

Istikharah — asking for the better choice

Two rak‘ah and a du‘a’, taught the way a surah is taught. It is not a request for a sign; it is handing the outcome over.



★ Taught for every matter

Jabir: “The Prophet ﷺ used to teach us istikharah in all matters as he taught us the surahs of the Qur’an.”

Sahih al-Bukhari 1166

★ Two rak‘ah first

“If anyone of you thinks of doing any job, he should offer a two-rak‘ah prayer other than the compulsory ones” — and then supplicate.

Sahih al-Bukhari 1166

★ The opening of the du‘a’

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ، وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ

“O Allah, I seek Your guidance by Your knowledge, and Your decree by Your power, and I ask You of Your immense bounty.”

Sahih al-Bukhari 1166

★ You know, and I do not

“For You are able and I am not, You know and I do not, and You are the Knower of the unseen.”

Sahih al-Bukhari 1166

★ Name the matter

“If You know that this matter — here you name it — is good for me in my religion, my livelihood and the outcome of my affairs, decree it for me.”

Sahih al-Bukhari 1166

★ And if it is not

“...turn it away from me and turn me away from it, and decree for me the good wherever it may be, and make me content with it.”

Sahih al-Bukhari 1166

★ What it is not

Not a request for a dream or a feeling, and not for a matter the Shari‘ah has already settled. It is for a permissible choice that is yours to make.

- Still unsettled? You may repeat it — no fixed number

Sahih al-Bukhari 1166

★ Consult people as well

وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ

“...and whose affair is determined by consultation among themselves.” Istikharah stands beside asking those who know, not instead of it.

Qur’an 42:38 • 3:159

★ Then act, and be content

فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ

“And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah.” Move, take the means — and remember you may hate a thing that is good for you.

Qur’an 3:159 • 2:216