

## For Fast 16

### Chapter 17

- 23** And your Lord has decreed that you serve none but Him, and do good to parents. If either or both of them reach old age with you, say no word to them showing annoyance, nor rebuke them, and speak to them a generous word.
- 24** And make yourself gentle to them with humility out of mercy, and say: My Lord, have mercy on them, as they brought me up (when I was) little.

---

*Note:* This is a prayer to be said for elderly parents.

---

- 78** Keep up prayer from the declining of the sun till the darkness of the night, and the recital of the Quran at dawn. Surely the recital of the Quran at dawn is witnessed.
- 79** And during a part of the night, keep awake by it, beyond what is incumbent on you; maybe your Lord will raise you to a position of great glory.

---

*Note:* In v. 78 prayer “from the declining of the sun” refers to *zuhr* and *asr*, and “till the darkness of the night” refers to *maghrib* and *isha*. *Fajr* prayers are mentioned as “the recital of the Quran at dawn” since longer portions of the Quran are recited in *fajr* prayers. The recital of the Quran at dawn being “witnessed” means that the person praying witnesses the effects of reciting the Quran much more at dawn than at other times.

V. 79 mentions the voluntary, *tahajjud* prayer, which is said in the middle of the night, before *fajr*. It raises a person to a high spiritual position.

(See next page for a description of Maulana Muhammad Ali’s *tahajjud* prayers written by those who lived with him.)

---

- 80** And say: My Lord, make me enter a truthful entering, and make me go forth a truthful exit, and grant me from Your presence an authority to help (me).

---

V. 80 is a prayer for undertaking a task. It must be started with a truthful aim, and completed by truthful means. We must ask for necessary help and resources from others who are in a position to provide them. The mention of ‘exit’ at the very beginning of the task shows that we must plan the entire task, including how to exit from it. In fact, this verse and prayer lay down the principles of what is now called project management.

In the modern world, we have projects which are started but then abandoned because the end isn’t planned. We have modern wars which are started by powerful countries untruthfully, for reasons other than the claimed reasons. The exit from them is not planned, and the appointed international forums are not treated as authorities but are by-passed.

---

*See next page*

## ***Tahajjud* prayers by Maulana Muhammad Ali**

*From his biography*

Maulana Muhammad Ali concentrated profoundly, to the highest degree, when saying his prayers. He gave importance to saying prayers in congregation, of course, but his practice of saying the *tahajjud* prayer, a habit acquired in his youth, was so firm that he did not miss this prayer for the rest of his life. Whether he was travelling or ill, he said his *tahajjud* prayer without fail and always exhorted the *Jama'at* in forceful, passionate words to adhere to this prayer. Even during illness he would wake up at *tahajjud* time and if he could not rise out of bed he would say his prayer sitting or lying in bed. In 1950, when he suffered the most serious heart attacks and the doctors declared it as absolutely essential for him to sleep as much as possible, he still would wake up for the *tahajjud* prayer. In severe pain the doctors had to give him injections to sedate him but even then he would be awake at the time of the *tahajjud* prayer despite the effects of the injection. A Christian nurse who was attending him in those days remarked that he must be a "saint" to worship so much on his sick bed.

His children, near relations staying with him, and travelling companions were all witnesses to the fact that in the later part of the night, in seclusion, he would be falling before God the Most High in prayer. Whenever anyone woke, he or she would hear a melodious, wonderful sound of heart-felt crying and supplicating, which included glorification, praise and sanctification of the Almighty. God alone knows if at that time he was in this world or in another world, but his voice was like that of one who is cut off from this world and all its trappings, and was elsewhere, having lost himself in the Divine Being, and expressing before Him the pain and concern in his heart. This was a picture of what Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had expressed in a poetic verse as follows:

"At this time of affliction [for Islam], we the helpless have no remedy,  
But to pray in the morning and cry before dawn."

Once a lady guest of Maulana Muhammad Ali's wife, belonging to a family who were well known for their hostility to the Ahmadiyya Movement, stayed for one night in their house. Before leaving she disclosed to the Maulana's wife that she had stayed there purposely in order to know the real truth, at home, about Maulana Muhammad Ali's reputation for religious observance. She had stood outside the room where he had just started saying his *tahajjud* prayers and observed him through the slightly open door. She related:

"He was reciting the Holy Quran with utter humility. I could hear some echo of his voice. He stood for so long that I got tired. At long last he went into *ruku* and was in that posture for a considerable time. Then he went into *sajda* and spent an equally long time in that position. I could not stand any longer, and I found a stool and sat on it. He raised his head from *sajda* at long last and then went into the second *sajda* for a long time. As he had taken more than half an hour in the first *rak'a* of the prayer, I could not wait any further and went back to bed. Sometime later I again went to have a look, and saw him still at prayer. Many hours later, when the call for the *fajr* prayer was sounded, he went to the mosque. I am now sure that he is not an ordinary man but a saint of God. I came here with many doubts and ill-feelings [about Ahmadis], but I am leaving after being deeply convinced of his righteousness and greatness."