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1. *The contributions should be original resulted from academic studies and researches.*

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3. *Articles should contain author's name, academic status, country and living city.*

4. *The editors of Safinah retain their full authority to bring the accepted papers in conformity with the Safinah house style, and edit them for length and clarity.*

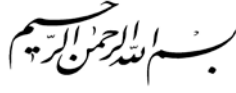
5. *The length of articles should be 3000 words (10 pages) at maximum.*

6. *Regarding the academic nature of this journal, using abusive or insulting language in essays or articles towards opposite thoughts or views should be highly avoided.*

7. *The articles will not be returned.*

8. *The authors are responsible for the accuracy of the articles.*

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### *Note:*

The abbreviations (s) and (as) following certain names in this article stand for "Salawat Allah alaihe va aleh" (May the blessings and peace of God be upon him and his family) and "alaihe/alaihuma/alaihem salam (upon him/her/them be peace), respectively. Their omission in certain circumstances may be accidental or for fluency, but in any case may God, the Praised and Glorified, continue to shower his blessings and peace upon these personalities until the end of the world.

## *Editorial*

### *Ghadir-e-Khum, the Greatest Islamic Event*

On the 18<sup>th</sup> day of Zul-Hajjah, in the year 9 A.H. – occurred Hajjat-ul-Wida (the farewell hajj pilgrim) of the holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.). In front of more than 70,000 Muslim hajis, the holy Prophet gave an important speech, after he received a cautious divine message:

*“O Messenger, deliver whatever has been sent down to you by your God. If you do not do so, you will not have conveyed His message. God will protect you from (evil plots) of people; god does not guide disbelieving folk.”*

*(The holy Quran, 5:67)*

The holy Prophet praised Allah, warned people about the Last Day, advised them about the holy Qur’an, and officially acknowledged his twelve rightful successors one by one, by giving their names. The first of them was Imam Ali (p.b.u.h.), and the next were his infallible descendants, generation by generation. The last of them was Imam Mahdi (may God accelerate his Re-appearance).

Then he took Ali to the top of his pulpit, and addressed the great audience,

*“whomsoever I am his Leader (Mawla), then Ali is his Leader (Mawla). O’God, loves those who love him, and be enemy to those who are enemy to him.”<sup>1</sup>*

Then the holy Prophet said, “O God, be witness that I performed my responsibility!”

The divine verse confirmed him:

*“... today those who disbelieve despair about your religion, so do not dread them, and (rather) dread Me. Today I have perfected your religion for you, and completed My favor towards you, and have consented to grant you Islam as a religion...”*

*(The holy Quran, 5:3)*

Then they came down from the pulpit, and asked the great audience to give their allegiance to Imam Ali (p.b.u.h), and congratulate him on the occasion of his divine succession and leadership.

Hamid Farnagh

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1- Tirmadhi, Al-Sahih, Vol 2, P.298, Vol 5, P.63

*Salaat'*

*Humility, Modesty and Concentration  
in Salaat*

Muhammad Biabani Oskouei<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract:** *in the present article, as its name denotes, we discuss the importance of concentration, humility, and modesty in Salaat. The necessity of the mentioned factors is even clearer when you see Salaat as the best way to reach salvation. The following saying from Imam Sadeq can make this point more clear, “One who prays two units (rak’ats) of prayers knowing fully what he is saying in it, he does not turn away from it (after completion), but there remains no sin between him and Allah, that He does not forgive.”*

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1- Also known as Namaz or the ‘daily prayers

2- scholar and Researcher/ Jalil Dorrani- Researcher

After reading the *Takbeeratul Ehraam* and *Doa-e-Tawajjoh* and turning your attention towards Allah, if you so desire, continue the *salaat* by reciting the *Isteaazah* (seek refuge in Allah from the accursed *Shaitan*) that you may seek protection from the whisperings of the devil in Allah and dominate him through His grace. Thereafter, you can proceed with the recitation of Surah Hamd, the second surah, bowing, prostration, *qunoot*, *tasbeehaat*, *tashahod* and *salaam*, in the order prescribed. While performing the aforementioned actions, strive to synchronize your limbs with your heart so that just as the latter has become humble and modest, each part of the body feels lowly, meek and submissive in the presence of the Almighty Creator.

Therefore, it is necessary that you gather all your attention, do not pay attention to what is going around you, and distance yourself from anything that diverts your attention. To achieve success in this, endeavour to find a lonely, simple, and unattractive place. Fix such a time for your *salaat* when your thoughts are soothed and relaxed, and there remains no room for laziness, physically as well as psychologically. It is also necessary that you obey the instructions of the infallible Imams (peace be upon them) concerning the methods of *qiyaam*, bowing, prostration, *tashahod* and *salaam*. For, these instructions are indeed very effective for concentration and humility. Moreover, recite the wordings slowly and try to pay utmost attention to their meanings and concepts unfailingly.

Allah the Almighty says,

❁ “Surely the believers are successful; those who are humble in their prayers.” (The holy Quran, 23:1,2) ❁

❁ “O ye who believe! Do not go near prayers while you are in an intoxicated condition till you know what you are saying.” (The holy Quran, 4:43) ❁

Imam Baqer (a.s.) explains,

“Do not stand for prayers lazily, yawning or feeling heavy (i.e. considering it to be a burden). For all these are from the traits of

***hypocrisy. Allah has prohibited the believers from standing for prayers while they are intoxicated i.e. (intoxicated) from sleep.”<sup>1</sup>***

Imam Sadeq (a.s.) elaborates,

***“When you are in your prayers, then it is obligatory for you to be humble and welcome your prayers. For Allah the Almighty (while describing the believers) says, ‘those who are humble in their prayers.’”<sup>2</sup>***

The same Imam (a.s.) says,

***“Certainly, I love the believer among you who while standing for the obligatory prayers, turns his full attention towards Allah and cleanses his heart from all worldly inclinations. His turns his face with his entire heart towards Allah, Who in turn, turns towards him and makes his heart overflow with His love and affection and Himself loves him tremendously.”<sup>3</sup>***

Again, Imam Sadeq (a.s.) says,

***“One who prays two units (rak’ats) of prayers knowing fully what he is saying in it, he does not turn away from it (after completion), but there remains no sin between him and Allah, that He does not forgive.”<sup>4</sup>***

Imam Baqer (a.s.) says,

***“Indeed, from the prayers of the believers, 1/2 or 1/3rd or 1/4th or 1/5th only is accepted. Thus, only that part of the prayers is admitted which is performed with complete attention. And we have ordered the recommended prayers (naafilah) only to cover the deficiencies of the obligatory (prayers).”<sup>5</sup>***

Imam Sadeq (a.s.) exhorts,

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1- Tafseer-e-Ayyashi, Vol.1, P.242

2- Al-Kafi, Vol.3, P.300

3- Sawaabul A’maal, 163

4- Sawaabul A’maal, P.67

5- Al-Kafi, Vol.3, P.363



***“When you perform your obligatory prayers, pray in its time as if it is your last prayers and is never going to return to you ever again. Then look at the place of your prostration. If you knew who is on your right and left, you would have performed your prayers well. And know that you are in front of the One Who sees you although you cannot see Him.”<sup>1</sup>***

In his famous treatise of rights, Imam Zainul Abedeen (a.s.) discusses the rights of the prayers thus:

***“As for the rights of the prayers, you should know that it is a means of reaching towards Allah. And you are standing before Allah when you are praying. When you are aware of this, then it is desirable that you stand during prayers like the one who is disgraced, desirous (of rewards), fearful, scared, hopeful, pauper, crying, respectful of the One Who is before Him. Maintain a dignified calm, head down, limbs humble, tender heart, praying with the best of invocations within yourself, seeking the freedom of your neck from Him, an imprisonment caused on account of your sins and a destruction caused by your misdeeds. There is no strength except Allah’s.”<sup>2</sup>***

Therefore, it is necessary that one who prays, considering the position and status of *salaat*, should pay full attention towards it with his heart and soul, which is worthy of the praying ones. He should derive benefits of both this world as well as the hereafter, from it and the greatest reward of them all, which is, meeting with Allah, comes his way. It does not befit him to become heedless of Allah, his creator, during his prayers, and instead become engaged in him. Although apparently this may seem difficult, rather impossible – which is why it is accompanied with such great rewards and compensation - but one should never despair of it. Perhaps, with Allah’s grace, and our efforts, belief and piety, the difficulties will become easy and problems will be solved. For, if you take one step towards Allah, He will pull you a hundred paces towards Himself. Then, turn towards Him with your entire heart and soul. Don’t

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1- Sawaabul A’maal, P.57

2- Tohful Oqool, P.258

allow laziness and indolence to dominate you and keep Shaitan away from you.

Abstain from ignorance and heedlessness that the path is paved and the goal is near.

### *Invocations in prayer*

Previously, we have quoted on the authority of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) that *salaat* is the occasion of fulfilling the desires and achieving one's aims. The *qunoot* in *salaat* has been ordained to enable the worshipper to place his desires and needs in front of his Lord. Also, for prostration, specific supplications have been recommended. Moreover, after the prayers, great emphasis has been laid to invoke and express our needs in front of the Almighty.

Imam Sadeq (a.s.) exhorts,

***“It is obligatory for you to supplicate after salaat, for such supplications are answered.”<sup>1</sup>***

Therefore, invocation is the expression of the need and paucity of our own selves as well as of others along with the confession of the self-sufficiency, generosity, honour, grace, affection and benevolence of the Almighty. Anyone who desires something from others turns and pays attention towards him. As he finds himself in need and impoverished, he strives to present his wants through pleas and persistence, thereby attempting to attract the attention of the invoked one. Traditions have stated that Allah loves importunity and persistence in invocations.

Imam Muhammad Baqer (a.s.) assures,

***“By Allah, no believer persists with Allah (Mighty and Glorified be He) in his needs but that He fulfils it.”<sup>1</sup>***

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1- Khesaal, P.488

Imam Sadeq (a.s.) informs,

***“Surely Allah (Mighty and Glorified be He) detests that people should be importune and persistent while asking each other for some need but loves the same for Himself. Certainly Allah (Mighty and Glorified be He) likes that He is asked and sought for what is with Him.”***<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, anyone who refuses to invoke Allah or express his needs before Him, subjects himself to His wrath. For, he has considered himself to be needless, great and haughty. Allah the Almighty warns,

﴿“Surely those who are arrogant regarding My worship (invoking Me), will soon enter hell in a degraded state.”(The holy Quran, 23:60)﴾

Imam Baqer (a.s.) interprets the word ‘worship’ in this verse as ‘supplication’ and then proceeds to say,

***“And supplication is the most superior form of worship.”***<sup>3</sup>

Hannan Bin Sudair relates from his father, who asked Imam Baqer (a.s.), ‘What is the best form of worship?’ Imam (a.s.) replied,

***“There is nothing better near Allah (Mighty and Glorified be He) than that He is asked and sought for what is with Him. And the most hateful and detestable person for Allah is he who is arrogant in His worship and does not ask Him for what is with Him.”***<sup>4</sup>

Hence, we should not claim that Allah the Almighty knows our needs and wants and thus there is no need for us to ask Him further, if as He deems it proper, He will grant it. For, invocation and supplication is this very attention towards Allah and reaching out to His wealth, generosity, and grant. At the same time, it is an expression of our being in

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1- Al- Kafi, Vol.2, P.475

2- Al-kafi, Vol.2, P.475

3- Al-Kafi, Vol.2, P.466

4- Al-Kafi, Vol.2, P.466

His slavery and bondage and confessing to His Lordship and Master ship.  
And this will be the best form of

Allah's worship. Therefore, we must implore and beseech Allah. Since apparent pleas without heartily attention is fruitless, we must make efforts to ask Him from the depth of our hearts, even if we don't utter our demands orally.

So, invocation is loved and desirable in all states and at all times but that invocation is more acceptable which is accompanied with its etiquette and conditions of time and place. As said earlier, one of the best times for supplications, is during prayers and after it, because it is that time when a believer rises to converse with his Lord, attains the elevated position of divine recognition and proximity, and his focus and concentration towards his Master is increased. We hope that Allah the Almighty makes our prayers as a channel towards His nearness a means for the acceptance of our supplications and needs.

## Reality of Salaat

It is evident that the holy Quran has been revealed in eloquent Arabic. The Holy Prophet (a.s.) and the infallible Imams (a.s.) conveyed their views and opinions to the people in the customary language prevalent in those times. And there is no evidence or document in support of change in the meanings of terms used by these holy personalities. Therefore, it is obligatory that every term that has come in the Quran or used by the Holy Prophet (a.s.) and the infallible Imams (a.s.), must be used in that very literal meaning as was prevalent in their times. This premise is applicable to all the terms and phrases used by them including the words that mean worship. But for the limitations and conditions set by them on the literal applications, especially of the words used to imply worship, we must apply the apparent meanings to achieve our aim.

The word '*salaat*' is among the Arabic words which is used in abundance in Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet (a.s.) and the infallible Imams (a.s.). Thus, to know its actual meaning, first and

foremost, we must search for its literal meaning and then strive to look for its conditions and definitions in the words of the infallibles (a.s.).

In *Lesaanul Arab*, vol. 14, p. 464, Ibn Manzoor writes: *As-salaat* means *al-dua*(invocation) and *al-isteghfaar* (seeking forgiveness).... And Zujjaaj has said:

The root in the word *al-salaat* is necessity. It is said, ‘when a thing becomes obligatory (i.e. when it does not become separate or separates a thing). And among the meanings of a *musalli* is the horse that comes second in the race, i.e. it trails behind the first horse. Yet another meaning of *sal’ya* is roasted meat and other roasted items. Also, *salaat* means to warm one’s hands...*salaat* also means to whirl or spin a staff to soften it or to make it straight.

Ibn Atheer, in *al-Nihaayah*, vol. 2, p. 50, writes: *Salaat* means a special form of worship. Its literal root implies invocation....Also it is said that its literal meaning indicates respect.

The meaning that has been accepted by all Arab litterateurs is ‘invocation’.

This translation is also universally accepted among the jurists. But considering the fact that the word invocation is always used in the transitive form, while *salaat* is non-transitive, it becomes clear that these are not synonyms or equivalents of each other. The reality of invocation is not only calling out or supplicating, rather it is only one of its facets. Invocation, in reality, suggests the calling out the invoked one by the one who invokes to attract the attention of the former. And when it is coupled with calling out, it is termed as ‘*doa*’ (supplication). But as the word ‘*salaat*’ is non-transitive, i.e. it is not in need of an object, it connotes sheer attention of one to another, without him expecting that person to pay attention to him. Therefore, the literal meanings of this expression indicate that *salaat* is an attention that is accompanied with softness, respect and following.

The word ‘*salaat*’ has been used in this very meaning in the Holy Quran and tradition. Like in the verse,

﴿“Surely Allah and His angels send blessings on the Prophet.”(The holy Quran, 33:56)﴾

where the blessings of Allah upon the Prophet (a.s.) have been supplemented with the blessings of the angels.

Similarly, in another verse,

﴿“Their (polytheists) prayers in the Ka’ba was nothing but whistling and clapping of hands.”(The holy Quran, 8:35)﴾

In still another verse, the Holy Quran declares,

﴿“He is the One who turns towards you and so do His angels that He may bring you out from the darkness to light.”(The Holy Quran, 33:43)﴾

Yet another verse commands the Holy Prophet (a.s.),

﴿“And turn your attention towards them. Certainly your attention provides them comfort.”(The holy Quran, 9:103)﴾

The *salawaat* sent by the Muslims on the Prophet (a.s.) and his progeny (a.s.), which incidentally is the most oft-uttered *dhikr* in Islam, is another evidence to support our view. Therefore, it is clear that the *salaat* of Allah, His angels and the Muslims on the Holy Prophet (a.s.) and his pure progeny(a.s.), and similarly the *salaat* of the polytheists in the Ka’ba and the *salaat* of Allah’s Messenger on the Muslims while taking charity from them, none comprised of prostration, bowing or other essential elements of the daily ritual prayers in them.

Another proof is this famous slogan that was used in the early period of Islam to call the society towards Allah’s religion, which is the Arabic equivalent of ‘your attention please,’ when you want to draw the attention of others to a very important matter.

Yet another proof is that traditions have talked about the *salaat* of Iblis, Hazrat Adam (a.s.), Hazrat Nuh (a.s.), Hazrat Sulaiman (a.s.), Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) and Hazrat Eesa (a.s.). Therefore, it is evident that the literal aspect, root and reality of *salaat*, was present in all the Prophets (a.s.).

Moreover, there were many Arabs who practiced Christianity and Judaism yet used this term for their form of worship. And if the word *salaat* bore any other meaning than attention in their vocabulary, it would have been used in that very sense. In that case, the unanimity of the litterateurs on the meaning of this word would not hold water.

This itself is a proof for the fact that the word *salaat* has been used in Islamic ideology in its literal sense and nobody used it in its new sense in the initial era of Islam. And only after applying the requisite definitions and conditions to it, they have accepted and limited its literal meaning and concept.

More important than all these is the basic and fundamental difference in the types of *salaat* - obligatory (*waajib*), recommended (*mustahab*), types of obligatory and types of recommended. Also, the differences in *salaat* prescribed for different individuals - traveller, sick, drowning and dumb.

Obviously, no other meaning can take in its fold all the above applications, except the literal meaning on which everybody agrees the only difference being in the definitions and conditions attached to them. E.g. the daily prayers are the same as the Friday prayers but each of them possesses certain conditions peculiar only to itself. In the tradition of ascension (*me'raj*) it has been narrated from the Holy Prophet (a.s.):

***“Hazrat Moosa (a.s.), in one of his munaajaat (whispering supplications) to Allah prayed, ‘O Allah! Grant me Your recognition.’***

***Allah retorted, ‘Testify that there is no god but Allah.’ Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) asked, ‘O Allah! How is salaat?’ Allah the Almighty replied, ‘Say, ‘There is no god but Allah’ and till the day of judgment, My servants will utter this statement.’”<sup>1</sup>***

A little attention on this tradition reveals the fact that the literal aspect of the word *salaat* covers all types of remembrance and attention towards the Almighty. The only difference being among them is that

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1- Behaarul Anwar, Vol.93, P. 202

while one is perfect, the other is more perfect, one is obligatory and the other, recommended. To imply that the application of the word *salaat* is true only for the obligatory while for others it is just metaphorical is definitely wrong and incorrect. For, the most complete *salaat* is that which includes the recitation of the Holy Quran, its invocations and other conditions that are available in the traditions of the Holy Prophet (a.s.) and his infallible progeny (a.s.). As the Quran itself descended in stages and the traditions of the infallible were narrated sequentially, proves that *salaat* of the Prophets (a.s.) prior to the Holy Prophet (a.s.) and that of the Muslims in early Islam, was only in its metaphorical sense (and not as used today).

Then it will not be incorrect if we say: The literal meaning of *salaat* is applicable everywhere, except that for each occasion some conditions and restrictions have been imposed. In the conversation between Imam Sadeq (a.s.) and Mansoor, the Abbaside Caliph, the same meaning can be derived:

*“On a Friday, Mansoor emerged from his palace while leaning on the shoulders of Imam Sadeq (a.s.). On seeing this, a person called ‘Rezaam’ remarked, ‘Who is this man who enjoys such a status that the chief of the believers (Mansoor) is leaning on him?’ He was told that he is Abu Abdillah, Jafar Ibn Muhammad al-Sadeq (a.s.). He cried (with the intention of insulting the Imam), ‘How I wish that the face of Abu Abdillah would become the shoe of Mansoor!’ Thereafter, he came in front of Mansoor and said, ‘O Chief of the believers! Permit me to pose a query. Mansoor answered, ‘Ask him (Imam (a.s.)).’ He insisted, ‘I want to ask you.’ Mansoor was obstinate, ‘Ask him’. On this, Rezaam stood before Imam Sadeq (a.s.) and demanded, ‘Define for me salaat and its conditions and restrictions.*

*Imam (a.s.) replied,*

*‘Salaat has four thousand definitions and you do not deserve to be informed of all of them.’ He said, ‘Inform me only of those conditions that cannot be forsaken and without which salaat will not remain a salaat.’ Imam (a.s.) explained, ‘Salaat will not be complete till a person*



*performs the ablutions (wuzu) completely and prays without any shortcomings.*

*Unawareness, hypocrisy, and deviation should be totally discarded. He should recognize Allah and stand before Him with total cognition. A feeling of humility and modesty should encompass him. He should find himself between complete hope and absolute despair, patient as well as anxious. That is, he should stand as if Allah' promises will be fulfilled for him and that His threats will be actualized against him. He should put aside his own honor and dignity. His aim and goal should be right in front of his eyes. He must submit his heart to the Almighty and tread on His path. He should not be distanced with his prayers to such an extent that his relationship with his Lord is totally severed. Remember, he is standing before Him who is his aim and brought for Him his own gift, and at the same time, hoping for His Help, Assistance and Grace.*

*The salaat that is ordered and revealed (in Quran) is this very salaat. And it is this salaat which keeps a person away from evils and indecencies.'*

When Imam Sadeq (a.s.) completed his reply, Mansour turned to him (a.s.) and said,

*'O Abu Abdillah! We always quench our thirst from the ocean of your knowledge and come nearer to you. You have extricated us from deviation and have dispelled our darkness with your light. We will always float in the brilliance of your holiness and the oceans of your greatness.'*<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, the reality of the term 'salaat', its subject and application, is the very attention towards Allah the Almighty but this meaning has been subjected to some definitions, restrictions, and conditions in the Quranic verses and traditions of the infallible (a.s.). For instance, the condition of timings, facing the Qiblah, saying 'Allah-o-Akbar', recitation of Quran, glorification, praise, saying 'there is no god

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1- Behaarul Anwaar, Vol.84, P.250

but Allah', witnessing monotheism and prophet hood, praying for the Prophet (s.a.w.a.), bowing in respect, prostration, etc. Hence, the various actions and utterances in the obligatory and recommended prayers and the numerous types of prayers are not the reality of the term 'salaat'.

Rather, these have been connected to it through the medium of other proofs.

## *Innate recognition of Allah and its role in* *Salaat*

According to the verses of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Ahle Bait (a.s.), any person who steps into this world, bears the recognition of Allah. This introduction was in a world prior to this and was firmly ingrained in his heart.

Imam Sadeq (a.s.) says,

***“Recognition (of Allah) was established and they forgot the occasion. Soon, they will remember it on a day. If this (recognition) was not there, none would have followed who is his Creator and who is his sustainer.”***<sup>1</sup>

Allah the Almighty orders,

﴿Then turn your face towards the religion, being upright. The nature of Allah on which He has created man. There is no change in Allah's creation. This is the strong religion but most people know not.﴾(The holy Quran, 30:30)﴿

Explaining the above verse, Imam Sadeq (a.s.) says,

***“He created them on monotheism at the covenant (meethaaq) on His recognition that He is their Lord...”***<sup>2</sup>

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1- Elalush Sharaaye', P.118

2- Tauheed, P.330

Imam Muhammad Baqer (a.s.), elucidates the term uprightness (*haneefeeyah*) in the verse,

﴿...being upright for Allah, and not among those who associate with Him.﴾ (The holy Quran, 22:31) ﴿

**“It is the nature (fitrat) on which Allah has created mankind. There is no change in Allah’s creation.”**

Imam (a.s.) reiterates,

**“Allah has created them on recognition.”<sup>1</sup>**

Thus, Allah the Almighty has placed His recognition in the soil (*teenat*) of every creature, mixed it with his essence and ruled out the possibility of change in this form. This is the covenant that Allah has taken from all His creatures before their arrival in this world and is attached with them in this world as well to complete His argument upon them. Allah the Almighty informs,

﴿And (remember) when your Lord removed from the backs of the progeny of Adam (a.s.), their off-springs and made them witness against themselves, ‘Am I not your Lord?’ They all said, ‘Yes. We testify.’ (This was) so that you may not say on the day of Judgment, ‘Surely we were unaware of this.’ Or that you say, ‘Our forefathers were polytheists from before and we are only their off-springs. Will you destroy us for what the wrong-doers did?’﴾ (The holy Quran, 7:172,173) ﴿

So, all the humans have been created on the nature of Allah’s recognition (*marefatullah*) and hence the question of doubt and ambiguity concerning the Almighty. Prophets of Allah (peace be upon them) who came to invite the people towards Him, used to say,

﴿Are you in doubt about Allah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth?﴾ (The holy Quran, 14:10) ﴿

Imam Baqer (a.s.) says that the Holy Prophet (a.s.) said,

***“Every child is born on fitrat (God-knowing nature). That is, on the recognition that surely Allah (Mighty and Glorified be He) is his Creator. And this is His saying, ‘And if you ask them who has created the heavens and the earth, they would certainly say, Allah.’”<sup>1</sup>***

Therefore, all the human beings, at the time of their birth, possess the recognition of Allah, His Unity, (Tauheed) His being their Creator and Sustainer in their nature. But this recognition is simple (*baseet*). That is, it is present in their nature but they are not aware of its existence. Had they continued to live in this very way, and there did not come any reminder in their entire lives, they would be neither believers nor unbelievers or polytheists.

Someone asked Imam Sadeq (a.s.) concerning the verse,

*“People were one nation. Then Allah raised the Prophets as givers of glad tidings and as warners.”(The holy Quran, 2:213)*

He (a.s.) replied,

﴿﴾*“They were not on guidance. They were on Allah’s nature on which He created them. There is no change in Allah’s creation. And they could not be guided till Allah guided them. Have you not heard Ibrahim saying, ‘Had my Lord not guided me, I would definitely have been among the deviated ones.’ (The holy Quran, 6:77)﴿﴾, i.e. I would have been among those who forgot the covenant.”<sup>2</sup>*

When Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.), among the greatest monotheists and those who have recognized Allah, confesses in this manner, then how is it possible that others can acquire the cognition of Allah through their intellects and understanding?! How can they recognize a thing that is beyond their intellects and remote from their understanding?

Allah the Almighty says to the holy Prophet (a.s.),

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1- Tauheed, P.331

2- Tafseer-e-Ayyashi, Vol.1, P.104

“Their guidance is not on you but Allah guides whosoever He pleases.” (The holy Quran, 2:272)

“Allah does not place responsibility on a soul but within its capacity.” (The holy Quran, 2:286)

“Allah does not place responsibility on a soul but what has been given to it.” (The holy Quran, 65:7)

Abdul A’laa says I asked Imam Sadeq (a.s.):

‘Has Allah provided man any faculty by which he can acquire the recognition of Allah?’

He (a.s.) replied in the negative. He questioned again,

‘Has he imposed on them a responsibility to acquire His recognition?’

Once again Imam (a.s.) answered,

‘No. Explanation is only from Allah’s side.’ Thereafter, he (a.s.) recited the last two verses quoted above.’

Imam Sadeq (a.s.) says,

**“Allah has not imposed any responsibility on His creatures that they recognize Him. It is upon Allah alone to introduce Himself to His creatures. And it is the duty of the creatures that when Allah introduces Himself, they should accept His recognition.”<sup>1</sup>**

In yet another tradition, he (a.s.) said,

**“Allah has not placed any responsibility on His creatures vis-à-vis recognition. Nor has he provided them any path for it.”<sup>2</sup>**

Therefore, notwithstanding the fact that Allah, on account of His grace and nobility, has instilled His recognition in the creatures, but for

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1- Al-Kafi, Vol.1, P.164

2- Behaarul Anwaar, Vol.5, P.222

His munificence, none would be able to realize and find Him in the concealed depths of their essence.

Here, another question crops up and that is: What is the use of prior world's introduction in this life?

The answer is that firstly, it is not necessary that this innate recognition be only for this world. Rather, it is quite possible that it might be simply for the sake of completing the argument.

Secondly, if prior recognition was not available- as the traditions have stated explicitly- none would be able to recognize their Lord, their Creator and their Sustainer.

Therefore, Allah has not only introduced Himself in the previous world by instilling this cognition in the essence of the people, in fact, even in this world, which is a place of examination and tribulations, it is He Who has lifted the veils of negligence and forgetfulness from the hidden recognition in their nature and guided them towards it.

Evidently, the tradition of Allah is that this guidance can be achieved only through the media of causes like sending of the Prophets (a.s.), His signs, placing man in difficulties and problems, etc.

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) considers guiding the people to the innate recognition and reminding them of their covenant to their Lord, as the important aims of sending the Prophets (peace on them):

***“Then He raised among them His messengers, and sent successively to them His Prophets, to make them fulfill the covenant of their nature, and remind them of His forgotten bounties...”<sup>1</sup>***

And Allah the Almighty addresses His messenger (a.s.) thus:

﴿Then remind; for you are only a reminder. You are not dominant over them.﴾(The holy Quran, 88:21,22)﴿

Divine emissaries were sent so that they could draw the attention of mankind to the concealed recognition in their nature. They performed this task in various ways and adopting numerous methods. Similarly, their successors (*awsiyaa*) too followed in the footsteps of the Prophets (a.s.) and invited the people towards their Lord.

A man came to Imam Sadeq (a.s.) and requested, “O son of Allah’s messenger!

Guide me to Allah as to who is He. For indeed the disputants have argued with me a lot in this regard and have even confused me.”

Imam Sadeq (a.s.) replied,

***“O slave of Allah! Have you ever boarded an ark?”***

He replied in the affirmative. Imam (a.s.) questioned him further,

***“Has it ever happened that the ark was wrecked and there was no other ship which could rescue you? Nor did you know swimming by which you could reach to the shore?”***

When he replied in the affirmative again, Imam (a.s.) questioned,

***“At this juncture (when all your hopes have been severed), did you not rely on SOMEONE who could save you from this difficulty?”***

He exclaimed, “Of course.”

Imam Sadeq (a.s.) confirmed,

***“The One who was your hope in that moment of calamity and from whom you expected salvation when there was no other Saviour, a refuge when there was no other refuge...is Allah”<sup>1</sup>***

Therefore, it is clear that philosophical discussions and theological arguments did not bring this man nearer to Allah. But, Imam Sadeq (a.s.), in his simple and lucid style, reminded him of his Lord,

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1- Tauheed, P.230

introduced in his (fitrat) nature. Of course, this is one of the methods to guide a man towards the recognition of his Lord. This method which is called as that of difficulties and calamities (*basaa wa zarraa*) has been used extensively in Quran.

Allah the Almighty reminds,

﴿ *Your Lord is He Who speeds the ships for you in the sea that you may seek of His grace; surely He is ever Merciful to you. And when distress afflicts you in the sea, away go those whom you call except He; but when He brings you safe to the land, you turn aside; and man is ever ungrateful.* ﴾ (The holy Quran, 17:66,67) ﴿

Another method which has been extensively relied upon by the Quran and the traditions of the infallible Imams (a.s.), is to remind man of the bounties of Allah. Ranging from man himself, to the smallest dust particle, not only the existence of every creature, but even their survival is bonded with Allah's Power and Grace.

Imam Muhammad Baqer (a.s.) reveals,

***“Allah, the High, revealed to Moses (a.s.), ‘Love Me and make My creatures love Me.’ Hazrat Moses (a.s.) said, ‘O Lord! You know that nobody is dearer to me than You. But how can I change the hearts of the servants?’ On this, Allah revealed to him, ‘Remind them of My bounties and endowments. Then certainly they will not remember anything but good about Me.’”<sup>1</sup>***

The late Ayatullah Mirza Mahdi Isfahaani (may Allah's mercy be on him) opines in this regard,

***“The aim of rationalization through the signs is to prevent the denial of Allah's existence (hadd-e-nafy-o-ta'teel). For, the existence of a creature is impossible without a Creator...Moreover, the conclusion of this reasoning in divine science, is perplexity and confusion in the***



***recognition of His Being, the Most High, -and it is obligatory that it should be thus- and therefore, He is called as ‘Allah’.*”<sup>1</sup>**

Thus, it is clear that the natural recognition of Allah implies that He on account of His grace and nobility has bestowed His recognition to the entire mankind and ingrained it in their essence and created them on it. But as this recognition is simple (baseet), they are unaware of its existence in their essence and whenever Allah the Almighty so desires, He will remind them about it and draw their attention. Of course, their reminder and attention has different levels and grades. Some reminders are very severe and intense while others are weak and yet others are moderate. We have already stated that it is a divine tradition that He usually makes His slave attentive towards Himself and reminds them about this recognition on different occasions, of which we have mentioned a few. One of these instances is salaah.

In salaah, Allah the Almighty remembers His servants and this remembrance is much more than what the servants remember of their Lord. In salaah, the slaves, feeling their need, paucity, degradation and dependence, raise their hands to beg their Lord, the Self-Sufficient, the Needless. Allah the Almighty fulfils their needs and helps them achieve their desires. It is known that the most important and greatest desire of a cognizant servant is to attain proximity with His Lord, meeting Allah and rising to the highest levels of recognition. Allah the Almighty on His part, according to His promise, helps him reach to the unprecedented degrees. As a result, when he finds himself in the presence of the Almighty, he realizes His greatness and might to such an extent that he is completely oblivious of everything else around him. Previously, we have narrated the statement of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) that he said,

***“And the meaning of ‘surely the prayers have been established’ in Eqaamah is that: ‘The time of visitation, conversation, fulfillment of needs, comprehending the desires and reaching to Allah (Mighty and Glorified be He), His nobility, pardon, satisfaction and forgiveness has arrived.’”***

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1- Abwaabul Huda, P.17

Imam Muhammad Baqer (a.s.) says that Allah the Almighty has said,

*“The best thing by which My servants can gain proximity to Me are the obligatory acts who performance has been imposed upon them. And certainly, My servant comes so close to Me by performing the recommended acts that I love him. And when I love him, I become his ear by which he listens, his eyes by which he sees, his tongue by which he speaks and his hand by which he takes. When he calls Me, I answer him and if he asks Me for something, I grant him.”<sup>1</sup>*

The Late Ayatullah Mirza Mahdi Isfahaani (may Allah’s mercy be on him) says:

*“True divine recognition cannot be gained except through Him and the reins of this recognition are in His hands. It is upon Him to introduce Himself to His servants. Thus, seeing Him, meeting Him and recognizing Him is entirely dependent on Him. Hence, He has made some houses on the earth for His vision and recognition and named them as ‘mosques’. The timings of salaah are the timings of meeting and recognizing Him. To announce the timings of this ascension, He has ordained the azaan. To attend to His presence, He has imposed some conditions like cleanliness of the body and clothes and the mode of dressing. The basis of this recognition is to stand before Him with respect and attention and this is done through announcing His greatness (Allahu Akbar), praising Him (Alhamdulillah), purifying Him (Subbuhun Quddus), invoking, modesty, humility, a sense of degradation and lowliness, etc. As there is no limit for the recognition of Allah and even the levels of this recognition are infinite, hence salaah has been made obligatory for everybody till their last breath. Anyone who tastes the sweetness of prayers and achieves its aim, will realize that his advent in this world and his imprisonment in this abode, is only for recognition. For, a person’s recognition is incomplete till he enters the house of deprivation and realization and his changing from one condition to another so that he attains the levels of recognition which*

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1- Al-kafi, Vol.2, P.352

*cannot be achieved but in such a house. Therefore, he will know the reason for his arrival in this house of examination and test. Because if man does not witness the conditions of degradation, poverty and helplessness, he will never know might, needlessness and perfection. Consequently, he will never know who is the source of this might and needlessness. And one, who is not aware of the pains of veil and ignorance, will never recognize the value of recognition, knowledge and vision.”<sup>1</sup>*

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1- Abwabul Huda, P.125, 127

# Story

## *Revelation of Delight*

Syed Mehdi shoja'i<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *A true nice story about the household of holy Prophet who were fasting for three following days and donated their belongings to the other ones. This is one of the proofs in asserting the great soul and deep kindness of these infallibles, who were always put others before themselves, and not only themselves but only their beloved ones for the sake of God. Their behavior can be a role model for the people who seeks salvation and the true meaning of devotion.*

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1- Researcher and writer/ Maryam Akhond Ali- Researcher

A heavy cold silence has taken over Medina. The people of the town, tired of their daily work have gone to their homes to rest.

The stars have decorated the sky. The earth is lighted from the soft, pale glow of the moon which has spread its rays like a silk cloth over the small mud-built houses of Medina.

Medina is silent and quiet and the only sound which gives it life is the echo of the strong steps of the Prophet. He is getting closer to Ali's home.

The Prophet is accompanied by two of his followers. They too are pondering about what is worrying the Prophet.

Not only them, but the entire town knows how much the Prophet loves Hassan and Husain.

Everybody knows that the Prophet gets sad from what saddens Hassan and Husain and is pleased from what pleases them. Everyone knows that his love for them is not just the love of a grandfather for two adorable sweet grandsons. It's a divine affection. All Muslims know that they must follow the Prophet and love Hassan and Husain.

Because lots of times before, they had seen the Prophet in front of the eyes of everyone saying: "oh, God, I love Hassan and Husain. Love whoever may love them."

Now the Prophet and two of his followers have reached Ali's home. The sweet warm voice of the Prophet echoes through the house:

- Dear Ali, darling Fatima, greeting to you. I've come to visit my children with two others. May we come in?

It is the eager voice of Ali and Fatima that is heard from inside the house:

- Greeting to you and the bliss of God! Welcome. Come in please.

First the scent of the Prophet and them himself and his followers enter the house. But this time Hassan and Husain don't come running

towards the Prophet. This time they do not throw themselves in his arms nor give themselves to his kisses.

Tonight Hassan and Husain are in their sickbeds and their illness has weakened them. They opened their eyes with difficulty. But they do not find the power in their limbs to get up.

The Prophet, worried and impatient, goes towards their sickbed, rolls his cloak around his legs and sits next to the children kissing their faces.

- What's the matter my dear ones? I hope God removes this illness from you and give your health back.

Hassan and Husain circle their hands around the Prophet's neck and hug him. Although this house belongs to the commander of the Islamic army, but nothing is found in it to serve the guests.

Ali apologizes for not having anything to serve the guests. However, the Prophet and his followers know that Ali's poverty is his honor of Islam. They know that if Ali wanted, he could have had the best of livings. It was the lifestyle which Ali and Fatima had chosen, themselves.

Therefore, the guests are served with love, kindness and sincerity of the host.

Before living, the Prophet asks Ali:

- Dear Ali! Don't you want to perform a vow for the cure of their illness?

Ali answers without hesitation:

- Yes, I will vow three days of fasting. If God gave back their health I will fast for three continuous days.

Fatima, hearing what the Prophet and Ali said, she says:

- I too, vow that if God gave back the health of my children, I fast three continuous days.

Hassan and Husain open their tired eyes and say:

- We will fast for three days, too.

And they feel the lips of the Prophet on their faces.

“Fezzah” is a woman who has been the servant of Amana, the Prophet’s mother, for years. Now, she has voluntarily come to this house to be the companion of Fatima and learn the lesson of life from her. She, like the rest of her dear ones, vows to fast for three continuous days for the cure of Hassan and Husain.

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It is a little after their vow that God gives back the health to Hassan and Husain. They both get up from their sickbeds, strong and refreshed.

It is now the time to fulfill their vow and the household are all fasting. For breaking their fasts, there is only grain for five breads, which Fatima and Fezzah prepare and cook.

The breads are cooked; one per person. They all sit waiting for Ali to come back from the mosque, so they could break their fasts together.

When Ali returns from the mosque, they all sit down to eat after a day of fasting and hunger.

Their hands have not reached the food when a knock on the door is heard:

- I am poor, wretched beggar. Oh household of the Prophet! I pray God to serve you from his heavenly foods. Help me. My family and I are hungry...

The beggar has not finished his words yet that Ali rises to give his bread to him. Fatima's bread is put on top of Ali's and then Hassan, Husain and Fezzah do the same. Five breads, the entire dinner of a fasting household is given to a beggar.

Now, there is only water to be served. The five fasters break their fasts with water alone, and thank God!

The second day of fasting is here. Again five breads are prepared for dinner. After two days of hunger and fasting, the hands go towards the hot breads which are the only food in the house; when again there is a knock on the door...

- Oh, household of the prophet! I am an orphan child that has nothing to eat. Please help me.

A hand, with five breads in it, comes out from behind the door. The breads are given to the child along with good wishes and blessing. Again, the fasters break the second day of their fast with water. Hunger has drained their energy.

The food for the third day of their fasting is the same as the previous nights; flour enough for five breads.

Ali is a powerful man and hunger is something which he is used to. However, how can the slender and delicate Fatima, Fezzeh and the two children who have just recovered from illness bear two days of hunger and not eat even a single piece of bread?

Anyway, they are fasting on the third day of their hunger.

As they get closer to the time of breaking their fasts, their hands start to shake from starvation. The eyes of Hassan and Husain are sunken and they can not walk nor stand on their feet from hunger. Ali returns from the mosque and there are five breads to eat and a bowl of water. Who knows how these three days have been for the members of this family? How appetizing this piece of bread looks!



Hassan and Husain pull themselves towards the food and stretch their hands towards the breads like the others. But... there is again a knock on the door...

The sound of the knock leaves the hands hanging in the air.

- Hello to the household of the prophet! Oh, Mohammad's family! Please help a captive that has been hungry for a long time...

Nobody hesitates for a moment. The hands that had been stretched towards the breads to take a piece of them, put the breads in one pile and put them in the hands of the captive!

The only thing that gives this pained family strength and power is the joy of giving and self-sacrifice; the joy of giving when you are in need; to take the morsel from your starving mouth and giving it to another hungry being. Only God can value such a deed and know its worth.

Ali looks at the pale yellow faces of his children and thinks with himself:

- Visiting the Prophet will lessen pains and makes we forget our hunger. He turns to Hassan and Husain and says,
- Let's pay a visit to your grandfather.

The joy of seeing the Prophet excites the children and the three of them go towards his house.

When the Prophet sees the colorless and pale faces of his grand children and their delicate bodies, which shake from hunger, tears fill his eyes.

- How can I bear to see my children in such a condition? Oh God, witness what the family of your Prophet do to gain your pleasure. Get up my dear ones to see how my darling Fatima is doing. How has she spent these three days?

Fatima's eyes are sunken from hunger, and her legs are weak, but she still continues to pray.

The Prophet embraces his darling Fatima and cries in away that his shoulders tremble.

Who can see the loved ones of the God in such a condition and be unmoved?

At this time the air is filled with a beautiful fragrance and Gabriel comes down to the Prophet.

- oh Mohammad! Accept the gift which I have brought for your family.
- Gabriel! What have you brought with you?
- First the mercy and bliss of God for this family, and then verses about their matchless deed has been sent down.

Real value is in a work that brings about the pleasure of God. I, the faithful Gabriel, the bringer of revelation, and the link between you and God, do not find a greater gift than this.

In these verses, the almighty God has introduced this fasting group as "the righteous ones" and has described their state in heaven:

God protects the ones who perform vows and are fearful of the Day of Judgment and give their food out of love of God to the poor, the orphaned and the captive, saying:

" We only feed you for God's sake. We desire from you neither reward nor thanks. Surely we fear from our God, a stem distressing day."

Therefore God will guard them from the evil of that Day and cause them to meet with ease and happiness. And the reward of them for their patience is Heaven. Reclining therein on raised couches they shall find therein neither heat nor cold. And the shades of the garden will come down over them. And its fruits will hang low and easy to reach...

☞ Surely this is the reward for you and your endeavor is accepted and recognized. (The holy Quran, 76:5-22) ☞

Now, Hassan, Husain, Fezzah, Fatima and Imam Ali no longer feel hungry. Their starvation does not longer bother them and it is replaced by feelings of happiness and glory. They all bow and thank their God for this wonderful great gift.

# *Looking at the Cause of Beliefs and Sacrament Tradition*

Hussein Taleie<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *Fazl-Ibn shazan was one of the scholars who asked his question about the cause of belief, sacrament and morality from Imam Reza (a.s.) and was answered by him. Then he collected the questions and answers that called it “ the causes’ tradition”. Luckily, this book is available today. The most important point in this book is that Shazan starts the argumentation from beliefs that is the basis of religion and the root of prayers. Then, tells about other sacrament and other subjects. In the following article, we will read some parts of that book.*

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1-Faculty member of university- Raheleh zindarbashi

God, who has created human, gives him life and shows His way, gives some schedule about belief, sacrament and morality at this way that human needs to get familiar with their intellectual (beliefs), internal (morality) and viable (prayers) duties. When he performs these acts, he can pass the way safely!

It is clear that each one of these practices have wisdom, because do something without any reason is useless, and the Almighty God is far from it.

*What is the wisdom of these acts? And how should we get it? The basis and origin of worship is from God and human doesn't have any role in it. Now, can human understand it with his knowledge? We have seen that some great scholars have talked about the wisdoms during the history. After studying them, we have found that, "perceptions of the human beings different." Of course, where is their perceptions, and where is the God's perception are? Actually there is no relation between God and His creatures?"*

*This issue is a valuable truth that in some cases, the knowledge is acceptance the ignorance of human. Knowing this truth is better than saying something without thinking about it, and put yourself and others in doubts!*

*Some scholars use their intellect and have asked about reasons of prayers from infallibles who say only from God. It means that infallibles were sent to us by God and bring the Messages of God to human as the holy Quran says,*

﴿nor does he speak out of desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed﴾(The holy Quran,53:3-4)﴿

Fazl-Ibn shazan was one of the scholars who asked his question about the cause of belief, sacrament and morality from Imam Reza (a.s.) and was answered by him. Then he collected the questions and answers that called it " the causes' tradition". Luckily, this book is available today.

The most important point in this book is that Shazan starts the argumentation from beliefs that is the basis of religion and the root of prayers. Then, tells about other sacrament and other subjects.

At the beginning of the tradition he says that all sacraments have reason. These reasons are known among persons who know them. However, we know some but not all of them. Because of that he answered every question with “some of the reason is such and such.” And never claims all the reasons of tradition.

### *A. Subject divisions*

This tradition contains 94 questions and answers. The total subjects are “belief“, “pray”, “fast” and “hajj”.

### *B. Some section of belief division*

Because of the importance of belief in human life, we express some of the belief tradition.

*1- Is it true that God says His servants do something that is meaningless?*

No, because He is wisdom, and not ignorant. He does not do useless work.

*2- Why human should do the God's order?*

The reason isn't clear for us. We know some of them but not all.

*3- What is the first religious duty?*

Submission God and His holy prophet Mohammad (a.s.), the sign and whatever he has brought to us from God.

#### *4- Why God addresses people to these affairs?*

- Every one who does not accept God, will not avoid sins, floated in worldly enjoyment, will not care people's rights.
- At this situation, men do whatever they want, kill each other without any reason, and this will cause annihilation of the world and communities. It will also corrupt the human generations and financial sources.
- People do some worry acts explicitly and implicitly. Believing in God is their only way of guidance and avoiding of corruption.

#### *5- Why knowing the prophets and obeying them is necessary?*

- Human beings need the guidance of God.
- But he can't see God and hear His words.
- So the prophet should come and show the way to human. Inevitably, the prophet should be infallible in order to do this work perfectly.

#### *6- Why after the holy prophet (a.s.) Gurdian and Imams were assigned for people and they are commanded to obey them?*

- They people have limited knowledge. They are asked to not go beyond limitation otherwise they fall in corruption.
- To enforce the religious' law needs a Divine person who people may trust him. He may Command them to suitable affairs from time to time.
- Every religion and tribe should have a head. Inevitably, religion that is related to the world affairs should have a head and this is the wisdom of God.

- If the Almighty God had not sent Imams to people, the traditions and verdicts of religion would have been changed by the opponent, and the communities had misled.

- Presence of the Imams is necessary after the holy prophet, in order to protect the religion from deviations by the opponents.

*7- Why two Imams don't come from God at the same time?*

Presence of two Imams at the same time makes conflict among people because their works can be a bit different. As if any Imams aren't come from God.

*8- Why should we accept to the Oneness of God?*

-If we don't do that, we can't understand who has created us and where the religious laws come from?

- The Satan will be right to claims that he is god and calls people to himself. That will cause the worst infidelity.

*9- Why should we accept that there is no one similar to God?*

a. Otherwise, the idols that others consider as god, could be introduced as real god.

b. Otherwise, some characteristics such as, ignorance, inability, change, weakness, lie, mortality, etc. could be attributed to the deity. The message and words of such a deity can not be trusted.



*a. Why God dictates His servants?*

- a. Because accepting the Divine orders and guidance protects people and save them from devastation.
- b. The Divine messages and orders cause servants think about their Creator, respect to Him and follow whatever the Almighty God says.

# *A report from the Birth of Imam Mahdi (a.s.)*

Reza Hemyari<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *in beliefs of all heavenly religions, the belief in the appearance of a savior exists. Some one who is going to come when all hopes have been dashed. In Shia beliefs, this person is the grandson of holy Prophet Muhammad, who will eradicate all signs of evils and immorality from the scene of world. Here, we will read about his holy birthday.*

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1- Researcher

Hazrat Mahdi, Imam of the Age (a.s.) was born on 15<sup>th</sup> Shaban, of the year 255 A.H. in Imam Hassan Askari's house in Samerra.<sup>1</sup>

Sheikh Mofid, (died in 412 A.H.) wrote:

***"He was born on 15<sup>th</sup> of Shaban, 255 A.H. His mother was a slave girl called "Narjes"; He was 5 years old when his father, Imam Hassan Askari died. It was at the same very young age that God bestowed wisdom and power of speech upon him, and chose him as His proof to people of the world."***<sup>2</sup>

Under divine dispensation and in an exceptional circumstances, His Holiness was born in secret just same as Moses (a.s.) who was born out of sight of enemies, so as to be safe from the Wicked people.

Sheikh Sadough (died in 381A.H.) and Sheikh Toosi (died in 460 A.H.) both quoted almost the same detail about the birth of Imam mahdi, from Hakima, daughter of the Ninth Imam, and the aunt of Imam Hassan Askari (a.s.). According to her, upon the request of Imam Askari, she spent the night of 15<sup>th</sup> Shaban with Narjes Khatun (Imam Mahdi's mother) to hear the news of this blessed birth from her nephew, Imam Hassan Askari (a.s.).

What was surprising to her was that before the mid night there was no visible signs of pregnancy or child-birth in Narjis. However, Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) was born and when Hakima handed Him to his father, on his father's order, the newborn child started talking. He recited the izan, and witnessed to *Imamat* (leadership) of all the Imams and recited below verse.

*"In the name of Allah, the Merciful Beneficent"*

﴿﴾ *"But We had willed to bestow our favor on the oppressed children of Israil to make them the governors and to make them the heirs of the*

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1- Sheikh Mofid, Al Ershad, P.346/ Sheikh Toosi, Al Gheybat, P.141/ Sheikh Koleini, Osool Kafi, Vol. 1, P. 512/ Ibn Sabagh Maleki, Alfosoul Ul Mohem, P.310

2- Sheikh Mofid, Al Ershad, P. 346

*oppressors." " And to grant them power in the land; and to make firown. Haman and their hosts see what they feared to happen." (The holy Quran, 28: 5,6) ﴿٥﴾*

His Holiness secret birth has already been predicted by his noble forefathers. This blessed event was narrated to us in 14 narrations (Safi Golpayegani, Lotf ullah, Montakhab – ol- Asar) including the narration that Saeid Ibn Jobair has quoted from Imam Zeyn ul Abedin (a.s.):

***"Ghaem (Imam Mahdi) is a member of our family, and that his birth will be kept as secret to people"<sup>1</sup>***

Whilst keeping his son hidden from enemies Imam Hassan Askari, in proper occasions, allowed his close friends and believers to see His Holiness, since he wanted them to be sure about the existence of Imam Mahdi, and cast no doubt on it.

Sheikh Sadough quotes from Abu Ghanem (servant of Imam Hassan Askari (a.s.):

***"A son was given to Imam Hassan Askari whom he named Mohammad. He showed his son to his friends on the third day of his birth and said: this baby is your Imam after me; he is the same Ghaem who has been awaited for; when the world is filled with tyranny and injustice, he will rise, and fills it with justice and equity ."<sup>2</sup>***

Sheikh Sadough quoted from Mohammad Ibn Osman that, when His Holiness was born, Imam Hassan Askari summoned Osman Ibn Saeed and commanded him:

***"Buy 10,000 Ratls (Ratl: Aweight measurement unit at that time) of bread and 10,000 Ratls of meat and distribute among people"<sup>3</sup>***

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1- Safi Golpayegani, Lotfullah, Montakhab-Ol- Asar

2- Behar ul Anwar, Vol.51, P.5

3- Behar Al Anwar, Vol.51, P.5

Ahmad Ibn Hassan Ibn Eshagh Ghomi also quoted that a letter was received by his ancestor, in Imam Askari's well-known handwriting in which it was written:

***"He is born; keep this news secret and do not disclose it to anybody. We informed only our friends and relatives for the confidence we have in them. And now we would like to inform you as well, in order to make you happy at this news as we did. "***<sup>1</sup>

It is also said that, once some forty Shiite people came to Imam Hassan Askary and requested him to show and introduce them the Proof, who is going to follow him. Imam accepted their request unwillingly, as he always insisted on keeping this matter secret. Nevertheless, the visitors saw a gorgeous boy whose face was shining like the moon. Then Imam Askari (a.s.) said:

***"he is my successor and your Imam after me. Obey him and do not turn away from your religion otherwise you will be perished. However, remember that you will not be able to see him after today. "***<sup>2</sup>

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1- Behar ul Anwar, Vol. 51, P.16

2- Safi Golpayegani, Lotf ullah, Montakhab-ol-Asar, P.355

# *Looking for the Lost Self*

Javad Mohaddesi<sup>1</sup>

How much are you prepared to pay in order to find your lost soup? To what extent can you sacrifice so that others may find their lost selves? If you lose your bag, bike or car, you will become worried and upset. You will go every where, and you will be asking whoever you come across whether they see it or not. Moreover, you will even be ready to give cash in order to get hold of it. Some people also specify a prize and consider offering a reward to its finders, since that which lost is important to them. In finding a book or a watch, we can provide our efforts to a certain degree, but if we lose a bag full of documents and certificates, we will be ready to struggle to an even greater degree in order to find it.

This means that the more important the lost or stolen item is, the greater the grief of losing it, and the greater the endeavor to find it. Money is valuable, but if one's child is kidnapped, he will spend all his property to find him. If he himself is kidnapped, he will provide the kidnapper with whatever they ask for so as to attain freedom from their clutches. This is because one likes himself more than everyone and everything else. Now, truly, what is this lost or stolen 'self'?

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1- Professor of university

Is it only his body? Or is it possible that it is his 'thinking' and 'soul', too? Why does he believe that being trapped within four-walls is imprisonment, and attaining freedom from it is a necessity even if it costs a lot? Yet on the other hand, he does not find imprisonment in the cage of his carnal desires, destructive habits and ugly character, or in general, vices something unwanted or unpleasant? Is the danger and harm of mind-robbers than that of those who steal and take as hostage one's physical existence, his son, his car, or his motorbike? How beautiful is the statement of Imam Ali (a.s.): I am surprised at a person who is endeavoring to find his lost item, while he has lost his self, and he is not thinking of finding it. If search and endeavor is proportionate to the value of that which is lost or stolen; it can be said that someone who is not in search of his self, has definitely not recognized the worth of his self.

# *Sire of the Holy Prophet Muhammad* *(a.s.)*

Martyr Morteza Motaharri<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** “Sire” means lifestyle, manner and beliefs supporting that lifestyle. and whose lifestyle can be as perfect as holy Prophet lifestyle; God asserts this truth and says, ﷻ “certainly a messenger has come to you from among yourselves; grievous to him is your falling into distress, excessively solicitous respecting you; to the believers (he is) compassionate. (The holy Quran, 9:128)”

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1- Professor of university and Hauza



## *Part 1*

The holy prophet Muhammad was born at 17<sup>th</sup> of Rabi-Al- Aval, the day that the most outstanding personalities of the world born at this month.

The holy Prophet was not only of the inspiration and prophetic mission aspect but also was one of the best examples of moral and spiritual virtues; He introduced his prophetic mission and invitation purpose as the praiseworthy morality.

Sire is something which is important and useful for Muslims to know, it means the manner of behavior, life and association of the holy prophet Muhammad (a.s.). We neither know about our religion nor aware about the life of its bringer. A few people aware of the bringer's life.

Imam Ali who grew up by the holy prophet Muhammad (a.s.) in his childhood and aware of the holy prophet life and was more believer, says," the most gracious prophet was more generous, more courageous, more truthful and more sociable than other people. When someone sees him for the first time, fear from Him but when he associated with him, he became captivated.

In association the holy prophet didn't give preference to him and didn't like person that gave preference to himself. In one of his journey with his successor, they wanted to prepare a sheep for food. One of his successor said," I cut the sheep head off." Another one said:" I fleece it." Other person said: "I cook it." The holy prophet says," I amass the wood." The successors said," the holy prophet, you don't do anything, we do it." He says," I know you do it, but I don't like to give preference to you. God doesn't like to see His servants more superior among successors. So the holy prophet amassed the wood.

The holy prophet did his work himself and didn't trust to others in doing his personal work and advice others do their work themselves. In one of his journey, the holy prophet came down from the camel and went for pray. He turned back after a minute. The successor said," the prophet

of Allah! What happen that you came back?" the holy prophet said," I went to tie the camel 's knee." They said," We do it for you." The holy prophet said," Never ask people to do something for you, even if it is a toothbrush."

The holy prophet was always happy and smiley except in sermoning and descending inspiration. The holy prophet was behaving well even with infidels and dualist. He commanded the Muslims behaving well with infidels out of the religion.

According to the holy prophet speech, the Faithful of the leadership in one of the day of his khelafat encountered with a Zemmi person- either Jews or Christianity. The Zemmi person knew Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and said," o' God servant, where do you go?" Imam Ali (a.s.) said," I went to Koofe." They went together. Imam Ali went on way gently that they reached to the way where the way of Zemmie person separated from Imam Ali (a.s). The Zemmie person went on his way and Imam Ali went with him. The man said," you said want to go to Koofe, it is not the your way(the way of Koofe)." Imam Ali (a.s.) said, "yes, I know." The man said, "So, why do you come in this way?" imam Ali (a.s.) said, " the way of association is going to the way of accompany and this is something that our holy prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) says." The man said surprisingly, "Is you're the holy prophet say this?" Imam Ali (a.s.) said, "yes." The man said," undoubtedly, all of the people follow the gracious prophet due to his valuable speeches. I call you to witness that I believe in your religion from this moment."

The holy Prophet (a.s.) behaved people the same. He always addressed and looked all people. Imam Sadegh said," The holy prophet (a.s.) shared his look to all successors and gave one share to each."

The holy Prophet (a.s.) cancelled the superiority of races and tribes and says, "Nobody isn't superior than others except in virtue."

The holy prophet Muhammad (a.s.) never behaved as a monarch with people. However, he made a big army that had a great power and Arab region and out of the region obeyed from his rule. The holy prophet

behaved humility especially with poor people and loved them. He associated with them, visited their patient and participated in their funeral. He mended his clothes himself, sewed his tear shoes and milk the sheep himself. Beside the holy Quran is God words and descended to the holy prophet. The holy prophet has some speeches and sermons that he says as an advice or expresses the instruction that submitted human against the holy prophet knowledge and wisdom unwillingly.

## *Part 2*

Now we want to talk other points at this section.

Maybe this matter is so simple and useless from some people view. They are important because one of the most important parts of the holy prophet success in invitation to the religion is related to sire, association and divine morality. The main reason of individual upset, social, misleading of the religion and doesn't follow of the holy prophet's sire clear the importance and advantage of this discussion about the holy prophet sire.

We should consider that during these century some opponents and Islam enemies propaganda against the holy prophet especially a few century ago that some writers and advertiser of Christianity in Europe don't neglect to accusation for pessimistic people to Islam and its bringer. In recent century that the relation between East and west become greater and the circle of research develop in history matters, some equitable Orientals found and publish some works about Islam and the holy prophet personality. They could decrease the accusation against Islam and the holy prophet. Unfortunately, we can see some of these propaganda effects among the youth now.

The holy Quran emphasize to the necessity of following the holy prophet and says: "Certainly you have in the messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah and the latter day and remembers Allah much."It means briefly, the holy prophet have some characteristics that the believer should pattern from them. It is

emphasizing on remaining the holy prophet sire of the holy prophet and enjoy from its result.

The holy prophet Muhammad (a.s.) was faithful to Islam principles and rules practically more than others. Something that made interest in the holy prophets 'successors was the complete belief and confident of the holy prophet to his speeches. Abdollah- ebn- Manzoor that was one of the writers of inspiration, it means he writes the holy Quran verses that descended gradually to the holy prophet Muhammad (a.s.), he says," one day the holy prophet Muhammad (a.s.) said to me, "read some verses of Quran to me." I opened the holy Quran and read from Al- Nessa Surah that I reached to this surah, " How will it be, then, when we bring from every people a witness and bring you as a witness against these?" ( 4-41). Ebne Manzoor said, " I saw the tears came down from the holy prophet eyes and said to me, " don't read again. That 's enough."

The holy prophet follows the gentle and companion manner in the invitation and guidance. He also commanded Muslims to follow this manner. An Arab man came to the holy prophet, asked something from him. The holy prophet gave that to him. He said a rough word instead of appreciation. The holy prophet's successor got angry and wanted to react against him. The holy prophet wanted them to be calm. Then the holy prophet went to the Arab men house and called him. The holy prophet helped him more. At this time, the man got happy and said good pray to the holy prophet. The holy prophet said, "The words that you say previously in front of my successors caused they got angry to you. It 's good to repeat the words that you say now in front of them, this caused their opinion changed about you. He did it the next day and said his happiness from the holy prophet. The successors got happy. At this time, the holy prophet gave a comprehensive command about the quality of invitation and guidance of people to his successors and said, "The people and I are the example like persons who their camel escaped. Some people chase and yell for getting it. This work is useless because it causes more escaping of the animal. Now the owner of the animal come and says: "'o people! Don't do anything. I know better what to do. Then he came out in

front of camel and he holds it the leash. If I didn't control you, you had killed him immediately.

The holy prophet behaved in friendship, brotherhood and equality with his successors. The holy prophet wasn't proud and didn't do anything that has a bad reaction from the successor. When he entered to a meeting refused his successor to stand up in front of him. He sat everywhere that was empty. If he rode, didn't let anybody to come after him. Also, he got in him. If he didn't get in, said to him, "so, you go ahead and our appointment is here with you.

Because of this sire of the holy prophet, Imam Ali (a.s.) in his khelafat period, when he reached near the Medaen, some peasant who came to welcome Imam Ali (a.s.), run in front of his horse. Imam Ali (a.s.) said;" why did you do it?" they said:" it is a kind of respect that we do for our kings. Imam Ali (a.s.) said:" it is lowliness for you and don't have any beneficial for the person who you respect. Imam Ali (a.s.) prevent them from doing this work for him.

The holy prophet (a.s.) was so humble that Arabs criticized the holy prophet and said: "you are like other servants in food and garment." The holy prophet answered," which servants are more servants than me? I am so happier that I 'm God servants than God prophet."

### *Part 3*

In two last parts, we were talking about sire, manner of association and morality of the holy prophet Muhammad (a.s.). We mentioned to some points and said one of the progress factors and development of the holy Islam religion, divine morality, morality of association and behavior of God Messenger.

All of us know Islam appeared in Arab island and Saudi Arabia and its embryo was created there. It grew gradually and developed so that it dominated the major parts of the world. The Arabs didn't want to accept the new learning of Islam because they were interested to their old belief and didn't want to abandon them, so Islam was against their belief. The

logical criticism and fault of Islam to their belief made them angry and hurt to their affections. So they opposed harshly and annoyed the holy prophet and his successor's cruelty. Some of the holy prophet relative were the first persons to do this annoying such as the holy prophet uncle, Abu Lahab. Two of the Khadijah's daughter were Abu Lahab daughter-in-law. He forced his sons divorced their wives because of their father foolish prejudice.

The affluent and nobles classes that see their reputation and wealth are in danger, tried to prevent from the developing of Islam and use from all their power. Finally, the material was became ready against the development of Islam at that days and wanted to fire down this call in announcer's larynx.

In other hand, the holy prophet didn't have any body materials. He didn't have any wealth, government and relatives who protected from him. In a meeting that the holy prophet called his relatives according to God command, he invited and gave an ultimatum to them. However, all of them confessed to the holy prophet wisdom, honest and good manner, nobody didn't accept the holy prophet invitation except Imam Ali (a.s.) who was 12 years old, others either got silent or ridiculed and left the meeting.

Any body material didn't protect from the holy prophet. But he has raised by the spiritual power that God gives him, he didn't fear of the revolt and ridicule of people and did the mission that God wants him. Morality, behavior and speeches of the holy prophet, especially the verses of the holy Quran that he reads to people, was so effective that people attracted and obeyed from him, the enemies didn't find any solution except that to say the holy prophet is a magician and did the magician by words.

The holy prophet didn't do any magic; also he tore all the magic that was appeared from the ignorance by his divine speeches. The holy prophet gave power with expressing the truth to their intellect and shook their thinking.

The holy prophet proved practically that the human can be powerful and strong and use his power for supporting and helping the poor, wanted his pain and comfort of others.

At the end of the holy prophet lifetime that he dominated all the Arab Island and some parts out of the Arab Island and all of them was controlled by the spiritual and divine power of the holy prophet, the successor of him saw that he taught about the human beings salvation and saw all people the same as a kind father.

The holy Quran describes the holy prophet as this,

﴿“certainly a messenger has come to you from among yourselves; grievous to him is your falling into distress, excessively solicitous respecting you; to the believers (he is) compassionate. (The holy Quran, 9:128)”﴾

The Muslims found practically that the holy prophet is interested in human beings comfort more than his comfort.

One day, one of the wealthy was sitting in the holy prophet presence. A poor man arrived and sat next to the wealthy. The wealthy men drew aside himself and crumbed his clothes. The holy prophet got angry to him and said, “are you afraid something from his poverty stick to you?” the men said,” no, “ the holy prophet said,” so, are you afraid something of your wealth stick to him?” The man said, “No,” the holy prophet said, “so, why did you draw aside himself?” the man said,” I confessed to my guilt. And I ‘m ready to give a half of my wealth to this my Muslim brother as the penalty of my guilt. The poor man said, “but I didn’t want your wealth because I ‘m afraid get your reprehensive behavior.”

Because the holy prophet didn’t believe any right for himself, could cancel the imagined points. The virtue and knowledge were important for him; he could enhance the knowledge and virtue position. Unfortunately, the decline circle of Islam was begun, when the rulers of Islam didn’t follow the sire of the holy prophet.

# *The History of Quran, Appearance of its Terminology and Records*

Majid Maaref<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *The history of Quran is a new course that include description and explanation of collection Quran from the beginning of its descending till its contemporary writing and printing. When we refer to the historic and scientific sources, we find that the Quranic studies are not new! These subjects have been discussed by the Islamic researchers, specially interpreters and Quranic scholars, and they have created various works. The previous researchers have discussed all the sciences, of Quran and all related subjects under the “Quranic sciences” topic. But today they try to consider studies of Quran as “ history of Quran”. In the present article we read about researchers introducing “Quranic sciences” and the “history of Quran”.*

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1- Lecturer of univercity



What's the difference between the "Quranic sciences" and the "history of Quran"? There is not an exact answer to this question. Because there are common subject and studies in the "Quranic sciences" and "history of Quran". Consider "the time" is as an important factor of their differences. In other words, the subjects that relate to a definite time, such as- the time of descending, collection of Quran in different periods, the manner of writing and its transformation are subjects of the Quran history. Those Quranic researches that can be done without any relation to a definite time, such as- firm or multiple possible meanings abrogating and abrogated verses implicit or explicit meaning, general or specific indications, the Quran guidance, the Quranic miracles and its dimensions.... are in Quranic sciences subjects.

To know the first person who used the "history of Quran" needs a discussion. Some researchers believe that the German professor Nold-ke and the French professor Blasher recommended the title of "Quran history"-or according to the Iranian researchers "the story of Quran"- in recent century. This opinion was agreed in other research.

The Nodke's "History of Quran" is his doctoral research, that he defended it in 1858. Published it when one of his student edited it again. The second publication of the book was in 1919. In this book, Noldke has tried to organize the verses according to their descending and he says about the collection and writings of the Quran. He organizes the verses and surah in two parts: "the Meccan" (the verses descended in Mecca) and "Medanese" (the verses descended in Medina.). He also has discussed about the content of surah, the stages of descending, and arrangement of the surahs.

Some scholars believe that using of "Quran history" term by some Orientalists. And they wanted to pretend that Quran, like other books, such as the Gospels is gathered years after the holy prophet Muhammad (a.s.) death. As we study their works, find that they have had this opinion in their "history of Quran". On the contrary, the Muslim researchers have adopted a different meaning for this term. They have accepted it and wrote books with "Quran history" title- that explain it. Some others without using the title, accepted the existing of a history for

Quran and believe that this history is clear and doubtless. Alameh Tabatabaie writes:

“The history of Quran is completely clear from the day of its descending till now. The chapters and verses of Quran are habitual phrases to Muslim, and go from one generation to an other continuously. All of us know that the holy Quran that is available now, is the one that gradually descended to the holy prophet Muhammad (a.s.) 14 centuries ago. With this description, the holy Quran doesn’t need the history for its validity. Its history is clear because it claims that it is the words of God and for its exclamation says to refer to its texts. And it wants all humans and jinni to bring one verse like Quran, and their disability is obvious. It does not need any reason and witness because it is clear that it is the wording of God and it has not been distorted so far. For its validity, it does not need any confirmation of persons or officials. The brightest proof of the Quran are the descriptions and advantages that the holy Quran says about itself; it exists now as it was. Then Allameh with using of Quran verses has mentioned to the most of its characteristics are the secrets of Quran eternal. At the end, he concluded that:

“According to circumstance of these verses, the holy Quran is free from distortion because it is recalling of Allah and guiding of Allah instructions, so far the reason it is protected by Allah that is free from any fault and impression of the Divine promise (the protection verse) that keep the holy Quran free from distortion in fourteen century, despite of millions enemies and thousands it is the only scripture book that has existed in a long time among human beings.”

Anyway, “the Quran history” is accepted among Muslim scholars and as the name of book, has been used for some Quranic researches. As we will mention, some of the Shia and Sunni scholars have produced Quranic works with this title in the recent decades.

### *The dimensions of the discussion of the history of Qur'an*

The researchers have discussed about the Quran history from two points:

1- Some of them have considered independent subjects for the Quran history, and have searched about them briefly or in detail. They have published their works as the Quran history, the Quran story and sometimes “discussions about Quran”.

2- Some others have discussed about “Quran history” discussions as a by-research. For example, Ayatollah Khomeini in “the protection of Quran from distortion” has discussed about the collection of Quran and has shown the differences among these narratives; he has suspected the collection of Quran in AbuBakr period, and has confirmed its collection in Osman period.

Other examples of interpreters are from the Quran verses, as Allameh Tabatabaie said in interpretation of “ الحجر 9 ” again he is saying about the problem of collecting Quran after the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (a.s.) and has expressed about various stages of collecting Quran. Other discussions are some interpretation of the primary verses of “Al-Ghadr” and “Al- Dokhan” or “Al- Baghare, 185”, i.e. “ Baghare”. It is possible to mention some books that is about the history of Quran such as, “ Quran and madrasatin” written by Morteza Askari, “ collection of Quran” written by Ali Koorani Ameli, “ Haghaegh Hamma Howla AlQuran” written by Jafar Morteza Ameli and “ Quran in Islam” Written by Allameh Tabatabaie.



*An Interview with the Christian Priest,  
Hanna Fakhori*

*Imam Ali (a.s.) is the Imam of the world.*

Hanna Fakhori is the old and well-known Christian priest, whose works about the Arabic and Islamic philosophies are famous. He talked about Imam Ali (a.s.) and teaching of Nahjul Balagha, and appreciated the religious freedom of the Christians in Iran.

He who has a PhD degree in the Islamic philosophy, has finished his high school in Jerusalem. Fakhori is a Catholic of Saint Paul church in Lebanon. He is the member organizer of the organization of the teachers of language, art and science in Lebanon. He has also written some educational books about Christianity theology.

Fakhori abandoned the administrative activity from 1962. He began searching in language, literature, and philosophy fields. By now, he has published tens of books and articles in Lebanon and Egypt. Some of them are :

- Ekhvan Al-safa, 1947
- The history of Al-adab Al-Arabi, 1951
- The collection of Al-loghat Al- Arabiah in 4 volume,1951
- The collection of Navabegh Al-fekr,
- Al-jadid Al-adab Al-arabi, in 6 volume, 1955
- Al- hekam va Al- Amsal ,1956
- The history of the Islamic Philosophy, 2volume, 1958
- Al-mojam al-vafi,1983
- The history of Al-adab al-arabi in Meghreb, 1982
- The history of Islamic Philosophy, 1984

The history of the Arab literature was translated to Persian by Abdul Mohammad Ayati (Tehran). Hanna Fakhori made researches about the manuscripts, or explanation of old works: he has translated some works from Latin, Greek and French languages into the Arabic language which include the religious texts, the history of the Christians thought, the culture and laws of the Christian church.

**Please tell about your educational, scientific and social activities?**

I entered a Christian school; after two years study of philosophy I went to Harisa church, and then I joined to the “priests association”. Simultaneously, I wrote and translated some literary and philosophical books from the Latin, Greek and French into the Arabic language. I study in my free time and like to study the Islamic and Arabic fields. I have friendly relation with the Islamic World, specially the Egypt and the Al-Azhar shaikhs.

**What is your evaluation about the interfaith Dialogue in Lebanon?**

We can see some violations, but they do not hurt the religious affairs in Lebanon.

**What is the view of the religious leaders about the dialogue?**

The Islamic leaders in Lebanon are really respectable and try to have a mutual understanding with different divine religions according to the existing realities. I believe that the affairs are in their right way. Of course, there are a few persons who are abnormal, but we don't care them.

**what's the place of religion in the human communities?**

The truth is that we witness almost scientific developments, not religious; it is a material movement, and taking away from the religion. Of course, the clergies should try to be faithful to the religion principles, and protect from it.

**What is the role of the religious leaders and organizations in developments of spirituality?**

Their roles are very broad and deep. They should use scientific and interesting ways, on a logical basis and discuss all religious issues.

**How do you see the dialogue between Islam and Christianity?**

There is dialogue between Islam and Christianity. The Muslim and Christian leaders talk with each other. A religion movement is formed in the East world that tries to create a space for coexisting and we should protect this opportunity.

**What is the advantage of dialogue among the Shi'a and Christian, or among the religious communities, as a whole?**

It brings the hearts together, and makes the life easier.

**What is your opinion about the priority in dialogue between the Shia and Christian communities?**

There is a dialogue between them. We respect Imam Ali (a.s.) a lot! I have written books about Imam Ali and his offspring and I can say that my best works are about Imam Ali (a.s.). A considerable part of my books about the Arab literature and university research books are about Imam Ali (a.s.). It is because Imam Ali is the Imam and leader of the world, not only the Muslims! We also want and respect him because of his

teachings that bring the humans close together. In Lebanon churches, we teach some parts of Imam Ali letters. The students form groups and every group learn one part of the Nahjul Balaghah. All of them respect Imam Ali (a.s).

**Which of Imam Ali's virtues are attracting to you?**

Blessing and openness toward people, brotherhood, goodwill and trying to guide people to growing and perfection are the most important virtues of Imam Ali. Imam Ali wanted universal kindness and sympathy for all people, and emphasized on respecting people each other in Nahjol Balaghah that is common with the teaching of Christ and Christianity.

**What lessons do we learn from Imam Ali (a.s.)?**

Many lessons and the important one is to respect the humanity and humanitarian principles. Respecting people as human beings is one of the prominent characteristic of Imam Ali (a.s.).

**In your opinion, what is the important gift of Imam Ali to mankind?**

In my opinion, it is Nahjul Balaghe that should be read and followed.

**What relations can be among the Christian and Muslim researchers, or, in other words, among the church and mosque?**

Both of them are God's houses, and all God houses are respectable, the mosque or church. We believe when a person enters a God house, the respects God, reverence Him, and this gives the affection that should be in one's heart.

**According to the shia belief, the Jesus Christ will come to help Imam Mahdi (a.s) after his appearance, and will form a just world. In your opinion what is the most important vocation of this great incident?**

It is a reward to human deeds! They encourage people to a fortunate life. it is a reality that human should understand he is a human; all people are his brothers, and should behave them in brotherhood, respect, and affection; and also help people to abandon their past and return to everlasting life.

**We want to know brief information about educational system in church and Christianity in Lebanon, because most of our readers are the Islamic students?**

Beside the church that is a place for pray, there are some schools that are called Patricki schools, in all the Christian areas in Lebanon. At those schools, the youth are taught religious and philosophical courses. They will become priests in the future and teach the religion!

**In your opinion, what is the relation between religion and politics?**

They have a close relationship with each other, without any interfere at each other!

**As you know many politicians know themselves as true Christians but their behaviors say another thing. What's your idea about such people?**

The politician acts on the basis of his understanding, and unfortunately, sometimes puts the politics prior to religion! They don't limit themselves to the religious rules, and some of their acts are not related to religion. In my opinion, if the world politicians attend the Imam Ali 's letters to his rulers, it would be better for them, because they are human letters that preserve human rights and judge them in the right way. They are not letters to ruin the human lives.

**Since you have been in Tehran before, what's your idea about the freedom of the Christians in Iran?**



I visited some of my Christianity brothers in Tehran and other places. They obey the Iranian rules but do their religious affairs in liberty, and have their own religious and Christian life!

**In my recent travel to Britain, I saw the youth don't come to the church even on Sundays, and some elder people were at the churches. What's the reason for that?**

Unfortunately, they have much liberty in the world and we can't force them to go to the church. Now the youth are quite free. Believing and submission is necessary. I think they will return to religion, at last.

**According to your studying about the Persian literature, what is the common spirit in the Persian works?**

The Persian literature is a world one. A world solution. Shahnameh is a world wide book. There are the old teachings in the world literature, besides the Shahnameh.

**What is the role of the Iranian writers in development of the Arab literature?**

They have had a great role. During the Abbasside period, the Arabs and Persians have intermingled with each other. The Persian researchers, such as Ibn Moghaffa, who was originally a Persian, wrote some books about the Arabic language and its grammar founded the basis of the Arab literature during the Abbasside dynasty.

**What is the most important characteristic of the shia teachings?** The human spirit.

**Why?** Because the people had bad behavior toward Imam Ali, but Imam behaved in a right manner with them. Imam Ali that shia people follow him- wants people to be complete human in all his speeches, orders and letters in Nahjul Balagha.

**Thank you.** Thanks a lot, to you too!

# *Recognizing Enemy*

Zahra Ejlal<sup>1</sup> - Hassan Karami<sup>2</sup>

***Abstract:** The man should not only be Godly, but most also recognize the enemy. Then he will be able to walk along the path, of perfection. At it is emphasized in Quran, one of the important things in life, is to be careful about the enemy, and do not take him as your friend, it is quoted from Imam Ali (a.s.) that we should not underestimate our enemy; even though he is weak. In this article, we get to know Satan.*

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1- Researcher

2- Researcher

## Identify the enemy!

According to the verses and hadith, we have two types of enemies; internal and external enemies.

When a man sees his enemy face to face, he will naturally defend and tries to take care of himself. But hidden and insider is the worst enemy. Since people are unaware of it. So obviously domestic enemy can hit fatal blows upon us, so we should first identify the enemy within and after defeating this internal enemy, we can fight with external enemies stronger!

Internal enemies are within us, and with us. They are our passions, rages or concupiscence.

Human should not be faithful to Allah only, but also must be able to recognize the enemy then he can be able to route through the way of happiness and perfection, because the Quran has expressed this and states that the Satan is the external enemy of human beings:

﴿ children of Adam, did I not make a covenant with you, that you should not worship Satan? He is surely a clear enemy to you. ﴾

﴿ Satan would arouse discord among them; he is the clear enemy of mankind.(The holy Quran, 17:53) ﴾

Satan is an evil creature that by misleading tries to influence. The human with temptation and seductive. Imam Ali (a.s.) said: “there is no enemy more vengeful than Satan.” Quran has also stipulates that you should take the devil as your enemy.

## The importance and necessity of recognizing the enemy

“Be careful of neglecting your enemy because your enemy will never ignore and forget you.”<sup>1</sup>

The recognition of enemy is crucial and important. Hence the term enemy is repeated in the Quran and we see, in the verses, about the recognizing the enemies of Islam, their behaviors, and our interaction with them.

## *Forget complaining the evil!*

Man can not complain from Satan, because Satan has declared that hell. Also in his speech, he will say to people in the doomsday; “Do not blame me! You should blame yourself today.

Because I’ve just invited you, and Allah showed the best way and invited you! But you chose your own way and followed me!”

## *Escaping from evil*

Imam Sadeq (a.s.) says: Devil can not divert a man from the right path if has five characters: “true intentions, frequent prays, patience in tragedy, satisfaction to Allah’s and to behave people the behavior as he like for himself.

## *Covering the Faults with pietism*

﴿Children of Adam! We have sent down to you clothing that covers your nakedness, and feathers. But the clothing of piety that is better. That is one of the signs of Allah, in order that they remember.﴾  
(The holy Quran, 7: 26).

As devil took out the clothes of our father, Adam, and disclosed his body he also wants to do the same with us; in other words, he wants to take out our dress of Piety!

The dress of piety covers all of our faults. The dress of piety is the best dress and a man should not confine to his ordinary dress which covers his body only because the piety dress looks after the behavior and moral of human, although our ordinary dress is necessary.

It can be stated that in spite of high accuracy of dress of piety which our souls require, it does not need to think about the dress of body.

### *Detoxify your body!*

The devil poisons our body. For example, someone wants to kill the other with poison. If he puts it in his pocket, it has no effect on him. Because his gastrointestinal should accept the toxin. Then it should be absorbed to his blood; after that it can, harm the body and damage it.

Temptations are like this: different lusts and desires among the youth, or the love for positions and powers among the elders, is a sign of the effect of poison.

If someone enjoys from the compliments and Praises, it means that the poison has affected him. Imam Ali (a.s.) in treaty of Malek Ashtar said: "Satan is always looking cunning; when you are praised, you should be careful, because you are in forefront of devil.

# *Haya*

Abbas Passandideh<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *One of the most important factors of self- controlling is “Modesty”. Modesty has an excellent place in human education from the Islamic view. Morality is important in anthropology that includes some factors. Among these factors, some of them have special priorities that are called “the noble morality (Makarem al-akhlagh.) In this priority (makarem) collection, modesty is the important factor or agent than other.*

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1- Researcher and writer

## *Introduction*

Controlling ourselves and organizing our behavior, thoughts, and emotions are some of the major factors in human life, both in personal or social aspects. We can not be successful in our life without them. The controlling and organizing can be internal and external in one view. The internal controlling and organizing is more effective. In fact, the matter of “self- controlling” is in this aspect. Human needs an internal power to control and organize his thoughts, emotions, and behavior. This concept falls under “virtue” in religious literature. The virtue is a general and comprehensive title that includes all self-controlling and self-organizing factors. In religious literature, there is a collection of controlling and organizing factors, that each of them has its characteristic, and makes control.

One of the most important factors of self- controlling is “Modesty”. Modesty has an excellent place in human education from the Islamic view. Morality is important in anthropology that includes some factors. Among these factors, some of them have special priorities that are called “the noble morality (Makarem al-akhlagh.) In this priority (makarem) collection, modesty is the important factor or agent than other.

The gracious prophet of Islam introduces modesty as the mood of Islam and says: “Modesty (haya) is whole the religion.”

In some narratives, it is said if there was not modesty, every thing was permissible. It shows the importance and priority of this attribute psychological structure and successful of human. It is because the special importance of haya. Haya is a power that controlling and organizing the physical and psychological behavior of human according to “religious law” and “convention”. The superiority of this factor is because modesty is based neither on fear nor greed; but it is based on respect to human bounties. When he sees himself in front of the noble person, he will not do something that is forbidden and will control his behavior. The human is unwilling to do wrong deeds, or deprive himself from the beauties. So, modesty is in the head of human controlling and organizing system

because God summons human to modesty before call him to fear from the Almighty God, and says:

﴿“Does he not know that Allah does see?”﴾

In the modern society we do not hear much about modesty. The controlling and organizing systems are external. They are based on material fear/Promotion.

Another point about modesty is that it isn't equal to virtue. Virtue is the fruit of controlling and organizing, that modesty is one of them. Second, virtue is limited to passionate region, while modesty is applicable in all grounds. So, modesty isn't equal to virtue and hejab, however, they aren't unrelated, either.

It seems that modesty is not known as it deserves; and perhaps there is no scientific research about it. Of course, in psychology there are some concepts such as, “self-organized” and “shyness”; but they aren't the same as modesty. Self-control is a more comprehensive concept, and shyness is different from modesty. When modesty gets out of its path the “shyness” phenomenon shapes. So, it's necessary that this effective and important axes, finds its place and some scientific researches to be made about it.

## *Description*

Searching about every subject requires collecting information and analyzing them. Before starting the research, we should know the subject correctly. Some subjects have similar and close meanings with others; it causes to use them instead of each other. On the other hand, some matters may have close relation to the research subject, but it isn't clear in the first review. Thus, we should have a scale to clarify the frontier of similar subjects! By this we will not collect information that are not related to the research subject; second, we will not investigate the information that are not related to the research subject in their face and effect on the result of research. As you will see in this research, there are information about “modest” that, at first glance, they were unrelated; however, they had



close relation to the subject. So, knowing the research subject is a major concept, especially in the field of the Islamic traditions.

## *The view of linguists about Modesty (haya)*

The first step in research about modesty is to know the view of the linguists. It seems there is a common definition. We can see some axes in their definitions:

Modesty is changing of mood, that appears because of scared of blamed affairs. Other definitions have explained modesty as “soul’s separation”. For example, Ragheb Esfahani says, “Modesty is “separation of souls” from uncleanness, and leave that because of ugliness.”

Toreihi says,

“Modesty is separation from evil deeds, because of frightening from people’s blames.”

Ibn Manzoor knows Modesty and prudence as equal.

Ibn Athir has considered “prudence” as “saparation”.

In the third step, Ibn Athir, not only considers prudence and modesty as synonyms, but also says prudence is “vaghaeh” or “heedfulness”. Ibn Manzoor and Toreihi introduce modesty as keeping away and leave sins, in explanation of the tradition, Modesty is belief.” tradition.

## *Conclusion*

There are three axes according to etymologists: First, Modesty is “changing and innate effect.” Second, it is “Soul’s separation”. Third, “forbidden factor”. Maybe, these three axes say different aspects of Modesty. It seems that the first and second axes have shown psychological aspects, and the third definition shows the function of Modesty –keeping away.

# *The Islamic Customs and Traditions*

Shahab Uldin Zoofaghari<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** *The religion of Islam includes a set of basic tenets, and regulations which regulates and adjusts the thoughts and behavior of the religious person. The practical part of this divine religion has various personal and social aspects, that “the Islamic customs” are parts of it. Being acquainted with these customs can beautify the treatment of a Muslim, and is a sign of his deep belief in God, and his stipulation towards the God’s law.*

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1- Researcher and writer

## *The origin of the customs and traditions*

To pay attention to the source and origin of the customs and traditions is very important not only from point of view of anthropology, but also it plays a great role in acceptance of them. When nationalistic ideas exist in a society, whatever that comes under the title of national customs and manners, are accepted immediately and would be prevalent.

A study of the history shows that the most important patronage of the customs and the traditions comes from the “religions”, and the continuance of some of the customs during the centuries relates to their religious nature, and the religious ideas that have supported them.

In this lesson, we study the roots of the Islamic customs and try to find their authenticity.

### *1- The Honored and the Glorified God*

Based on the Islamic monotheistic view, the source and origin of the all ideals and perfections is the Divine Majesty, just as He has all the “Good Names”. In Islamic literature, the real beloved is God, and the only way to reach the ideals is the path toward God, that ends to Him as well. The aim of the creation of human beings is that through service to God, he finds his divine essence, and gets adorned by the Islamic ethics.

Imam Ali (a.s.) said:

***“One who is trained by the divine ethics, will get the eternal salvation.”<sup>1</sup>***

What is the divine morality? And how can you find it?

A simple way to study this subject is paying attention to the manner that God talks to the angles, prophets, and the people in Quran. As

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1- Behaar-ul-Anwar, Vol.92, P.214

an example, when God addresses Mohammad (a.s.) in Quran, He uses the titles like “the Messenger” and “the Apostle”.

## *2- The Previous messengers (p.b.u.h.)*

Abraham (a.s.) the great messenger of God, and the symbol of the monotheism, spent all his life keeping the people away from polytheism and sins. God introduces him in Quran as the leader, a good sample for the men of virtue, and his treatment and manner as a complete way to followed by all the Muslims.

﴿There is for you an excellent example (to follow) in Abraham and those with him.﴾ (The holy Quran, 60:4). ﴿

## *Hanafieh Ashareh*

The ten traditions of Abraham (a.s.) which were performed up to the time of appearance of Islam, were called “Hanafieh Ashareh”. “Hanif” is a person who is willing toward truth and it is called so as Abraham’s religion was based on the monotheistic nature. (“Ashareh” means “ten” in Arabic). “Hanafieh” which is a theoretical idea, has practical effect as well; And Abraham was the founder and beginner of some customs which were confirmed by the messenger of Islam, too. Some of these customs relate to head, and some others to body.

### *A: the part related to the head:*

- Cutting the hairs
- Growing the beard
- Cropping the mustaches
- Brushing the teeth
- Cleaning the teeth by the tooth-pick

### *B: the part related to the body*

- Washing the body after sexual intercourse

- To circumcise
- To shave the outgrowth hairs of the body
- To cleanse the body by water
- To cut the finger-nails

3- *The honorable Messenger of Islam* One of the essential aims of revelation to the messengers by God is to provide a “model of behavior” for the people, as well as showing the correct and divine path to them. The main goal of the messengers, especially those who were Imams, was not only communication of the celestial revelation, but also during their social life they taught people the Practices of the humanity, and the divine morality.

Among these messengers, the one who is the master of the “noblest behavior” and in the world of religion his amber like presence attracted all the human hearts, and God has characterized him as follow, was Mohammad (a.s.):

“you were left alone if you were harsh and hard-hearted”.

Thus his holy personality is introduced as the superior model of conduct, to all the religious people of the world:

“In God’s messenger you have a fine model for someone who looks forward to meeting God and the Last Day, and mentions God frequently.” (The holy Quran, 33:21).

The theory of religion known as the “Practice of the Messenger” is a set of his behaviors and speeches, which are clarified through Quran, and the origin of it is his being as a pattern of conduct.

Being a Muslim can not be justified unless by taking advantage of the Messenger’s customs (Sonnah), and the level of respect of every Muslim to him can be recognized and judged through his similarity of treatments with the Messenger’s customs.

The God’s Messenger (a.s.) said:

“The one who raises my Sunnat (Practice) has revived me, and the one who revived me, will accompany me in the Heaven.” (Sunan-Ol-Nabi)

Imam Ali (a.s.) said:

“The best and the most favorite people is the one who follows the custom of the Messenger Mohammad (a.s.) and searches for the thoughts which have been left by him.” (Qur'an-Al-Hekam, P.110).

Imam Sadeq (a.s.) also said:

“It is unpleasant to me that somebody dies while one of the Prophet’s practices has been left undone by him.” (Makarem-Ol-Akhlagh, vol.1; P.41).

### *The meaning of custom and tradition*

In Arabic language “Adab” means custom and good manner. This word is used in Quran, in way to invite the people towards the good behavior. Due to this matter, the holy Messenger (a.s.) said:

“Quran is a source, and a school of teaching the good manners. Thus get trained through it as much as you can.” (Behar-Ol-Anvar, Vol.92, P.19).

In the above mentioned narration “source” has two meanings:

1- It means Quran is the divine blessing, that God have favored to His people, and has invited all to take advantage of it.

2- Quran is the school of divine training and custom.

“Sunnah” also verbally means the way and the manner of treatment and practice.

Sunnah and Terminology

“Sunnah” in jurisprudence means: “Narration, Actio, and Approval of Infallible persons (a.s.).

An example for the narration and statement is that the Messenger (a.s.) said:

“Marriage is my custom (Sunnah).

Or the other recommendations and advices that are found in the various “Hadith” and “narration books”, and are considered as “Sunnah” or the Islamic practice.

The sample of “Sunnah” as action is like the way the Messenger (a.s.) made his ablution. He used to wash his hands from up to the down, and Imam Sadeq (a.s.) said, “I make my ablution just like the Messenger, with all the details.”. Or the action of teaching the Muslims the Hajj Ceremony by the Messenger, which also is called a “Sunnah”. It means he has left his “Sunnah” (customs and traditions) thorough his narrations and actions.

Approval of the innocent Persons: It is called “Sunnah” also if something is done in front of one of the Innocent Persons, and they have confirmed it, or by their silence have shown satisfaction.

***The difference between the customs and traditions, and the religious Jurisprudence***

Most of people do not make any difference between the “Obligatory” and “recommended” precepts. But what makes Islam distinguished is “The Four Percepts”: “obligatory”, “recommended”, “abominable” and “prohibited” laws, that are intresting and attractive for studying.

In this lesson two percepts are going to be studied: the “recommended” and the “abominable”.

Therefore, custom and tradition are rooted from the same Islamic percepts but are not indispensable ones.

By the Islamic custom, we mean what you see in Muslim's behavior and treatment. These acts are for two essential reasons:

1- To obtain God's satisfaction, and be capable of receiving His rewards. Since God likes the good manners. If you ask the Christians why they say their prayers in groups? They will answer because God likes it in this way. And if you ask a Muslim why does he say "In the name of Allah, and the Messenger Sunnah when he brushes his teeth?", he would reply, "as it meets God's satisfaction and it will bring the heavenly reward."

2- To show that he follows a particular religious pattern.

3- To act in the best way and manner, as the religious laws include both permitted and the prohibited affairs; While the religious leaders not only are innocent of doing the prohibited deeds, but also do not do any useless action, or anything out of the logics and interests.

Thus, whatever the Messenger has done had been based on the wisdom. We read in "Nodbah Prayer" about Imam Ali (a.s.) that,

"He exactly followed the Messenger (a.s.) step by step."

It has come in the narrations that wearing the gate ring in the right hand is useful for the health, but how? We do not know. Just as this statement belongs to the Messenger, it must have some reasonable wisdom.

### ***The differences between custom and Ethics***

- In Ethics we face "must" and "must not". While in custom it changes to "better" and "more deserved". Of course, the custom can be a primary step to the ethics.

- The ethics has root in the nature and the soul, while it is not the same for the custom. A normal human being, who has been grown up in a healthy environment, may not be a murderer or a cheater; he has a high inclination towards the goodness and beneficence. The customs have the



practical and imitating aspects. If there is no repeat and limitation, the custom and tradition can not be created.

An example:

Hospitality in ethics: The norm of hospitality itself (Everywhere, even among the primitive tribes).

Hospitality as a custom: The way of hospitality (how to serve the guests, to present a gift, washing the hands of the guests, or how to meet them and say hello, or good bye, etc.)

- The customs are relative, but the ethics are decisive.

As mentioned before, the ethic is a set of “must” and “must not” things. They are essential truths which are the same everywhere. For example, stealing or telling a lie are bad for all people around the world. While everybody admires the honesty, and loyalty. But the customs are relative. They are accepted in some areas, while they may be disagreeable in the other area.

### ***Some important points about the Islamic custom***

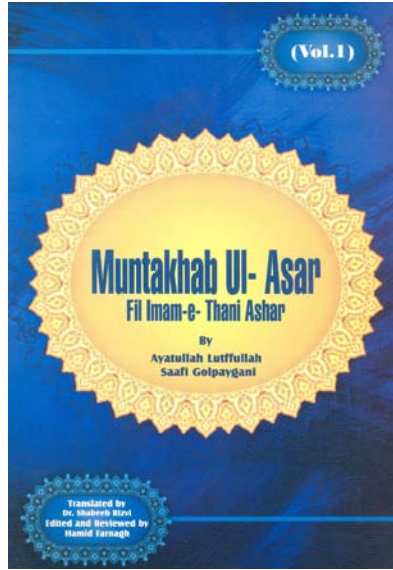
1- The best way to publicize the Islam religion is to observe and perform the religious customs that beautifies our behavior. The person who cares to do his daily affairs of life according to the Islamic precepts has a very attractive and noble behavior, and in this way he may attract other people. In many cases, the attractive and humble behavior of the holy Messenger or Imam(s) (a.s.) has made some people to convert in to Islam. For example, the Messenger visited a Jewish patient who used to pour dust on his head every time. This affected the Jewish so much, and this kind courtesy attracted him and caused him to convert to Islam. Also escorting of one of the Imams (a.s.) to see some non-Muslim person off motivated the man to follow the Islam since after.

2- Following the religious customs and traditions unifies the people in action, and causes the social unit, which results in bringing their hearts near together. For example, washing hands before taking meals by

the Muslims, or saying “In the name of God” on the food table collectively, or visiting relatives in the off-days, all and all bring the social unit.

3- The Islamic custom is a harmonized and associated collection, that its parts are related to each other. Thus, as much as we follow them, we can get a better result.

4- An important characteristic of the Islamic customs is that they are accompanied with prayers. A difference between the Islamic traditions and other religions’ customs is that no action is done except by saying prayers, even in satisfying the body needs. As matter of fact, the whole actions of a Muslim is somehow related to God. One who brings his meal with the praying “in the name of God” in fact he takes his meal with a divine light and this action creates a beautiful and effective spiritual atmosphere.



## *Munthakhab-ul-Asar*

Ayatollah Lotfollah Safi Golpaigani<sup>1</sup>

More than fifty years ago, a learned scholar and valued researcher made a great effort in composing the most comprehensive and thorough work about Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and he named it “Muntakhab-ul-Asar”.

This book not only contains “selection of the immaculate Imams recorded works but also comprises “selection of compiled works on Imam Mahdi”. Truly, this book was considered as the best compiled work by gathering held in honor of the written works on Imam Mahdi (a.s.). the grand Ayatollah Haj Sheikh Lotfullah Safi Golpayegani who is today one of the most high-ranking ‘Marja’e’ (religious authority) manifested a novel and great masterpiece and gifted to the Shia world a comprehensive book in its most perfect and completely innovative manner fifty years ago with very limited resources.

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1- One of the greatest religious scholars of Shia’s World

The honorable author has compiled this book in ten chapter and one hundred sections with great enthusiasm and excellent style and arranged the Prophet's and Imam's hadith in an innovative manner in one hundred chapters. He has narrated with utmost care the full text of hadith in its complete form with firm documentary support and taken from printed and handwritten books.

The big privilege this everlasting work enjoys is related to its complete innovative style such that readers familiar with writing style are aware that every hadith usually comprises of several phrases where each phrase pinpoints to one of the dimensions concerning Imam Mahdi (a.s.).

The grand Ayatollah has taken a new innovative step in this book. While narrating every hadith, he examines its various phrases; he selects one of them which according to him is the most rational, audible and important and records the full text of hadith in chapters that have closer connection with the contents of selected phrases. He recollects the chain of transmission, the text and source of hadith. Thereafter, he considers the other phrases of each hadith by means of one hundred chapters. At the end of each chapter, he reminds that the hadith come down in so and so chapter and so and so section gives guidance to this matter.

This excellent style has kept the traditions immune from dissection; the volume of book too has not increased while at the same time nothing has remained unsaid. This beneficial style and numerous other privileges of this book has always attracted the attention of researchers in the length of these fifty years and is considered to be one of the most important reference books on par with such invaluable works like "Ghaibat-e-No'mani", "Ghaibate-e-Toosi", "Kamaluddin' by Sadooq and Bihar-ul-Anwar' by Majlisi and is recognized as a trustworthy and reliable source all around the world.

### *Other features of book:*

- 1- The rare comprehensiveness of this book: within limited volume and limited pages, this book pinpoints 6217 page titles.

- 2- Extensive broad-based research by author: 830 hadith has been compiled in this invaluable work and this is extremely high considering that the number of hadith come down in each of the books like 'Ghaibat-e-no'mani', 'Gheibat-e-Toosi' and 'Kamaluddin' by Sadooq is about 500 in number.
- 3- Access to numerous sources: despite limitation of time for writing the book, the author has utilized 94 Shiite sources and 63 Sunni sources for recording hadith.
- 4- Direct reference to sources and abstinence from recording narration of others: consequently, he has refrained narrating from such books like Al-Musnaf Ibne Abi Shaibah and Abdol-Razzagh that remained unprinted at that time.
- 5- Reference to different sources for recording sound and firm hadith: for this reason, the author has not limited himself in narrating the original source of reference; he pinpoints the differences in manuscripts.
- 6- Reference to handwritten manuscripts like various manuscript of 'Kefayat'ul'Athar' that was not published at that time.
- 7- Explanation of difficult hadith in footnotes: Numerous invaluable points have been described in the footnotes.
- 8- Explanation of numerous literary, lexical, interpretive and theological points in footnotes.
- 9- Observing the bounds of Imams' sayings with full explanation so that the author's sayings are not all mingled with the sayings of Imams (a.s.).
- 10- Narrating the sayings of renowned figures in footnotes for living greater strength to his points.
- 11- Strength, accuracy and firmness regarding contravention and perseverance of matters. For instance, un the last part of preface

where he wishes to refute Ibne Khaldun's feeble and senseless sayings he sets forth the precise and decisive words of Ahmad-bin-Mohammad Seddiq Hazrami from the book 'Abzaar al-Vahm al-Maknoon' transmitted from Ahmad Msri from the book 'Al-Mahdi wal-Mahdaviyah' so that it remains aloof from any fanatical doubt and misgiving.

The special importance and extraordinary greatness of this book will become manifest if we recollect that the honorable author compiled this book all by himself 50 years ago with the very limited resources of that time.

### *The titles of book:*

Chapter one: sets forth hadith that clearly indicate the number of Imams and stipulates that the immaculate Imams were 12 in number equal to the number of chiefs of Bani-Israel where the first of them was Amirul-Muminin Ali (a.s.) and the twelfth amongst them is Mahdi (a.s.).

The honorable author has set out this chapter in eight sections. He has written down the full text of 243 hadith and referred to 663 phrases from hadith come down in other chapters.

Chapter two: Hadith giving glad tidings about manifestation of the last unseen savior coming from the progeny of the holy prophet (a.s.); from the descent of holiness Fatima (s); from the generation of Amir-ul-Mu'minin (a.s.); from the descendant of Imam Husain (a.s.) and from the offspring of Imam Hassan Askari (a.s.).

This chapter has been arranged in 49 chapters and contains the full text of 252 hadith had refers to 4076 phrases from other chapters.

Chapter Three: this chapter refers to the history of birth of Allah's Hujjah; brief account of this honorable Imam; his miracles and the story of fortunate people who earned the honor of visiting the holy Imam during Imam Askari's (a.s.) era.

This chapter has been arranged in 3 sections and contains 34 hadith. It also gives reference to 108 hadith.

Chapter Four: it refers to the 12<sup>th</sup> Imam's miracles during the minor occultation, the life of his special envoys and the story of those who regained Imam after the demise of Imam Askari (a.s.).

This chapter is arranged in 3 sections and contains 53 hadith and gives reference to 2 other hadith.

Chapter Five: Reference to the 12<sup>th</sup> Imam's miracles during the major occultation and the story of the fortunate figures who earned the honor of meeting their Imam during major occultation.

This chapter has been arranged in 2 sections and contains 16 hadith and gives reference to 9 other hadith.

Chapter Six: about the features of Imam's reappearance; the signs and disturbances before his manifestation; the month, year and place of reappearance; the revolt of Sufyani and Dajjal; the heavenly cry; the type of allegiance and prohibition of assignment of time (of reappearance).

This chapter has been arranged in 11 sections and contains 128 hadith and gives reference to 92 other hadith.

Chapter Seven: Unparalleled victories, manifestation of earth's hidden treasures, coming of prophet Isa (a.s.), killing of Dajjal, war with Sufyani, the perfection, the perfection of man's intellect, global flourishing and the earth overflowing with equity and justice are the topics of this chapter.

This chapter is arranged in 12 sections and comprises of 37 hadith and has given reference to 209 other hadith.

Chapter Eight: it concerns the virtues and good traits of his 313 companions and speaks about their bravery and rigour.

This chapter is arranged in 2 sections and comprises of 9 hadith and has given reference to 10 other hadith.

Chapter Nine: it discusses the period of his rule as well as his invitation, character, food, clothing and manner of living.

This chapter is arranged in 3 sections and comprises of 7 hadith and has given reference to 22 other hadith.

Chapter Ten: this chapter is about 'Entezar' (which means to await and look forward his coming and consequent triumph), duties of his Shiites during his 'Ghaibat' (unseen-ness), the virtue of perceiving him, belief and following his holiness, prohibition of disbelief, manner of our submission before him and several invocations that has come down from his holy self.

This chapter has been arranged in 7 sections and contains 51 hadith and gives reference to 77 other hadith.

Thus, the book contains 19 chapters, 100 sections, 830 hadith, 5387 references and the total number of hadith and referred phrases are 6217.

The honorable author has written this precious book half a century ago with limited resources at his disposal but with aforementioned state of specialty. He finished it on 28<sup>th</sup> Ramadan and during the same time managed to get it published in Tehran in 525 pages. During this half century, the book was reprinted tens of times in Tehran, Qom and Beirut and was referred to by great scholars and researchers.

The special care exhibited by researchers towards this valuable work motivated the respected author to once again turn over the pages of this book, examine the collection of hadith, insert new findings in every place of the book and present it with remarkable additions to those seeking their beloved one.

And now we are pleased and fortunate that the new edition has been printed in three volumes with numerous privileges.

Mentioning the privileges of this new edition itself calls for an independent report. Here, we shall only pinpoint that in the new edition,



the number of hadith has increased from 830 to 1294 hadith and the number of references has increased from 159 to 396 in number.

### *Explanations of author:*

The respected writer has mentioned many invaluable points in the preface and footnotes of the book and here we shall refer to few of them along with their page number but as per the first edition:

- 1- Proof of successive transmission of hadith on Mahdaviyat as per the narration of great Sunni scholars such as Shukani, Ibne-Saban, Ibne-Abil Hadid, Zaini-Dehlan, Savid, Shablanji, Barzanji, Ganji Shafa'ei and others (pages 3-6).
- 2- Confessions by 65 great Sunni scholars that Imam Mahdi (a.s.) does exist and that he is the immediate son of Imam Hassan Askari (a.s.) [pages 320-340].
- 3- Disproving the improbability of longevity (pages 274-283).
- 4- Disproving the fable of 'Sardab' (cellar) [pages 371-373].
- 5- Disproving the devious thoughts of such figures like Ibne- Khaldon and Ahmad Amin Mesri (pages 5-7).
- 6- The secrets of 'Ghaibat' (occultation) [pages 266-269].
- 7- The mysterious behind secrecy of his birth (pages 286-287).
- 8- The mystery behind his comparison to the sun hidden behind the cloud during the period of occultation.
- 9- Disproving the generic Mahdaviyat and proving the personal Mahdaviyat (page 40).
- 10- Proving the non-conformity of hadiths of the twelve- fold Caliphs except with the immaculate Imams (a.s.) [pages 14-23].

- 11- The names of forty important Sunni personalities who have noted down the hadiths related to Imam Mahdi (a.s.) in the books on hadith (page 35).
- 12- Calling to witness the claimants of Mahdaviat by setting evidences on the originality of belief in Imam Mahdi (a.s.) [pages 32].
- 13- Explanation of difficult hadiths in numerous instances (pages 145,310,305,302,257,196).
- 14- Proving the originality of Mahdaviyat via books compiled during the era of Imam Baqir (a.s.) and Imam Sadeq (a.s.).

### *Munthakhab-ul-Athar in the works of others*

Many renowned scholars in the Islamic world have expressed their views about Munthakhab-ul-Athar in their respective invaluable works. Hereunder, we mention few of them:

- 1- The author in history, Allamah Tehrani in his “Alzarieh” after introducing the book and its author writes: “ this book arranged in 10 chapters and each chapter consisting of several sections and each section comprising of several hadiths is compiled in the best possible manner and in the most charming style from both Shiite and Sunni books. (Alzarieh, vol.22, page 367).
- 2- Allamah Sheikh Habib Mohajir Aamuli after words of praise for the style adopted by author in writing Munthakhab and his success in writing his treatise and explanation of chapters writes: “ the author has collected every matter related to Imam Mahdi (a.s.) in this book and has not left out any vital matter. This book is unparalleled with respect to its topic and its worthy for every believer to have one copy of it with them.
- 3- The grand teacher Allamah Sayyed Morteza Razavi in his valuable book while explaining his meeting with Sheikh Mohammad Aborieh one of the outstanding figures in Egypt writes: ‘ if you wish to do research in hadiths related to Imam Mahdi (a.s.). I have with myself the book

Munthakhab-ul-Athar written by the great Allamah Haj Sheikh Lotfullah Safi wherein he has narrated the views of great Sunni scholars about the source referred to by their traditionists and examined this topic in great detail.”

4- After reading the book Munthakhab-ul- Athar, this teacher i.e., Aborieh became amazed and expressed his wonder and praise before Allamah Razavi.

5- Martyr Motahhari too in his book “ A journey into the life of holy Imams’(a.s.) has earmarked one chapter for introducing the book Munthakhab-ul- Athar. After ample praise for this book and its author, he recommends one and all to read this book.

6- The honorable teacher, Ayatollah Haj Sheikh Ja’far Sobhani writes in this regard as such: “ Praise for this book is not exclusive to the Shiite scholars. Rather, groups of Sunni scholars and some of the Orientalists too have words of praise for this book. Besides, it’s an important source and reference for any writer who wishes to write any subject on Imam Mahdi (a.s) because the grand author has collected all the hadith about Imam Mahdi (a.s.) at one place and employed a unique style in its arrangements.

7- The author of Al-Zarieh, Allamah Tehrani in a letter addressed to the honorable writer of Munthakhab expressed that he had never seen such a comprehensive book like it on this subject.

8- All the index-writers have undertaken a descriptive introduction and bibliograghy of this book.

About 30 years ago, in an interview with this respected writer, queries were put forward before him about the collection of works on Mahdaviyat particularly Munthakhab-ul-Athar. In reply, he pinpointed 3 vital factors that were mainly responsible for investigating him to ponder on this subject:

1- I had a virtuous mother who was deeply found of this household (Ahl’ul-bayt). Love for this household along with the milk that she fed filled my heart’s content. She used to refer to the book ‘Najm-e-Saqeb”

and encouraged us to read this book. It was the first book I succeeded reading in my very childhood.

2- I had a father whose love for this household was always overflowing. Alongside guidance of the people, by setting forth verses from Quran, hadith and elegant poems, he made my heart leap towards this noble household.

3- I had a honorable teacher who out of good intentions and affection encouraged me to write a comprehensive book on Imam Mahdi (a.s.) together with Shiite and Sunni references.

It was the author's style to first note down the chapters and sections under consideration and then refers to authentic Shiite and Sunni books. He would place each hadith under its appropriate chapter and section. It took 3 years for completion of this invaluable work.

### *Viewpoint of author:*

At the end of this article, for greater benefit to respected readers, we shall remind a few points that are actually the author's views concerning the subject on Mahdaviyat.

- 1- The issue of Mahdaviyat in Islam took shape by the hands of the holy Prophet (a.s.) during his own life-time.
- 2- Belief in the savior was something present in past eras among past nations and people, too.
- 3- From the viewpoint of numerosness of hadith, no topic can be found showing the same number as Mahdaviyat.
- 4- If deeper research is conducted, the number of hadith will cross two thousand in number.
- 5- Except for one or two cases, in all the specifications, the Sunnis have the same belief as we have.

- 6- Regarding Imam Mahdi's 'Vilayat' (mastership & authority), many of the leading Sunni figures have the same belief as we have.
- 7- Many of the outstanding Sunni scholars believe that Imam Mahdi (a.s) is the direct and immediate son of Imam Hassan Askari (a.s.).
- 8- Some of the Sunni scholars have narrated miracles and wonders for Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and in certain instances claimed to have met him.
- 9- Like other Islamic fundamentals, the matter of Mahdaviyat is mooted in the Sunni scholarly associations and cultural centers.
- 10- Numerous Sunni scholars have written independent books on Imam Mahdi (a.s.).
- 11- In the books written on Tafsir (interpretation), hadith (traditions), Kalam (theology), history, literature, etc... words have been expressed about Imam Mahdi (a.s.).
- 12- Considering the numerous recorded hadith and number of verses come down and interpreted in honor of Imam Mahdi (a.s.). No researcher can bear any doubt that belief in Imam Mahdi (a.s.) is a matter self-evident and obvious.
- 13- The mission of spirituality in spreading the belief in Mahdaviyat is very weighty. This is because spirituality is an organization belonging to Imam Mahdi (a.s.) and its existence, motive, power, influence, effects and services are all dependent on him.

All the fascinated Shiites and those awaiting his manifestation should strive hard in strengthening the matter of belief (in him); proving the authenticity (of Mahdaviyat); burying the doubts (about him); acquainting the society with their duties during the occultation era; holding in great honor the occasions related to him (a.s.) and other such related issues.

## *God's Appreciation by His Servant*

**Abstract:** *Fatemeh was born in a quiet large family, and also her family had not been in a good condition financially and is not now. She got cripple about 80 percent because of unintentional carelessness. But she continues her life and went to school till fifth grade. She can not use her hand but associate with her God by using her feet fingers!! Maybe it is necessary to read her words more than once.<sup>1</sup>*

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1- Farideh Mahdavi Damghani- scholar, researcher, writer and translator

**In the name of Allah**

**The Book of Gratitude for God's Blessings**

*O Good God!*

Even though I am not as well as I should be, and cannot walk, but I render Ye grace and thank Ye, for Ye have bestowed on me, a sound mind, O God...!

*O Good God!*

I thank Ye for having created me to live in this world; even though my life is very hard and difficult, and the conditions of my life are very arduous and strenuous, and so painful; but despite all that, I thank Ye, O God!

*O Good God!*

When Ye are with me and beside me, I feel tranquil and serene; and then, all the hardships, all the sorrow and sadness that I feel inside myself go away, for Ye are beside me, O God!

*O Good God!*

I thank Ye for the Blessing of not being a mentally retarded person, and that my mind is sound and not damaged. Thank Ye, O God...! Thank Ye for having granted me a highly intelligent mind; I thank Ye for all the Blessings Ye have bestowed on me, O God...!

*O Good God!*

I thank Ye for the kind family that Ye have given me! I render Ye thanks for my good and kind-hearted father and mother, for my good brothers, and my sweet sister. For my kind brother-in-law and my kind sister-in-law. O God! I render Ye thanks for this good family that Ye have granted me!

*O Good God!*

I love Ye very very much! O, I love Ye dearly and so tenderly...! I have good, sweet moments with Ye; I laugh with Ye, I cry with Ye, and I share all my pains and sufferings with Ye, and tell Ye about all my sorrows, for Ye are my One and Only Companion Who listens to all I have to say, O God...

*O Good God!*

I wish to call Ye incessantly; moment after moment, and to repeat: God! God! God! I enjoy calling Your Name, and I know that, Ye too, enjoy hearing me call Ye in such way; when I call Ye, my soul becomes serene and calm, for Your Name causes me to feel serenity inside my being, O God...

*O Good God!*

I render Ye thanks for having giving me the necessary power to draw with my feet. Ye have given me, indeed, something to be proud of, in front of the others, and be proud of myself. Thank Ye... Thank Ye for all these great Blessings Ye have bestowed on me, O God...

*O Good God!*

If I have been so successful in my life, and proud of myself, in front of the others, it is solely because of Ye! O God! For it is Ye indeed, Who have made me reach this success; it was Ye, indeed, Who made me be so gratified and happy! For that, I thank Ye warmly, O God!

*O Good God!*

I thank Ye, for Ye have given me everything! All the things that I have ever wanted and dreamed of, in my wildest dreams! Ye have given them all to me! It is all, by the Grace of Your Mercy! I thank Ye for all this kindness and benevolence Ye are showing me, O my Sweet God!



*O Good God!*

If I was able to show my real self to everyone, and show everyone, what my abilities and talents are, it is all because of Ye...! If I enjoy such ability and force [inside myself], it is because of Ye! For Ye are my Power and my driving Force, O God, for Ye are my only Power!

*O Good God!*

I love Ye very much! Not because Ye are God... I love Ye, because Ye are not only "my" Lord Creator, but also because it was Ye Who have placed everything meaningful inside my being... Ye flow inside my being, inside my veins, and each beat of my heart is made with Your Name! I have tatoood Your Beautiful Name inside my heart, forever...

*O Good God!*

I would like to reach all my dreams with Ye beside me! I would like to fly, high above in the sky, with Ye beside me! O God! I would like to become the happiest person on Earth, with Ye beside me! O God! With Ye beside me, I intend to transform this stony, rough world of ours, to become a beautiful Garden, full of blossoming, multicolored flowers...!

*O Good God!*

Without Ye, I am nothing... Without Ye, I am only a piece of flesh, unable to be of any use to anyone or anything. O God... The only thing I can do is to breathe. Nay! I only breathe, for the love of Ye. Only for the love of Ye, my heart beats. O God! Without Ye, I am cold and silent...

*O Good God!*

I wish I were able to transform this world of stone and gravel, which is made of stones and iron into the Garden of Paradise! And I wish I could have planted Love and Tenderness inside the hearts of every human being! And that their roots remained green and healthy forever, so that no one would talk about any absence of affection and love among humans...

*O Good God!*

My life resembles the sunset, O God... Its red color, for all my sorrows and sadness, its orange color, for all my pains, its yellow color, for all my cries and tears... O God! The sun of my existence shall never rise... However, somehow, I firmly believe that the sun of my existence will rise fully, and high above the sky...!

*O Good God!*

When I watch the dance of a butterfly, my heart becomes wishful! O God! I then wish to fly, just like butterflies! I wish to flap my wings, and whirl round over a prairie, full of flowers! While those flowers are waiting impatiently for the butterflies to come to them and sit on their petals, and whisper softly in their ears, about the sweet love romance...

*O Good God!*

When sunset is approaching, I sit near the window, with a guitar in my hand. A guitar which is now so familiar with me! Together, we play a song and our voices become so soft, that they echo high in the sky. And then, the sky, with all its glory begins to rain; and raindrops, for our sake, begin a banquet of togetherness... Ye see then, O dear God, that we are not as lonely as Ye may think we are...?

*O Good God!*

When I recite [the noble verses of] the Holy Quran, when I whisper to myself, Your sweet, delicate words, all my being is filled with Your Love...! O God! And with each passing moment, I feel Your Love and Affection, pervading all my inner being, becoming more and more profound, as if they were aflame...

*O Good God!*

Even though my life is so full of sufferings and hardships, somehow, with Ye being so near, I can bear everything with patience and endurance; for Ye are always, and each moment, beside me. Ye caress me with the

breeze, and with the help of raindrops, Ye erase and clean all my sorrows from my heart, and everything becomes transparent! And with the splendid light of the sun, Ye offer me the Light of Your Love...!

*O Good God!*

I thank Ye, for all the Blessings that Ye have bestowed on me, and I am indeed grateful to Ye and I appreciate all that, O my dear, Good God...

*Alhamdollēlāhi Rabbēl Ālamin,*

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