Salam alaikum wr wb

I wanna start by making a request in the spirit of the subject that we are dealing with.

At the end of my speech some of you might feel obligated... even out of a sense of what you've been doing already to applaud.

I don't think I'll benefit much from your applaud even though I appreciate the gesture but I think I'll appreciate more if you just make du'a for me & my family.

So that would be a favor that you would do for me and up for all of the noble scholars that are here that have presented... and if you've benefited from them then absolutely make du'a for them and also make du'a for their families.

I have very little to add to what's already been said in regards to this awesome subject but I do want to divide my conversation with you into two parts.

The first of them is something about my personal life something that has to do with du'a that I wanna share with you and it's not really as out of a spirit of boasting or you know exposing... but really I think it's something that many of you probably can relate to and maybe find even encouragement in and that I wanna share with you, my favorite du'a in the Qur'an.

Insha'Allahu ta'ala... and those are the only two things that I wanna do with you guys today.  I was about almost 20 yrs of age and I "absolutely" "head over heels" fell in love...

I went into a masjid in Ramadan. And I heard a remarkable scholar explain the Qur'an I had not read the Qur'an except in translation before that day and I heard him speak about the Qur'an in the form of almost a conversation.

And you know the Qur'an is Allah azzawajal speaking to us directly. And it felt like that for me for the first time. And he was doing this every night of Ramadan for about 4 hours every night to go through the entire Qur'an in this fashion.

And I attended this entire series with him because I was hooked completely, I was mesmerized by this Book. I was completely 'overwhelmed' that I didn't have any clue..no idea..what this Book was, that was always there and I always thought I have read something from it or some translation or something.

I have an idea what it says, I guess I know what it has to say. But when I heard what it "really" had to say for the first time. I felt that there's like this person in... there's this Book that I love so much and I have no relationship with it.

And of course the barriers were many including the knowledge of it but of course even the language. I had no idea what the Arabic language was. Not a clue!

The only thing that I could do at that time you know what it was? It's to make du'a :)

So I just asked Allah something very simple. I didn't even know how to ask it in Arabic or anything. I didn't know any duas by heart.

So I just asked Allah: "O Allah! I love Your Book". "I just love Your Book". And I'd love nothing more but to learn it and to teach it! Just make it easy for me to learn it. And make it easy for me to teach it. Because I love Your Book

That's all I asked And I swear to you by Allah! I am a terrible student of anything, "terrible" I mean specially languages I am absolutely horrendous.

I was not a good student in college. I used to hate studying. You know if anybody If I ever had sleep problems the easiest way for me to catch some sleep was to open up a text book 10 seconds later...

I'll have 12-13 hours of solid sleep Because... nothing will knock me out like studying But this teacher who was presenting the Qur'an also happened to be teaching an Arabic class.

And when I attended his class, Wallahi! it was like knots opening up. I couldn't stop studying. I couldn't put the books down. I couldn't stop thinking about it. I was doing like conjugations in my sleep. Going through grammar in my sleep. I was studying it in the train. I was doing it at work, at school, all the time!

I just became obsessed with it. And wallahi! what people around me found so difficult, Allah made it so easy for me. And I knew something had just happened. Allah has given me a gift in response to my du'a. And wallahi! I tell you... to this day, if I try to study anything else I have a hard time. But when I study Qur'an... I can spend hours & hours and hours... and it's easy for me.

Walhamdulillah! It's a gift of Allah to me. But this is something that I have personally experienced in terms of the "power of du'a". Just the power of du'a.

SubhanAllah! I don't mean to say this as a means of boasting but look I have... Walhamdulillah! I have taught Arabic courses all over the country. Maybe...close to now 15 thousand students. SubhanAllah! And not any of them have benefited anything except from the gift that Allah has given. And if they're able to continue that that entire benefit starts from one du'a. As far as I am concerned.

SubhanAllah! (Glory be to Allah). So that was a little bit about my personal story .But what I wanna really share with you is my favorite du'a in the Qur'an. And I think it's a very relevant du'a for pretty much all of us here in the audience.

And to set the stage for this du'a. I'm sure that some of you have heard me talk about this du'a before but I personally don't care. I'm gonna repeat it. Because (Qur'an verses)=> remind... reminder has benefit. So I hope to benefit myself & all of you with this reminder.

There's a powerful expression in the Qur'an. It's captured in two words. Those two words are "Qurrata A'ayun" The "Coolness of the Eyes".

A simple translation will yield=>coolness of the eyes. And it's mentioned in a number of occassions and it's also found in a Hadith of the messenger s.a.w.

Before I tell you how it's used in the sacred text, I want to tell you how the ancient Arabs used to use this figure of speech this expression. It's really a figure of speech.

So we can't really understand it literally. It means something more. In the Arab idiom, there were two expressions, without getting too technical with you guys.

There's the "eyes becoming cool" and the "eyes becoming warm". That's the first thing I would like you to know. The Arabs had two figures of speech. The eyes becoming cool & the eyes becoming warm. When somebody is shedding tears of sorrow. They're suffering the worst kind of fate. They're in deep depression & sadness and calamity. Then when you would look at them, the Arab would say at least that his eyes have become warm.

One of the worst curses you can curse upon someone in the Arabic language in ancient Arabic

"may Allah make his eyes warm" means...may he suffer the worst kinds of sorrows in his life. The exact opposite is what? The eyes becoming cool.

For your sorrows... for your sadness... for your pains to be removed completely and for you to feel peace and tranquility and joy like nothing else.

And I'll give you a simple example of coolness & warmth of the eyes before I continue. Imagine you're at the airport.. right. And there are two pairs. There's a pair of a mother & a son and another mother & another son. But this mother is saying farewell to her son, he's flying off somewhere. And the other mother is greeting her son, who flew-in from somewhere. And both of the mothers are crying. But one of them... her eyes are cool. And the other mother's... the eyes are warm. One is shedding tears of joy as she sees her son after many years.  She is crying too... but these are eyes becoming cool. But the other is letting go of her son. These are what? The eyes becoming warm. You understand the difference. Right?

A few pieces of context before I go further. The poet in Arabia says that the eyes of my tribe will remain warm. And he's actually an assassin also. Ya! poets are assassins...

It's kind of an Arab thing I guess but. So he's waiting on a sand dune, waiting to kill the tribe leader that has offended his tribe. And he makes poetry in the meantime. I guess he gotta lot of time. So he says: "my tribe's eyes will remain warm...untill my dagger isn't warm with his blood. In other words, when I kill this guy, then my tribe's eyes will become cool.

The rage, the frustration, the humiliation they feel will only disappear upon this guy's death. That's what I'm here to do to cool the eyes of my tribe. You understand?

So it's a means of relieving frustration and anger and ill-feelings. That's how the... in which context it's used. But then there's a final context that I wanna share with you in Arabic literature, where this expression is found. It's very beautiful actually. The Arabs used to travel in the desert and there is sandstorm. And in a sandstorm the Arab used to wrap his face up. Because obviously your face is being pounded with sand. Now the camel on which he is riding. Allah created the camel in a magnificent fashion. The eyelids of the camel actually trap sand and drop them. It doesn't even have to blink. It's got a screen in front of his eyes that captures sand and drops it. We don't have that... you know that "screen system" in our eyes. But the camel does. But now the rider, he can't afford to cover his eyes... can he? Because if he covers his eyes... what's the problem? He doesn't know where he's going.  So he has to keep his eyes exposed and so finally he finds a cave, he finds some refuge and he says interestingly: "my eyes have finally become [what]... cool".

In other words, in literature we find the precedent of the "eyes becoming cool" equated with --

finding refuge from a storm. Now I have set the stage for you for what this expression stands for but I still haven't told you my favorite du'a. Though I recited it in the beginning. This is at the conclusion of the 25th surah of the Qur'an, Allah azzawajal says [translation]:

HE tells us to say "Those who say -- 'Our Master, our Lord,gift us, grant us,  [you know in Qur'an we find \*atinaa\*], give us, to give a grand gift, gift us, an unexpected gift, a beautiful gift. This is a gift you are asking ALLAH to give you. This prepositional phrase is brought earlier, especially for us. We are asking for a special favor to ALLAH. And what is this favor that we are asking Allah azzawajal?

'Grant us from our spouses, and [not just our children],  [which is 'Aulad] future generations of us'. In other words, you are not even asking for your  immediate children. But your lineage from you know, for future generations to come, grant us from all of them -- coolness of eyes' make our eyes cool by means of our spouses and by means of our children.

And I say this is my favorite du'a for a reason. One, I am married and I do have children and a spouse. But two... all of us... all of us have to appreciate the power of this du'a, because of the crisis of the world today. The world's fundamental institution of family is under attack.

Most of the people here, even Muslims are not immune from this problem. In many of our homes, the storm that I said when you find coolness of the eyes, you find refuge from the storm. This storm is not "outside" the house. The storm is "inside" the house!

And you have to get away from home to get away from the yelling, and the screaming, and the name-calling, and the insults, and the depression, and the sadness, and the friction between husband and wife, and parent and children.

Our homes are broken. Brother is not talking to brother. Parents are not talking to children. How many of all the Shuyukh I can bet you..I can... I can... almost guarantee you..All of the speakers that have come to this conference. Some mother... some father... some husband... some wife... has come up to them and said:

'I have got this problem'

'I can't talk to my kid'

'he yells at me'

'we can't talk'

'he's doing these things that...

I don't know how to stop'

'my husband'... 'my wife'...

SubhanAllah! This is a crisis inside the home. And what better du'a to ask. The exact opposite you know the family has become a place of sorrow, of depression, of sadness, of anger, of rage. People feel like they wanna escape it  and here ALLAH tells us to ask so perfectly! So eloquently! That the home should become the place of refuge. It's like the outside world is a storm. And you suffer on the outside and your refuge... your safehaven... is those doors in your home. It's your spouse... it's your children.

When you see them your worries disappear. But for most of us when you see them your worries begin! It's the exact opposite. But I want to give you a further appreciation of just this remarkable beautiful phrase and how it's used in the Qur'an. Just I wanna explain this feeling to you that Allah wants us to have with our families.  There's some more elaboration of those feelings.

You know some of the most, the strongest emotions that exist in, that exist in human existence, The strongest emotions that I can think of is the emotion a mother feels for her child.  It is the strongest bond.  Many of you in the audience are married. And when you are first married you are obsessed with the husband, you are obsessed with the wife.

'you are so awesome!'

'no you are awesome!'

'how perfect Allah makes the pairs'

'I can't believe you are my husband'

You are like all weird in the beginning, yeah! People look at you funny, you know... the guy has got a goofy smile on his face, all the time you know. And the husband's name is mentioned and she gets shy. Ten years go by, the husband's name is mentioned [uhhh],  right... but anyway before that happens when you have your first child.  The husbands will realize this. You are talking to your wife about something, the baby is in the other room. You know the husband doesn't even have the ears for this one, the baby just does a little [ehhh]. That's it... that's all it does. And guess what happens to the mother. That conversation is over.He was in the middle of telling her how his day went and it was a really important meeting and... what.. where did you go! what happened! spider-sense goes berserk and you go in the other room and you pick up the child. Nothing comes between [who?] Mother and child. Nothing! Nothing comes between them. It is the strongest bond.

Now I am talking to the mothers in the audience for a second. Can you imagine the state of Musa's (a.s.) mother's heart?  She puts her baby in the water. You can't even leave your child outside in the hall. You start calling your husband, 'where is he?' 'where is he?' 'have you seen him' , 'where is he at?' You can't stop. You are 30 min late picking your child up from school. What happens to you, you know. I know, because I have been late picking up my kids from school before. So I know what my wife goes through. You didn't make it to the airport in time..Right...

You haven't seen your kids. You know even mothers in the home, when they can't see the child.

'Where did you go?' 'Abdul Karim' 'Abdul Karim' 'Where are you?'

'I am in the bathroom mom relax!' 'I'm here'

But there's this desperation. Can you imagine her feelings, she's putting her child in what is apparently certain death. Because what's behind is even more graphic. So she's in this desperate situation. Does she know what happened to the child? She doesn't. Can you imagine not knowing what's happening to your child? After they are... you know that they are in a dangerous situation. Can you even imagine this? SubhanAllah!

And on the other hand. I want to give you 2 women scenarios. On the other hand... and I'll promise I'll try to finish within five minutes.  There's another women who is in a story. In the same story. She's married to a really bad guy. What's his name? Oh yeah, Fir'awn (Pharaoh).  And you know some times women are in a difficult domestic situation. And usually in a society like ours, you can call the domestic hotline, you can call the cops if there's abuse.

Now we don't know if there's physical abuse, but the Qur'an certainly indicates psychological abuse. So much so, that she has to ask for rescue, right.  She's in this terrible marriage and she can't even call the cops. Why not? Because he (fir'awn) owns the cops. She can't complain to the government. Because he is the government. She has got nowhere to turn. So the only place she can turn to is who? Allah!

She is in the middle of this storm and she can't find a refuge. But when this baby washes up

you know what she says? Now think about this... She picks up the child and she says...

'he will be the coolness of my eyes for me' (read: Surah AlQasas)

'he will be my refuge from the storm'

'he will be my only source of joy because.. I am in the middle of sadness'

She's with this child...this childless women...is with this child now and...all of a sudden all her problems disappear . That's her first reaction to this child. SubhanAllah! And on a separate note she said...I won't discuss with you. She separated herself from fir'awn even in that

'he will be the coolness of my eye for me and even for you'

Even to fir'awn.  But she didn't say 'for us', 'coz she doesn't even associate herself with him. SubhanAllah! radhiAllahu anha (may Allah be pleased with her)

Now, one more thing...One last thing...Just about this coolness of the eyes. And why this du'a is so beautiful, and powerful, and eloquent.

You know when a mother has lost her child which in this case she has, and she is re-united with her child, can you imagine the feeling of a mother whose child was lost  and then she was re-united with it. Can you imagine the tears of happiness? Can you imagine that emotion?

Now understand how ALLAH describes that emotion. ALLAH tells his favor to Musa a.s. HE says...[translation] So WE returned you to your mother so her eyes could become cool, so her eyes...ALLAH is describing the most amazing joy! The most amazing relief! The most indescribable feeling in the heart of a mother! And what expression does HE use? 'The coolness of the eyes', to depict that powerfully.

And so we ask ALLAH, 'Give us from our spouses, and our children...coolness of eyes'. Thats what we ask ALLAH. When somebody said I wanna get married, go further, not just get married ....'I wanna get married to a spouse that will...cool my eyes.' 'That I will be the coolness of their eyes and they will be the coolness of mine.'

And ALLAH azzawajal took the du'a further and then we understand, why talk about future generations. And I'll conclude with this: 'And make us leaders over those who are cautious, conscious, fearful, pious, righteous, those who are fearful before ALLAH. And you know what makes you realize, It makes you realize your relationships right now are not just about you. You are setting a precedent in your family, for generations to come.

So when you are not acting as good husbands, and good wives and good parents, and good children, what are your future generations gonna be doing and who is gonna be answerable for that negative trend that was started by you.

Who is gonna be answerable for that? So it's an intelligent du'a that we should find coolness of the eyes not only in our immediate family, but the future generations should be people  that are righteous too. Because when we are raised on Judgement Day, we are imam (leader) over the entire family, whether they were messed up or not. So we better ask for the kinds of people, if they are underneath us (in lineage),  not those who are dragging us down on Judgement Day.

But those who are elevating us. And we beg ALLAH that HE give all of us. those kinds of families. So the biggest favor that you can do to me and the scholars here because none of us are immune from this. This du'a is something you and I ...Everyone... every Muslim.. And this is even something that non-muslims need today. They have no peace in their families. So I beg all of you sincerely, that we all make this sincere du'a to ALLAH, yes I know the time is up- 0 minutes... aah 0 minutes really nice.

Rabbana Hablana min azwaajina wadhurriy-yatina, qurrata 'ayioni wa-jalna lil-muttaqeena Imaama ...

I sincerely pray that ALLAH azzawajal gives all of us and makes from our spouses, and our children those that are the coolness of our eyes and that HE makes us an imam, a leader over those that are pious & righteous.

May ALLAH forgive all of our shortcomings accept all of our du'a, and make the means

of our forgiveness easy upon us.

This is at the end of Suratul Furqan (25:74)

Make Du'a for me too brothers & sisters!