

Types of Dua (Supplication) in Islam:

In Islam, the terms Dua Ibadah and Dua Mas'ala refer to two distinct types of supplication or invocation, both integral to worship and one's relationship with Allah.

1. Dua Ibadah (Supplication of Worship)

- Meaning: This refers to acts of worship in themselves being a form of dua (supplication). When a person Praise Allah, Remembers Allah's Attributes and glorifies His Sovereignty , infinite power, and infinite Mercy , and showing their helplessness, they are essentially asking Allah for His pleasure, mercy, and fulfillment of their needs through their praising and glorifying act.
- Key Aspect: Dua Ibadah is implicit and indirect. It is broader and encompasses all acts of obedience and devotion that seek to glorify Allah and earn His favor.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

“Dua is worship.” (Tirmidhi, 3372)

This highlights that worshipping and glorifying itself is a form of seeking closeness to Allah and asking for His blessings and fulfilling your needs.

In Quran there are explicit examples of these types of Dua by Several Allah's Messengers themselves.

1) When Prophet Yunus Left his nation without Allah's permission, As a punishment Allah made a whale swallow him alive, He did the supplication (Dua Ibadah)

وَذَا النُّونِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغَاضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

[Q21/87]

Look the wording of his Dua, he didn't ask that O' Allah, I am in the belly of a whale, I am going to die, I am in extremely dangerous and unbearable situation, please save me etc. He only said "There is none worthy of worship but You, Glory be to You! Indeed I was the one who committed wrong"

He praised Allah, accepted His oneness and admits his guilt. He didn't need to explain his situation and solution as He knows Allah knows everything, the situation he is in and what is the best solution of getting out of this situation with His infinite knowledge and wisdom. Allah not only saved his life and made arrangements to survive in desert with shade and food and he fully recovered.

2) Prophet Ayub was wealthy, healthy and have prosperous family and worldly life, then as a test Allah took away everything and he was inflicted with severe Physical /bodily decease . He did the Dua to Allah (Dua Ibadah)

وَأَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَى رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الضُّرُّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

[Q21/83]

Look at the wording of his Dua, he didn't complain, that he lost his wealth, family and what king of decease he had and he wants his

health , wealth, family back but said “ I am badly afflicted with distress: but all of those who show mercy, You are the Most Merciful”

Then Allah, not only cured him but give him back his wealth, family and health.

3) When Prophet Musa ran away from Firon (Ferrell) territory to avoid persecution and went to Madian , He was hungry, shelter less, no worldly possessions at all, He made a Dua (Dua Ibadah)

فَسَقَى لَهُمَا ثُمَّ تَوَلَّى إِلَى الظِّلِّ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ
[Q 28/24]

Look at the wording of his supplication. He didn't complain or said, I am hungry, no place to live, no money etc but said “My Lord, indeed I am in need of whatever good you would send down to me”

Allah, not only arranged for his lodging, boarding but pious woman for marriage.

4) When Prophet Adam and his wife Eve violated Allah's commandment of not eating fruit from a specific tree in Paradise and they lost their clothes which were hiding their private parts, they made a dua.

قَالَا رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ
They said, “ Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves, and if you do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we will surely be among the losers”.

Look at the wording of their dua, they did not mentioned to give back their clothes and put back in Paradise, but admitted their guilt, and praised Allah’s power of forgiveness and Mercy.

Similarly it is reported in Ahadith that whenever Prophet Muhammad (SAW) needed anything or was in distress, he praised Allah’s greatness, Glorifying Him abundantly.

Here are few Dua’s Prophet (SAW) did in times of distress, affliction and hardship without mentioning actual distress or hardship, just praised Him (Dua Ibadah) knowing fully well that Allah knows better than myself my situation, what I need and what is good for me with His infinite knowledge and Wisdom.

A) حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ.

Translation:

“Sufficient for us is Allah, and He is the best disposer of affairs.”
(Surah Aal-E-Imran, 3:173)

B) اللَّهُمَّ لَا سَهْلَ إِلَّا مَا جَعَلْتَهُ سَهْلًا، وَأَنْتَ تَجْعَلُ الْحَزْنَ إِذَا شِئْتَ سَهْلًا.

Translation:

“O Allah, there is no ease except that which You make easy, and You make the difficult easy if You will.”
(Ibn Hibban, 2427)

C) هُمْ إِنِّي تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَيْكَ، وَأَنْتَ رَبِّي، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ اللَّهُ.

Translation:

“O Allah, I place my trust in You, and You are my Lord. There is no deity except You.”

(Abu Dawood, 5069)

D) وَأَغْنِنِي بِفَضْلِكَ عَمَّنْ سِوَاكَ اللَّهُمَّ اكْفِنِي بِحَلَالِكَ عَنْ حَرَامِكَ،

“O Allah, suffice me with what You have allowed instead of what You have forbidden, and make me independent of all others besides You.” (Tirmidhi)

F) لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

الْعَلِيمُ الْخَلِيمُ لَا

إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّ

الْعَظِيمُ لَا الْعَرْشِ

إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ رَبُّ
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَرَبُّ
الأَرْضِ رَبُّ
العَرْشِ الكَرِيمِ

“There is no deity but Allah, the Knowing, the Clement. There is no deity but Allah, Lord of the Magnificent Throne. There is no deity but Allah, Lord of the heavens and Lord of the earth and Lord of the Noble Throne.” - (Bukhari)

بِسْمِ اللهِ الَّذِي لَا يَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الأَرْضِ (G)
لَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ العَلِيمُ

“In the name of Allah with whose Name nothing on earth or in Heaven harms and He is the All-Hearing the All-Knowing.”

H) حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

“Allah is sufficient for me. There is none worthy of worship but Him. I have placed my trust in Him, He is Lord of the Majestic Throne.” (Sahih)

I) إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ، اللَّهُمَّ أَجْزِنِي فِي مُصِيبَتِي، خَيْرًا مِنْهَا وَأَخْلِفْ لِي

“We are from Allah and unto Him we return. O Allah take me out of my plight and bring to me after it something better.”

J) يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيْثُ

“O Living and Eternal Sustainer! By Your mercy I seek relief!” - (Tirmidhi)

K) اللَّهُمَّ قَنِّعْنِي بِمَا رَزَقْتَنِي، وَبَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ، وَأَخْلِفْ عَلَيَّ كُلَّ غَائِبَةٍ بِخَيْرٍ

“O Allah, make me content with what you have provided me, send blessings for me therein, and replace for me every absent thing with something better.” - (Bukhari)

L) اللَّهُ رَبِّي لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ

‘Allah is my Lord without any partner, (Al-Mu’jam al-Kabir lil-Tabaraani 24/154)

The best of the best Dua Ibadah Prophet (SAW) used to recite himself and taught us:

**وَإِبْنُ عَبْدِكَ وَإِبْنُ أُمَّتِكَ نَاصِيَتِي بِيَدِكَ اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي عَبْدُكَ
 مَاضٍ فِي حُكْمِكَ عَنٌّ فِي قَضَاؤِكَ أَسْأَلُكَ بِكُلِّ اسْمٍ هُوَ
 لَكَ سَمِّيَتْ بِهِ نَفْسِكَ أَوْ عَلَّمْتَهُ أَحَدًا مِنْ خَلْقِكَ أَوْ أَنْزَلْتَهُ
 عِلْمَ الْغَيْبِ عِنْدَكَ أَنْ فِي كِتَابِكَ أَوْ اسْتَأْثَرْتَ بِهِ فِي
 تَجْعَلَ الْقُرْآنَ رَبِيعَ قَلْبِي وَنُورَ صَدْرِي وَجِلَاءَ حُزْنِي
 وَذَهَابَ هَمِّي إِلَّا أَذْهَبَ اللَّهُ هَمَّهُ وَحُزْنَهُ وَأَبْدَلَهُ مَكَانَهُ
 بَلَى يَنْبَغِي فَرَجًا قَلْبًا فَقِيلَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَلَا نَتَعَلَّمُهَا فَقُلْنَا
 لِمَنْ سَمِعَهَا أَنْ يَتَعَلَّمَهَا**

Abdullah ibn Mas'ud reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "A servant is not struck by worry or grief but let him say (to remove the grief or sorrow):

'O Allah, I am Your servant, the son of Your servant, the son of Your maid servant. My forelock is in Your hand, Your decision over me has passed, and Your decree upon me is in justice.

I ask You by every name with which You have named Yourself, or revealed in Your Book, or taught to one of Your creatures, or kept hidden in the Unseen with You, that You make [the Quran](#) the spring of my heart, the light within me, the banisher of my depression, and the expeller of my anxiety,' then Allah will expel his worry and replace his grief with joy."

It was said, "O Messenger of Allah, shall we not study these words?" The Prophet said, "Of course, whoever hears them should study them."
(Musnad Ahmad 3712)

Above dua is a classical example to show your extreme humility towards Allah, Except His decree against you and ask His Unlimited Mercy for

your all affairs through Quran (By reading it, understanding it, pondering and reflecting on it and through the implementation of its Ayat in your life).

You can see from all the Dua's mentioned above, Prophet (SAW) didn't mention any specific problem/distress he had, and didn't asked what he wants but only Praised and glorified Allah (SWT) .

This is the highest level of Dua called Dua Ibadah, in which you have full Trust in Allah that he knows what your problems are what the best solution He will provide for you so you do not need to mention your problems and suggest your solutions.

The importance of Dua of Ibadah is also very evident from Hadith Qudsi;

“Whoever is so occupied with my remembrance and they do not ask Me for their needs, I grant them the best of what I grant to those who ask” Reported by Musnad Ahmad.

2. Dua Mas'ala (Supplication of Request)

- Meaning: This refers to directly asking Allah for something specific. It is the literal invocation or plea where a person makes a

request to Allah for guidance, forgiveness, provision, relief from hardship, or any need.

Nothing wrong in this approach too, because after all you are Asking Allah alone by mentioning your problems and asking specific things. But this is lower level of Dua.

- Key Aspect: Dua Mas'ala is explicit and direct. It involves a person recognizing their dependence on Allah and turning to Him for help.
- Example: Saying "O Allah, grant me health, grant me children, a home to live etc or ease my such and such difficulties ."

The Qur'an also encourages making such supplications:

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ

"And your Lord says, 'Call upon Me; I will respond to you.'"
(Qur'an, 40:60)

Key Differences

Both forms of dua reflect submission to Allah, with Dua Ibadah emphasizing glorification, accepting His absolute authority, oneness, His wisdom, knowledge of unseen and trust on Him and at the same time accepting your helplessness and humility toward Him.

Dua Mas'ala is emphasizing reliance and direct communication with the Creator about your problems and need.