



RUQYAH & HEALING

Ruqyah



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Ruqyah

Definition

Ruqyah (plural: ruqa) derives from the past-tense verb raqa. It consists of words said or written in the form of dud or Dhikr for the purpose of protection or cure. It is sometimes accompanied with other actions, such as blowing or wiping over the thing to which it is applied.

A synonym for ruqyah in Arabic is "ta'with" and "ta'withah", from which derives the description "al-Mu'awwidhat" (the protecting ones) for the last three suras of the Qur'an, and "al-Mu'awwidhatan" (the two protecting ones) for the last two suras only (cited below).

People from most cultures and religions use various forms of ruqa. They are usually referred to in English as spells, charms, incantations, and so on. Most of those ruqa contain magic, shirk, senseless words, lies, etc. Because of this, the Prophet (Peace and Blessing upon Him) prohibited using ruqa at first. Ibn Masud (RA) reported that the Prophet (Peace and Blessing upon Him) said:

'Indeed, ruqa, amulets, and tiwala*, are all acts of shirk.' Recorded by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and others.

Verified to be authentic by al-Albani in as-Sahihah no. 331.

(*Tiwala: Beads or other objects, usually worn around the neck, believed by some people to have the power of making a husband love his wife.)

Later on, he (Peace and Blessing upon Him) allowed people to use only the ruqa that he approved, or that did not contain shirk. Jabir Bin 'Abdillah (RA) reported that Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessing upon Him) prohibited ruqa. Then, some people from the tribe of 'Umr Bin Hazam came to him and said, "We have a ruqyah that we used to use for scorpion and snake stings; but you have now prohibited using ruqa." And they showed it to him. He (Peace and Blessing upon Him) said:
'I do not see anything wrong in it. Anyone among you who can benefit his brother should do so.' Muslim

Conditions for a Permissible Ruqyah

There are some important conditions that must be satisfied in a ruqyah to make it permissible. They were summarized by Ibn Hajar (AR):

"There is a consensus among the 'ulama that ruqa are permissible when they satisfy three conditions:

- 1 - To be with Allah's words or His names and attributes
- 2 - To be in Arabic or of an intelligible meaning
- 3 - And to believe that they do not have effect by themselves but by Allah ('Azza wa Jalla)." Fath ul Bari 10/240

In what follows, we discuss each of these conditions:

1. Must Be with Allah's Words, Names, or Attributes

As we will see below, all forms of ruqa reported in the Sunnah satisfy this condition. They either consist of specific portions of the Qur'an, such as al-Fatiha or Ayat ul-Kursiy, or contain a praise of Allah ('Azza wa Jalla) and an invocation of His help and protection.

2. Must Be with Clearly Understood Words

This is an important condition that must be satisfied in order to eliminate any magic factors from the ruqyah.

3. Believing That the True Benefit Is from Allah ('Azza wa Jalla)

Similar to our earlier discussion of medicines, one must always believe that the true and ultimate protector is Allah ('Azza wa Jalla) alone, and that ruqa and medications are means that He created and He controls as He wills. Thus trust must be put in Him and not in the means that He created. Allah ('Azza wa Jalla) commands His Messenger (Peace and Blessing upon Him):

«So seek refuge with Allah (only); verily, it is He who is all-Hearer, all-Seer.» (Al Ghafir 40:56).

Additional Guidelines

In what follows, there are additional guidelines that should be taken into consideration what performing a ruqyah.

1. Adhering to What Is Reported in the Sunnah

Ruqyah is a form of supplication. As is the case with other supplications, it is permissible to use any words that fulfill the above conditions. This is approved by Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessing upon Him) who said:

'There is nothing wrong with ruqa as long as they do not involve shirk.' Muslim

However, rather than experimenting with ruqa that may or may not be useful, and rather than being doubtful as to whether a specific ruqyah fulfills the correct conditions and guidelines, it is best to adhere to the ruqa that have been reported in the Sunnah.

Things to Avoid in a Ruqyah

1. Shirk

'Awf Bin Malik al-Ashja'i (RA) narrated that he said to the Prophet (Peace and Blessing upon Him), "O Allah's Messenger! We used to apply ruqa during Jahiliyyah. What do you think of that?" He (Peace and Blessing upon Him) replied:

'Present your ruqa to me. There is nothing wrong with them as long as they do not involve shirk.' Muslim

Ibn Mas'ud's wife Zaynab (RA) narrated that he saw on her neck a string and asked her, "What is this?" She replied, "It is a string on which a ruqyah was made for me." He cut it off her neck and said:

"You, family of Ibn Mas'ud, are in no need for shirk. Truly, I heard Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessing upon Him) say: 'Indeed, ruqa, amulets, and tiwala, are all acts of shirk.'

She said, "Why do you say this? I was having spasms of pain in my eye; so I went to such and such a Jewish man, and whenever he treated it with ruqyah, it soothed it." He replied:

"That is the doing of Satan. He (Satan) pinches it with his hand; and when the ruqyah is applied to it, he removes his hand. It would have been sufficient for you to say what Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessing upon Him) used to say:

'Athhib il-ba's, rabb an-nas, washfi ant ash-shafi, la shifa illa shifa uk, shifaaan la yughadiru saqama.'

Meaning: 'Remove the affliction, Lord of the people, and cure - You are the one who cures, and there is no cure except from You—a cure that will not leave any sickness.' Recorded by Abu Dawud; judged hasan by al-Albani (Mishkat ul-Masabih no. 4552).

The Prophet (Peace and Blessing upon Him) explicitly prohibited all magical ruqa. Jabir reported that the Prophet (Peace and Blessing upon Him) said: 'Nashrah* is of the doing of Satan.' Recorded by Ahmad and Abu Dawud. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (as-Sahihah no. 2760).
(*A magical spell done to counter another magical spell.)

2. Seeking It from Magicians or Soothsayers

One may never go to a magician for help, regardless of whether the magician were true or false. False magicians are liars who pretend things to attract people's awe, money, or both. True magicians rely on jinns and the devil, and apply procedures containing kufr to produce their spells. Thus all of their spells, including ruqa, are prohibited, and any Muslim who seeks their help belies his belief in the Prophet (Peace and Blessing upon Him). Abu Hurayrah (RA) reported that the Prophet (Peace and Blessing upon Him) said: 'Whoever goes to a soothsayer or fortuneteller and believes in what he says has indeed rejected that which has been revealed to Muhammad.' Recorded by Ahmad and al-Hakim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani (Sahih ul-Jami no. 5939).

As indicated in the Qur'an, (*the magicians can never be successful*) (Taha 20:69), nor (*can they benefit anyone*) (al-Baqarah 2:102). Because of all of this, and from the rule established earlier that Allah did not make our cure in anything that He prohibited, we clearly conclude that it is not permissible at all to seek a ruqyah from a magician.

3. Using Unintelligible Words or Phrases

As has been indicated earlier, a ruqyah must be in intelligible and well-understandable words. Otherwise, it could contain shirk, magic, or other evils covered by cryptic characters and mysterious words.

4. Applying It in Prohibited or Strange Situations

Some people require that a ruqyah be accompanied with bizarre actions or conditions, such as applying it in a graveyard or bathroom, or applying it to a person who is unclean or covered with najasah. These and other similar requirements, beside conflicting with what has been reported in the Sunnah, demonstrate a devilish tendency that must be totally avoided.

As for writing a ruqyah on a piece of paper and attaching it to the body of the patient, or soaking the paper in water and making him drink that water, or blowing and spitting over a water container while reading it and then making him drink that water, all of this has no basis in the Sunnah (There are some authentic reports indicating that Imam Ahmad (AR) and some other 'ulama of the salaf have allowed some of these actions, but this by no means gives them a stamp of approval without a supportive evidence from the Sunnah.), and should therefore be totally avoided.

5. Using Prohibited Words or Phrases

A ruqyah may not include evil words, such as cursing, offensive descriptions, or profanity. All of this is prohibited, and, as has been indicated earlier, Allah did not make our cure in anything prohibited.

6. Relying on the Power of the Ruqyah

Neither the person applying a ruqyah, nor the person to whom it is applied may assume that it has an independent power of cure or protection. They must both put their full trust in Allah, rely fully on Him, and believe that the ruqyah is a means that He created for them. As Ibn Al-Qayyim indicates (Al Jawab Al Kafi), one should view a ruqyah like one does a sword: it can be of no use without three conditions:

- a) It should be strong and sharp.
- b) The person using it should be well versed and experienced.
- c) There should be no obstacles hindering it from being most effective.

The Profession of Ruqyah-Giving

Some people have turned ruqyah-giving into a profession for which they devote their full time, and from which they earn a lot of money. This conflicts with the Sunnah and the practice of the salaf. It should be avoided by both the giver (called a reciter or a raqi) and the seeker of ruqyah. Some of the reasons for its prohibition are the following:

1. The common people think that the reciter has a special healing power, thereby turning their minds from the True Healer and His words to the one who recites them. This is a clear source of shirk.

2. We have no reports of any of the sahabah and salaf devoting their time to offer this service. This makes it a bid'ah in the Din.

3. When the devils realize the common people's fascination by a particular person, they do things to cause deviation to him and them. This is clearly expressed in the above discussion that took place between Ibn Mas'ud and his wife.

4. When a reciter finds the people gathering at his door seeking his help, he would imagine that he has a high status before Allah, and would be drawn into vanity and conceit.

5. Most of the reciters have a poor knowledge of the Sunnah, which makes them claim or do things that have no basis in Islam.

6. Since this profession is a good source of income, it attracts many impostors and liars who claim that they can treat people, thereby adding to the spread of ignorance, falsehood, and shirk.

Ruqa from the Sunnah

Various forms of supplications for prevention or healing, some of which may be classified as ruqa, have been presented in this site. In what follows, we include some more, or refer to earlier ones, as the discussion warrants.

Ruqyah with Allah's Name

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (RA) reported that Jibril came to the Prophet (Peace and Blessing upon Him) and said: , "O Muhammad, are you sick?" He replied, 'Yes.' He said:

"Bismillahi arqik, min kulli shayin yuthik, min sharri kulli nafsin aw ayni hasid - With Allah's Name I shelter you (give you ruqyah), from all that ails you, from the evil of every soul, or that of the envious eyes. May Allah cure you; with Allah's Name I shelter you." Muslim and others.

Ruqyah with Allah's Book

'Aishah (RA) reported that Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessing upon Him) came into her house and saw with her a woman who was treating her with ruqyah. He told her:

'Treat her (only) with Allah's Book.' Recorded by Ibn Hibban; verified to be authentic by al-Albani in as-Sahihah no. 1931.

In what follows, we present ruqa with specific suras or ayat as is recorded in the Sunnah.

1. Ruqyah with al-Fatiha

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri and Ibn Abbas (RA) reported that a number of the Prophet's (Peace and Blessing upon Him) companions were on a journey. They stopped one night by the dwellings of a bedouin tribe who refused to host them and give them food.

The chief of that tribe was then stung (by a snake or scorpion). His people tried everything possible to treat him, but to no avail. One of them suggested to seek help from the travellers. When they came to them, one of them said, "By Allah, I can perform ruqyah; but you have refused to host us. So I would not perform the ruqyah until you pledge to give us an offering."

They agreed to give them a flock of thirty sheep, and the companion started blowing (with light spit) on the stung man's sting and reading al-Fatiha. He was immediately cured, like one who was tied and then set free. He stood and walked as if nothing happened to him, and they gave them their pledged offering.

Some of the companions said, "Let us divide this flock among us." Others said, "No, you may not take any pay for reading Allah's Book! Let us not divide the goats until we reach the Prophet (Peace and Blessing upon Him), tell him what happened, and see what he commands us."

When they reached al-Madinah, they came to the Prophet (Peace and Blessing upon Him) and told him what happened. He said (approvingly):

'How did you know that it (al-Fatiha) is a ruqyah? You have done well! And indeed, the best thing to be paid for is Allah's Book*. So, divide it among you; and allot a share for me.' Al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others.

(*One may not be paid for praying or reading Qur'an, because these are acts of worship that should be done purely for Allah ('Azza wa Jalla). However, it is permissible to be paid a compensation for the time or effort that one sometimes puts into matters associated with these acts of worship in order to serve the Muslim community. For example, a regular imam in a masjid should be compensated for devoting his time to that position, otherwise he would have to work in a profession that would prevent him from fulfilling all of the services needed from him. Furthermore, based on this hadith, some scholars conclude that it is also permissible to be paid for a benefit that reaches others because of one's reading Qur'an.)

2. Ruqyah with al-Muawwidhat

As explained earlier, al-Muawwidhat are the last three suras of the Qur'an. The last two of them carry a clear meaning of ruqyah, and are presented below. Surat ul-Ikhlâs (112) does not carry such meaning in an explicit manner, but contains concise and strong words of praise for Allah ('Azza wa Jalla), making it an

important introduction to the succeeding two suras:

(Say, "I seek refuge with the Lord of daybreak, from the evil of what he created, and from the evil of darkness when it settles, and from the evil of the blowers in knots, and from the evil of an envier when he envies.") 113

(Say, "I seek refuge with the Lord of the people, the King of the people, the God of the people, from the evil of a retreating whisperer, who whispers (evil) in the breasts of the people, (whether he is) from among jinns or the people.") 114

‘Aishah (RA) reported:

"When Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessing upon Him) went to bed, he would bring the palms of both hands together, and blow into them while reading "Qul huwa Allahu ahad" 112, "Qul a'udhu bi rabb il-falaq" 113, "Qul a'udhu bi rabbi n-Nas" 114. He would then rub with them whatever he could reach of his body, starting with his head, face, and the front part of his body. He would do this three times. When he got very ill, he asked me to do that for him." Al Bukhari and Muslim

‘Aishah (RA) also reported:

"In the final sickness in which he passed away, the Prophet (Peace and Blessing upon Him) used to blow over himself with al-Mu'awwidhat. When he became very ill, I blew with them for him, rubbing over him with his own hand because of the blessing in it." Al Bukhari and Muslim

We can use these suras for scorpion stings like it as been reported in ahadith.

3. Ruqyah with Ayat ul-Kursi

Ubayy Bin Ka'b narrated that he had a harvest of dates. He noticed that it shrunk every day, and decided to watch it at night. He did and noticed a beast that looked like a boy who attained puberty. He gave him salam, and it responded to him with salam.

He asked it, "Are you human or jinn"

It replied, "Jinn."

He told it, "Show me your hand."

It showed him its hand, and he saw that it looked like a dog's, with fur like that of a dog covering it. He exclaimed, "Is this how jinn are like!?" It then told him, "All jinns know that there is no one among them stronger than me." He asked it, "What brought you here?" It replied, "We have been informed that you like to give charity, so we came to get some of your food." He asked it, "What would protect us from you?" It replied, "This ayah from Surat ul-Baqarah: (Allahu la ilaha illa huwa Al-Hayy ul-Qayyum,) (2/255) - whoever says it in the

evening will be protected from us until the morning, and whoever says it in the morning will be protected from us until the evening."

In the morning, Ubayy came to Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessing upon Him) and told him of that incident. He told him, 'The evil one has said the truth!' Recorded by an-Nasa'i and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albani.

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Muhammad Al Jibaly

Sickness: Regulations & Exhortations

Part 1



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