



Selected Pearls of Benefit from the Tafseer of al-Mu'awwadhatayn [the Last Two Chapters of the Qur'aan] from Badaai' al-Fawaa'id of Ibn al-Qayyim (rahimahullaah)
Badaa'i al-Fawaa'id of Ibn al-Qayyim
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Lesson 2: The Meaning of Isti`aadha

Ibn al-Qayyim (rahimahullaah) said:

Know that the wording (a`adha) and whatever branches from it, indicates protection, fortification and safety, deliverance, and the reality of its meaning is "fleeing from something that you fear to one who will protect you from it", and it is for this reason that the one with whom refuge is sought (al-musta`adhi) is called, "mu`adhi".

And in the hadeeth there occurs that when Ibnat ul-Jawn entered upon the Prophet (sallAllahu `alayhi wa Sallam), he placed his hand over her and she said, "I seek refuge (a`oodhu) in Allaah from you". So he said to her, "Indeed, you have taken refuge with a "mu'aadhi" (i.e. one in whom refuge is sought).

Hence, the meaning of "a`oodhu", is "I make recourse to, and seek refuge, and seek protection". And concerning its origin (in the language) there are two sayings. The first of which is that it is taken from "as-sitr" (covering). And the second is that it is taken from "luzoom al-mujaawarah" (close, tight, nearness or proximity). As for the one who said it is taken from "as-sitr", then he says that the Arabs say that the house that is built in the trunk of the tree and which is concealed by it is called (uwwadh), so when he seeks recourse (a`adha) to this tree, and conceals himself by trunk and its shade, they call it (uwwadh). Then likewise the one who seeks refuge (a`a'idh), he has concealed himself from his enemy by way of the one with whom he sought refuge, and by whom he hid away from (his enemy).

And as for the one who said it is "luzoom al-mujaawarah", then he says that the Arabs say about the meat that sticks to the bone and does not separate from it completely that it is (uwwadh) because it clung to it and stuck by it. So

likewise the one who takes refuge (‘aa’idh), he has held onto the one with whom he has sought refuge, and has clung to him.

And both of these sayings are true and “isti`aadhaah” (seeking refuge) comprises them both, for the one who seeks refuge conceals himself by one in whom refuge is sought, and holds fast to him and sticks to him. His heart has held fast to him and has binded to him, just like a boy binds himself to his father when his enemy has raised up a sword over him and desires to use it upon him, so he flees from and then he meets his father on the way while fleeing from his enemy who wishes to make him to perish and to return to his Lord and Master, so he flees to him (i.e. his father) and throws himself between him and holds fast to him, and comes close to him and recurses to him.

So the meaning of “isti`aadhaah” which occurs with the heart is actually behind the likes of these expressions, meanings (i.e. in what has been explained above of the various meanings and examples), since they are indications and examples to provide understanding. Otherwise, what occurs in the heart of seeking recourse, seeking protection, showing defeat in front of the Lord, showing great need of him, and humbling oneself before Him is a matter that cannot be encompassed by the expression(s).”

Badaa’i al-Fawaa’id (1/439-440), with slight abridgement