etc.) since he adds words of the Islamic prayer formula and spit to the strength of his inner self to remove the effects of the evil forces and the venom. Also, the more strength of heart the person has, the stronger the Islamic prayer formula he recites becomes. There is another secret behind using spit in the divine remedy, which is also used by the evil forces, just as Allāh said,

﴿ وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ ﴾

“And from the evil of those who practise witchcrafts when they blow in the knots.” (113:4)

The body is greatly affected by what the heart feels and so blowing the air and spitting resembles a way to intensify the effect of what the heart feels and intends. Those who work sorcery tie some knots and blow onto them words of sorcery, which work on the victim although he or she might not be present. In this way, the evil force helps transferring the words of sorcery and their effect to the victim. When the force for good retaliates by using the Islamic prayer formula and then breathing unto the victim, the more powerful of the warring parties wins. War between good and evil forces resemble real war that occurs between people. The spiritual forces essentially use and enlist physical bodies in their wars against each other. Whoever is only concerned about the material world will not feel any of this raging war since he is attached to the environment that he believes in, that is, the material world, and he is far away from the world of spiritual forces and their effect on mankind.

In short, when the good spiritual force is strong enough and feels the effects and the meanings contained in the *Al-Fātihah*, along with the breathing that accompanies reciting it, the Islamic prayer formula will have the intended effect against the evil forces and will thus remove their harmful effect. Allāh knows best.