

# *Safinah*

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#### 4. *Safinah*

### **Editorial**

#### **Dear Readers,**

Welcome to our second *Safinah*, a new resource of academic perspective on the Islam religion, ideas, and teachings. *Safinah* is an international magazine within the field of the Islamic studies.

The main field of our studies is Islamic thoughts. Islam is attracting both scholarly and popular interests. It is this interest that has brought about the need for such magazines. The "Islamic studies" is a field of interdisciplinary studies. *Safinah* will in the course of its development, benefit from a greater group of writers and reviewers.

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\* Research articles: the academic researches in Islamic studies.

\* Research notes and bibliography: reports of literature reviews and progressive researches.

\* Essays and opinions: elementary, or revealing papers arising questions that serve as a light for further research, will be very helpful.

\* Poems and literary works: essays that use artistic means, to evoke insight, are welcome. Visual art works are also invited for publication.

Hamid Farnagh  
Editor-In-Chief

## **The Outcome of Introduction (The Characteristics of Fitrat)**

Reza Berenjkari\* (Ph.D)

***Abstract:** Fitrat which is given to the all mankind by God is the basis and foundation of Divine theology as the real gnosis of God would become something impossible without it.*

*In this essay the most important characteristics of fitrat by citing some Hadiths and Qur'anic verses are fully described of which are the following:*

*A way of gnosis and recognition of God, God's creation (not man's action), explicit, clear and unambiguous recognition, simple and not compound and heart-related. It is the only true gnosis and the basis of divine faith as well.*

***Key words:** Fitrat, Ma'refat (gnosis), Innate disposition, Innate knowledge of God, Hanif, Innate Ma'refat, Ilm (knowledge), A'rafa, Irfan*

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## Introduction

In the previous article, while denoting to the divine theology of the holy prophet and its process, it was said that the bases and fundamentals of divine theology is the innate knowledge of God, which is given to all mankind in the previous worlds, and this knowledge is present in all hearts and natures of all mankind in the present time. In this essay, the most important characteristics of Fitrat are discussed.

### **1. Fitrat (innate disposition) is a way of gnosis and recognition of God, and not belief or inclination**

As mentioned in the discussion on the verse of covenant, the outcome of introduction is the lofty gnosis and recognition of God. Hereunder, we shall set forth a few more verses and hadiths concerning this matter:

*"Then set your face upright for religion in the right state-the nature made by Allah in which He has made men; there is no altering of Allah's creation; that is the right religion, but most people do not know."* (Qur'an; 30: 30)

The holy verse calls man towards Din-e-hanif (religion in the right state)<sup>1</sup> and propounds this to be the Fitrat (innate disposition) made by God in which He has made men.

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<sup>1</sup> The term "hanif" in the verse, literally describes "din" (religion) or the addressee in the holy verse. Lexically, it should be said: "Hanif" which is derived from "Hanaf means inclination and tendency towards some side." "Hanif" has also been interpreted to mean the straight path and someone who has a tendency towards the religion in the right state or has a dislike towards the crooked religion. A Muslim is called a "Hanif" because he is inclined to the straight religion. In this regard, refer to Mu'jam Muqaiyes al-Lugha 2/110; Al-Sihah 4/1347; Mesbah al-Monir; page 154 and A'sas al-Balagha; page 97.

In the traditions, "Hanafiyah" has been interpreted as Fitrat (innate disposition), Ma'refat (gnosis) and Islam (submission). Under the verse of Fitrat, one tradition declares religion to mean Salat (prayers) and hanif to mean "inattention to the left

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Thereafter, it emphasizes that this Fitrat is unalterable, and it is the right and steadfast religion.

In the traditions which have come under the verse 31 of Sura Hajj the Imams have interpreted hanif as Fitrat:

Zorareh said: "I asked Imam Sadeqh (p.b.u.h) about what God states in Qur'an:

*"Then set your face upright for religion in the right state-the nature made by Allah in which He has made men"*

And asked: what is Hanafiyah?" He answered: "That is Fitrat."<sup>1</sup>

The narrator asked: "What is Hanafiyah?" Imam said: "That is the Fitrat on which is based people's creation. People's Fitrat is the gnosis of God."<sup>2</sup>

In the second tradition as well as few other traditions<sup>3</sup>, hanif has been interpreted as Fitrat and Fitrat has been described as the gnosis of God. In the books on hadith, numerous traditions have come down below the verse of Fitrat. Shaikh Hurr Aameli has compiled in his book "Esbat al-hoda" a chapter under the title:

That contains fifty-six traditions.

About the nature Fitrat, Imam Baqir (p.b.u.h) said: At the time when Allah took the covenant from man, concerning His Divinity, He made man based on monotheism. Narrator asked Imam: "Did Allah address men?" Imam lowered his blessed head and then said, "If it was not for this address, the human beings would not have recognized their Lord and Sustainer."

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and right". According to other traditions, religion means qibla (direction of prayer) and hanif means sincerity in worship and aloofness from polytheism. Refer to Al-Burhan 3/262.

<sup>1</sup> Ma'ani al-Akhbar; p.350, tradition 1.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Mahasin 1/375; tradition 824

<sup>3</sup> Kafi 2/12; tradition 4.



From the above hadith, it becomes obvious that the word "Fitrat" implies the very monotheistic nature which was acquired at the time of "covenant". Moreover, this covenant took place in the form of conversation, and if it was not for that gnosis (Ma'refat), nobody would have succeeded in recognizing his God and Sustainer.

About the verse of Fitrat, Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h) said:

"Allah has created the human beings on monotheism"<sup>1</sup>.

As it can be seen from the above traditions, in some instances Fitrat has been interpreted as the gnosis of God; while in other cases it is described as monotheism. It must be said that gnosis of God and monotheism are the same, and God has uniquely introduced (defined) Himself to the people.

In the preceding tradition of Zorareh, too, it has come down that:

"At the time when Allah took covenant from the people concerning His recognition, He made them on the basis of monotheism."

This is one of the differences between innate gnosis and philosophical recognition. Most of the logical reasoning about God's existence only proves the existence of God, whereas for proving monotheism, other proofs and reasoning are necessary.

It is worthy to mention that in the Sunni books, too, Fitrat has been interpreted as "gnosis of God", "Din (religion) of God" and "Islam".<sup>2</sup>

The verses of Qur'an too explicitly mention that there exists no doubt and uncertainty about God's existence, and if the

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<sup>1</sup> Kafi 2/12, tradition 3. Also, refer to Kafi 2/13, tradition 5; Tauhid-Saduq, page 329; tradition 5 & 6 and Al-Mahasin 1/375, tradition 823.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Durrul Manthur, vol. 6, PP. 492-4.

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people were asked who is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, they shall reply: God!

*"Their Apostles said: Is there doubt about Allah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth?"* (Qur'an; 14: 10)

*"And if you ask them who created them, they would certainly say: Allah"* (Qur'an; 43:87)<sup>1</sup>.

The honorable Prophet said:

"Every born child is born on the basis of his Fitrat, and by Fitrat is meant his gnosis that Allah is his Creator. And the verse: *"If you ask them who created them, they would certainly say: Allah"* gives hint of this very matter."

As can be observed, the verses and traditions reveal that, Fitrat which is the fundamental of all divine religions is the gnosis and monotheism of God and this gnosis is the outcome of God's introduction.

Thus, Fitrat is not belief in God. This is because- considering that the present world is a place for trial and examination, and considering that man on the one hand possesses carnal desires, and on the other hand possesses will-power and authority- **we cannot say that all the human beings necessarily believe in God.** This is in spite that man bears a lofty Ma'refat (gnosis) from God, where the reminding and propagation of the evangelists may alert him or even encourage him to have faith.

Therefore, no more remains for this question that why some people in this world deny the existence of God. This is because Fitrat is Ma'refat (gnosis), and the authority of confession and denial has been entrusted to man where reward and

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<sup>1</sup> Also refer to the holy verses of Qur'an 31:25,29:63, and 39:38

punishment springs from this very authority! Aside from the fact that this very Fitrat remains concealed by means of other factors, the reality is hidden before man. This point will be elaborated in the chapter concerning "Submission and faith".

Another point which we can conclude, from the above discussion, is that Fitrat is not "inclination" toward God. In spite of this, inasmuch as man perceives the Merciful, Compassionate, Munificent, Gracious and Graceful God with his divine Fitrat, he becomes inclined towards God and loves Him. Thus, inclination (to God) comes after Fitrat. As such, the one who witnesses his God in the light of Fitrat, submits to Him only, and none others.

Basically, true love can be found in the true lover, and everything other than Him is carnal desire and egotism although they may be expressed in beautiful words. The one who reckons figurative expression to be the castle of truth is far from truth:

Verily, the one who possesses carnal desires, arrogance, vanity, obstinacy and darkness does not have any inclination towards God. Thus, the question why some human beings have no tendency towards God is irrelevant. This matter will be elaborated in the stage of "submission".

Another conclusion which we can derive from the above discussion is that Fitrat is not "potentiality for knowing God". Basically, the power or potentiality for knowing God will be given to man only when he is unaware of his God where in this case, he will be given this power so as to make him recognize his God. Therefore, considering that the Ma'refat (gnosis) of God is present in man (although in simple and concealed form) at its highest level, the question of potentiality does not arise at

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all since the outcome of this potentiality would be the achievement of something which is already acquired.

However, if it means that man possesses the ability to remember the original innate gnosis through the reminding of the reminders and divine grace or is capable of preparing the ground through spiritual endeavors and sincere worship for knowing God or is able to argue and dispute by means of extroversive and psychical signs in proving God, this matter is correct and indeed man possesses such powers. However, these have no relation with Fitrat which is the fundamental of religion and should not be utilized for explaining and justifying Fitrat.

## **2. Innate Ma'refat (gnosis) is God's creation and not man's action:**

In numerous verses of the Qur'an, God Exalted be He, has introduced guidance as one of His exclusive acts where nobody has any share in it.

These verses declare that the real guidance is from God only:

*"Surely Ours is it to show the way"* (Qur'an; 92: 12)

*"Surely you cannot guide whom you love, but Allah guides whom He pleases"* (Qur'an; 28:57)

*"To make them walk in the right way is not incumbent on you, but Allah guides aright whom He pleases"* (Qur'an; 2:272).

*"Surely the guidance of Allah, that is the (true) guidance"* (Qur'an; 6: 71 and Qur'an; 2: 120).

*"Surely the (true) guidance is the guidance of Allah"* (Qur'an; 3:73)

In the old and new testaments too, such meanings concerning the gnosis of God can be found. As a specimen, we narrate here a short expression:

"God has introduced (defined) His Self".<sup>1</sup>

In numerous invocations and traditions too, the gnosis of God has explicitly been introduced as God's deed and act where none have any role in it.

In these traditions it has come down that the Exalted God, has not kept at man's disposal any means for acquiring the Ma'refat (gnosis) of God. Man in no way is responsible for acquiring the gnosis of God. Rather, God has made it incumbent upon Himself to introduce (define) Himself and it is for man to submit before Him and obey His commands. On the Day of Judgment too, God shall argue with the people on the basis of this very gifted Ma'refat (gnosis).

These matters have come down in the traditions which we narrate as follows:

Someone asked Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.), "Who has created Ma'refat (gnosis)? Imam (p.b.u.h.) said: It is among the things made by God and people have no share in it."<sup>2</sup>

In another place, Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) said:

"It is not the right of Allah on His creatures that they should know Him. Rather, it is the right of His creatures on God to make known Himself. But once God makes known Himself to His creatures, then it is His right over His creatures that they accept Him"<sup>3</sup>.

Imam Reza (p.b.u.h) was asked: "Do people have any role in the gnosis of God?"

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<sup>1</sup> Old Testament; Psalms, chapter 9 / page 16

<sup>2</sup> Kafi 1/163

<sup>3</sup> Kafi 1/164

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Imam (p.b.u.h.) replied: "No."<sup>1</sup>

Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) said:

"Allah has not made the human beings responsible vis-à-vis His gnosis and has also not kept at their disposal any means for acquiring His gnosis".<sup>2</sup>

Amir ul-Momenin (p.b.u.h.) was asked: How did you recognize your God? He replied: By that through which He made Himself recognized by me.<sup>3</sup>

Narrator says: I heard Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) saying: "Every affair of Allah is strange except that he has finalized the argument upon you through His introduction"<sup>4</sup>

Narrator says: I inquired from Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.): Is there any means with the people by which they can acquire the Ma'refat (gnosis)? The Imam (p.b.u.h.) replied: "No." I inquired further: Have they been made responsible for acquiring this gnosis? Imam (p.b.u.h.) replied: "No, not so. Rather, it is for Allah to apprise first."<sup>5</sup>

Amir ul-Momenin (p.b.u.h.) said:

"Recognize Allah through Allah Himself and the Messenger of Allah through his messenger ship (i.e., through the message delivered by him), and recognize those who have been vested with divine authority through their righteous commands, their justice and their good deeds."<sup>6</sup>

"O the One who manifests Himself by means of Himself."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bihar al-Anwar 5/221

<sup>2</sup> Al-Mahasin 1/315; tradition 624.

<sup>3</sup> Kafi 1/86. Also refer to page 162; tradition 1 and page 164; tradition 4.

<sup>4</sup> Same reference; page 163

<sup>5</sup> Same reference; page 163

<sup>6</sup> Kafi 1/85.

<sup>7</sup> Dua-e-Saba; Mafatih al- Jinan

### **3. Innate Ma'refat (gnosis) is an explicit and clear gnosis; not an ambiguous recognition**

As mentioned in the first chapter, God, Exalted be He, gifted His real recognition to all the human beings in the world of pre-existence where He took confession from them regarding His Divinity. While introducing Himself, God, Exalted be He, did so in a very holy and lustrous sphere.

And all the human beings witnessed Him by the divine eyes in such a way that there remained no doubt and uncertainty whatsoever. The intensity and lucidity of this gnosis was of such magnitude that it is recalled in the traditions by such names as "observation"<sup>1</sup> and "vision"<sup>2</sup>. Verily, this observation does not mean looking by the physical eyes nor does it mean the incarnation of God.

In this world too, God causes the human beings to remember this innate gnosis via various channels. However, the degree of remembrance varies from person to person and usually; the Ma'refat (gnosis) is not manifested in its exact original form. Rather, it is partly manifested where in this case too, it is the Act of God. At the time of remembrance and manifestation, it is the All-Generous God who converts this innate gnosis from its "simple" level to the "compound gnosis"

It is worthy of mention that although man and man's authority have no role in the original compound gnosis and that the manifestation of innate gnosis is God's Act, nevertheless man's authority has some sort of an effect in this matter. This is because if man, after remembrance, (which is the moment of finalization of argument) submits himself before God and turns devout, God too shall gift him with a

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Mahasin 1/376

<sup>2</sup> Tauhid-Saduq; page 117

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much higher divine gnosis so much so that He may even for a few moments manifest in his heart the exact observation and vision of the preceding worlds. This indeed is the loftiest level of divine and pure gnosis.

Thus, man's will and authority is not effective over the original gnosis and its remembrance. Rather, God bestows man with different levels of Ma'refat (gnosis) depending upon his authority and selection of path.

This matter reveals the role which will-power, worship and ethics can play in gnosis. Thus if (gnosis of God) is attributed to man and is placed in the domain of man's voluntary actions, it is because of this very reason. This matter will be pursued in the topic on "Submission".

### **4. Before getting reminded, innate Ma'refat (gnosis) is "simple" and not "compound"**

Man is unaware and neglectful of the innate gnosis. When we say that the innate gnosis has turned "compound" it means that man has become heedful of the innate gnosis.

As a result of man's involvement in daily affairs, man often tends to neglect God and this is divine wisdom. Basically, the world is a place of deceit where people tend to become heedless of God and if it was not so, the world could not have become the means of trial and examination and the worship of God could not have held such significance which could drive people in reaching the position of "Khalifa tullah" (representative of God) and gaining proximity to God. In spite of this, following to the reminding of the Prophets and divine evangelists, the human beings become aware of the divine Ma'refat (gnosis) and the argument is finalized for them. Thereafter, they either submit themselves before God and



choose the path of devotion or follow their carnal desires and select the path of disobedience.

### **5. The focal point of innate gnosis is the heart, not mind**

The innate gnosis is God's creation, and man's intellect and conception have no role in this gnosis. In other words, God, without any intermediary (man's conception and mental activity) has introduced Himself to man's mind and soul. This subject is remembered in the traditions as "gnosis and heart-related vision". We set forth below some other traditions with respect to this matter:

Amir ul-Momenin, Ali (p.b.u.h) was asked: Do you see your God while worshipping Him? The Imam replied, "I am not the one who worships God whom I do not see."

He was asked: "How do you see Him?"

Amir ul-Momenin (p.b.u.h.) said: "Eyes do not perceive Him with the faculty of sight; but hearts see Him through the realities of faith."<sup>1</sup>

Imam Baqir (p.b.u.h) was asked: Whom do you worship? He replied: The Exalted God. They asked: Have you ever seen Him? Imam replied: "No eyes see Him with the faculty of sight but the hearts see Him through the realities of faith."<sup>2</sup>

Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h) was asked: Will the believers see God on the Day of Judgment? Imam said: "Yes! They have seen Him even before the Day of Judgment." He was asked: When? Imam replied: When they were addressed, "Am I not your God?" They replied yes! Thereafter, Imam kept silence for a few moments and then said: Verily, the believers see Allah in this world i.e., before the Day of Judgment. Aren't you seeing

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<sup>1</sup> Kafi 1/98, tradition 6; Nahjul-Balagha: Sermon 179, page 258

<sup>2</sup> Kafi 1/97, tradition 5; Tauhid-Saduq, page 108

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Allah at this very moment.....seeing by heart is not the same as seeing by the faculty of sight.<sup>1</sup>

### **6. Innate gnosis is the only true gnosis and the basis of divine faith**

In the traditions mentioned about the verses of Covenant and Fitrat, the point worthy of notice is that if there had been no such innate gnosis, nobody would have recognized his God, Creator and Sustainer.

From such interpretations it becomes obvious that Fitrat is the basis and foundation of divine theology and without it the real gnosis of God would impossible.

Basically, the real gnosis of a thing is the recognition of the essence of that thing, and the mental recognitions can not be construed as real gnosis.<sup>2</sup>

In some traditions, too, the heart-related gnosis has been reckoned to be the basis of faith:

"Belief means recognition with the heart, acknowledgment with the tongue and action with the limbs".<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Tauhid-Saduq; page,117

<sup>2</sup> Abu Halal Askari says: The difference between Ma'refat (gnosis) and Ilm (knowledge) is that Ma'refat in its strict sense is (derived) from Ilm and it means knowledge about the essence of a thing in such manner that it is distinct from other things. (Al Furuq al-Loghaviyah/62) According to this explanation, Ilm comprises general recognition as well as personal recognition. But, Ma'refat applies to personal (specific) recognition only.

Faiyumi reckons Ma'refat to be sensory recognition perhaps in the sense that sensory recognition is personal recognition and not general recognition where the essence of a thing is perceived and not its general conception

(Al Mesbah al-Monir)

Fars-ibn-Zakariyyah says: A'rafa in reality has had two meanings: The first, "Two things coming in.

<sup>3</sup> Nahjul-Balagha: Sermon 227I; page 508

Gnosis is a root, and faith is its branch.<sup>1</sup>

I bless you, I bless you with gnosis.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bihar al-Anwar 3/14

<sup>2</sup> Bihar al-Anwar 3/14

## Umma Abiha, Fatima Zahra

Nahla Garavi- Na'ini\*

**Abstract:** *In this essay the writer tries to state a brief biography of Fatima (peace be upon her), the daughter of the holy Prophet. The article starts with introducing the titles which Fatima (p.b.u.h) is called upon by them. Then, the writer describes some of the significant events of her life such as the demise of her parents, her marriage to Imam Ali, her wedding celebration, and offspring of her marriage. The injustice and oppression which Fatima experienced after the demise of the holy Prophet is explained by the writer by referring to the usurpation of the Fadak village (Prophet's inheritance for Fatima) and the story of the burning of the door of Fatima's house and also miscarrying her child. Her death, its time and the secret of her burial is also discussed. Looking into some Hadiths, the meanings of some of Fatima's names are referred to as well. In this essay, some of the merits of Fatima like her devotion to Allah, her contentment and forbearance are described. The Fatima's book (Mus'haf) and her speeches and sermons are the final issues to this article.*

**Key words:** *Umma Abiha, Fatima Zahra, Hazrat Fatima, Fatima's biography, Fatima's marriage, Fatima's names, Fadak, Fatima's book (Mus'haf)*

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\* Professor of Tarbiat Modares University

Fatima (peace be upon her) is daughter of the holy Messenger of Allah, Muhammad Ibn Abdullah (peace be upon him and his progeny) and Khadijah bint al-Khuwayld (peace be upon her). She was born on the 20<sup>th</sup> of Jumadial-akhar, 5 AH (the fifth year of the hijra)<sup>1</sup>.

Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h) said: "In the presence of Allah, she is known by nine names, which are Fatima, Siddiqah, Mubaraka, Tahera, Zakiya, Radiya, Mohaddatha and Zahra."<sup>2</sup>

Abu Ja'far Qomi<sup>3</sup> has stated other names for her: "Batool, Hisna, Harah, Sayyidah, Azra, Haura, Maryam, Kubra, Sadiqah, Nuriya, Samiwiya wal Haniya". Her epithets are as: "Umma al-Hasan (Hasan's mother), Umma ul-A'emma (mother of Imams) and Umm Abiha (father's mother)."<sup>4</sup>

It would take books to fully describe the life of the holy Fatima. Here, we will note some of the significant characteristics of her life. When she was five years old, her mother passed away. Fatima bint Asad (the wife of the Prophet's uncle and mother of Imam Ali undertook to care for her. They migrated with Imam Ali and other Muslims from Mecca to Medina. After the death of Fatima bint Asad, the holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) entrusted Umma Salamah (his second wife) with her care.

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Many men, Abu Bakr and Umar among them, asked the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) for Fatima's hand in marriage. However, the Prophet always declined, saying: "I am waiting for the order of God." Abu Bakr and Umar encouraged Ali ibn Abi Talib

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Kafi*, I, p. 461, section on the birth of Zahra.

<sup>2</sup> *Bihar ul-Anwar*, vol.43, p. 10; Elal ash-Sharaee, p. 178; *Dala'il al-Imamat*, p.

<sup>3</sup> Muhammad bin Husain, known as Abu Ja'far, writer and poet residing in Nishabor.

<sup>4</sup> *Bihar ul-Anwar*, Vol. 43, p. 16.

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(p.b.u.h.) to ask for her hand, but he felt inadequate to ask the Prophet about marriage, for he was a poor man. At last, an angel descended and told the Prophet: "O' Messenger of Allah, my God has ordered the marriage of light with light.

The Prophet asked: "Who are they?"

The angel answered: "Fatima and Ali"<sup>1</sup>

Thus, after the battle of Badr, in 2 A.H. the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) gave Fatima to Ali in marriage. The simple and modest dowry was provided through the sale of Ali's shield.<sup>2</sup>

Regarding the wedding celebration, the Prophet told Ali: "Prepare a good party for this wedding celebration." He then added: "We have meat and bread, you provide the dates and oil." The meal was prepared: Ali invited everyone to take part his wedding party (p.b.u.h.). The guests were many and the food seemed not sufficient. Ali was embarrassed and worried, but the Prophet told him: "Oh Ali, do not worry, Allah will increase it!"

"This very thing occurred; everyone ate and the food was sufficient for all."<sup>3</sup>

Hasan, Husain, Umma Kulthum and Zaynab (p.b.u.t.) were the offspring of that blessed marriage. Thus, the descendents of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) came only from the line of Fatima (p.b.u.h.).

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> month of the year 11 A.H., the blessed soul of the Messenger of Allah ascended into heaven, and a world of sorrow engulfed Fatima (p.b.u.h.). Shi'i scholars and most knowledgeable Sunni authors have written about the injustice

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Kafi, Vol. I, p. 461, section regarding the birth of Zahra; Dala'il al-Imamat, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Kafi, Vol. 5, p. 377, chapter of marriage, section regarding the marriage of the Commander of the faithful with Fatima (p.b.u.h.).

<sup>3</sup> Amali of Shaykh al-Toosi, Vol. 2, p. 26; Rayaheen al-Sharia, Vol. I, p. 95; al-Tabaqat al-Kubra, vol. 8, p. 20, accounts of the dowry of Zahra (p.b.u.h.).

and oppression which Fatima (p.b.u.h.) experienced after the death of Prophet (p.b.u.h.). In these accounts, it is told that the Prophet, during his lifetime, gave Fadak<sup>1</sup> to Fatima. Property remained in her hands for three years before his death. At the beginning of the reign of the first caliph, Abu Bakr, Fadak was taken from her. When Fatima asked for return of Fadak, Abu Bakr formulated a Hadith from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) saying:

"We, the Prophets, do not leave inheritance; all that we leave behind is for charity!"

No one of the Prophet's companions had heard of, or transmitted this Hadith previously; only Abu Bakr claimed it to be a Hadith from the holy Prophet. Thus, the authenticity of that Hadith has been refuted from several aspects.<sup>2</sup>

Tabari<sup>3</sup> has documented that Urwah narrated from Aisha<sup>4</sup> as below:

"Fatima and Abbas (the Prophet's uncle) went to Abu Bakr and asked about their inheritance from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.). They asked for Fadak and the Prophet's portion from Khaybar. Abu Bakr told them: "But I heard from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.), "We, the Prophets, do not leave inheritance; all that we leave is for charity." Then he said: Muhammad's family is using this property, and I do not do what the Prophet did not do."

Urwah said: "Then Fatima went into isolation and did not speak to Abu Bakr again, until she died."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Fadak is a village near Medina which has many grands. Since the peace treaty of Khaybar, half of the village belonged to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.).

<sup>2</sup> Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 43, p. 182; Riyaaheen al-Sharia, Vol. 2, pp. 2-16.

<sup>3</sup> Muhammad ibn Jarir ibn Yazid at-Tabari (Abi Ja'far), an interpreter and reciter of the holy Qur'an, and jurisprudent, was born in Tabarestan in 224 or 225 AH. He died in 839 AH. He has written several books on Qur'an Commentary and history.

<sup>4</sup> The Prophet's third wife, and daughter of Abu Bakr.

## 24. Safinah

Shia scholars and some eminent Sunnis have recorded the story of the burning of the door of Fatima's house. Ibn Abd Rabbah<sup>2</sup>, of the Maliki School<sup>3</sup>, revealed in his book that Abu Bakr sent Umar ibn Khattab (later the second caliph) to receive an oath of allegiance (to the caliphate of Abu Bakr) from Ali and others in Fatima's house. He was to come out of the house and, thus, Umar set fire to Fatima's house.<sup>4</sup>

Tabari, in his Tarikh, wrote: "Umar came to Ali's house. Talha, Zubayr and a group of Muhajireen (early Immigrants to Medina) were there. Umar said: "I swear God that I will burn down the house if you do not come out."<sup>5</sup> He also wrote: "Ali, Zobair, and those who were with them in Fatima's house refused to swear allegiance."<sup>6</sup>

Ibn Qotaibah Dinvari<sup>7</sup> has written: "Some of the resisters [to swearing allegiance to Abu Bakr] were gathered around Ali at Fatima's house. Abu Bakr sent Umar to bring them. Umar went to door of Fatima's house and shouted: "Come out and swear allegiance to the caliph of the Messenger of Allah. If you do not heed this, I swear God, in whose hand is my life, that I will burn this house and whoever is in it."

They said to Umar:

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Tabari, al-Tarikh, Vol. 2, p. 104, part 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ahamad ibn Abd ar-Rabbah ibn Habb ibn Had\_r ibn Sal\_m al-Qurtab\_(Ab\_Amr) was a scholar, man of letters and poet. He was born in 246 AH in Qurtabah and died there in 328 AH. He has written books such as al-Iqd al-Far\_d and Diw\_n Sh'ir among others.

<sup>3</sup> One of the Sunni schools of thought.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Iqd al-Farid, Vol. 3, p. 63 and Vol. 2, p. 443.

<sup>5</sup> Tarikh, Tabari, Vol. 2, p. 101.

<sup>6</sup> Tarikh, Tabari, Vol. 2, p. 103.

<sup>7</sup> Abu Muahmmad Abdullah ibn Moslem ibn Qutaybah was born in 213 AH in Kufa. Abu Muhammd was a writer on the science of language, syntax and style of the Quran, a Qur'an commentator, poet and jurisprudent.



"Fatima, the daughter of the holy Prophet is in the house." He said, "I will do that, even if the daughter of the Prophet is in the house."<sup>1</sup>

Ibn Abil-Hadid<sup>2</sup> has also reported: "Umar, and some men from the Ansar and Muhajireen went to Fatima's house and said: 'I swear the One in whose hand is my life, if you don't come out and swear allegiance, I will burn the house and all who are in it.' Fatima died while she was very angry with Umar".<sup>3</sup>

Shahrestani<sup>4</sup>, in his book, quoted the speeches of Nazzam<sup>5</sup>, a high-rank Mu'tazilite,<sup>6</sup> who said:

"Umar ibn Khattab injured Fatima so hard that she miscarried her child. Umar shouted: "Burn the house with everyone in it!"<sup>7</sup>

Umar Ria Kahhalah<sup>8</sup> has also mentioned the usurpation of Fadak and the burning of Fatima's house in his book.<sup>9</sup>

Allama Amini<sup>1</sup> quotes this narration from the book "*Imam Ali*" by Abdul-Fatah Abd ul-Maqsood<sup>2</sup> and has included, at the end, the words of Fatima:

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Imamat was-Siyasat, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Abdul-Hmid ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Husain ibn Abdul-Hadad Mad\_yini was a scholar and historian. He was born in 586 AH and died in 655 AH. His most important work is Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah.

<sup>3</sup> Sharh Nahj ul-Balaghah, Vol. 2, p. 120.

<sup>4</sup> Abdul-Fath Muhammad ibn Abul-Qasim Abd al-Karim was a Jurisprodent, expert in religion and Ash'ari scholar who was born in 479 AH and died in 548 AH. His books are usually anti-Shia. He is the author of al-Milal wan-Nihal.

<sup>5</sup> Ibrahim ibn Sayar Balkhi Basri, well-known as Nazzym, was one of the greatest scholastic scholars, an orator, scientist and theologian; the author of more than one hundred books. He died in 221 AH. He was anti-Shi'a.

<sup>6</sup> A school of thought emphasizing free will and denying the predetermination man's life.

<sup>7</sup> Al-Milal wal-Nihal, p. 57.

<sup>8</sup> Author of A'lqm an-Nisa wa Mu'jam al-Mu'alifin; contemporary.

<sup>9</sup> A'lām an-Nisa, Vol. 4, pp. 114-118.

## 26. Safinah

"O' father, Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.), what difficulties have we received from the son of Khattab<sup>3</sup> and the son of Abi Quhafah?"<sup>4</sup>

### Her Merits

Many scholars have written books about the attributes and virtues of Hadrat Fatima (p.b.u.h.). The truth is that her attributes are so numerous that it is not possible to describe them all. Let it be said that Fatima (p.b.u.h.) is the mother of eleven Imams who have been chosen by Allah. The following touches a few areas that show a small portion of reality of the life of this jewel of existence.

### The Messenger of Allah and Fatima (p.b.u.t.)

Ibn Athir<sup>5</sup> and Tabarani have quoted from Imam Ali that the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said to Fatima:

"Allah becomes angry when you become angry, and Allah is satisfied when you are satisfied."<sup>6</sup>

Shaikh Saduq and Majlisi have recorded several versions of this Hadith.<sup>7</sup>

Ibn Athir has written that Ali asked the Prophet (p.b.u.h.): "Do you love me more or Fatima?" He said:

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<sup>1</sup> Abd al-Husain al-Amini resided in Najaf and was a contemporary Shi'a scholar. He was born in 1320 AH in Tabriz, Iran, died in 1390 AH in Tehran, and was buried in Najaf, Iraq. He wrote al-Ghadir.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Ghadir, Vol. 3, p. 102.

<sup>3</sup> Umar

<sup>4</sup> Abu Bakr

<sup>5</sup> The epithet of several scholars who resided in Iraq and Syria. The most prominent was Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Sa\_d, who died in 359 AH. One of his books is Tanb\_h al-Alb\_bf\_Fadl al-Ir\_b.

<sup>6</sup> Usd ul-Ghabah, Vol. 5, p. 522; al-Mujam ul-Kabeer, Vol. 22, p. 402.

<sup>7</sup> Uyun Akhbar ar-Rida, Vol. 2, p. 29, Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 19, p. 43.

"Fatima is more beloved than you and you are dearer than her."<sup>1</sup>

Zayd ibn Arqam said: "the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said to Ali, Fatima, Hasan, and Husain:

"Whoever is your enemy, I am his enemy! And whoever is your friend, I am also his friend."<sup>2</sup>

Ibn Abbas said: "Whenever the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) was leaving for a trip, the last one he goes to for saying goodbye was Fatima (p.b.u.h.) and whenever he returned, she was the first person who received his greetings. If Fatima's position before Allah had not been so high, he would not have acted like that."<sup>3</sup>

Ibn Abbas and others have related that the holy Prophet drew four lines on the ground and said: "Do you know what these lines are?" The people said: "Allah and his Prophet (p.b.u.h.) know better." He then said: "the best women in Heaven are Khadijah bint Khuwayld, Fatima bint Muhammad, Maryam bint Imran, and Asiyah bint Muzahim."

The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) has also praised Fatima and her dear mother, Khadija (p.b.u.t.), in other speeches, such as the ones in which he said:

"The best women in the Heaven are four: Fatima, Khadijah, Maryam, and Asiya."<sup>4</sup>

Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) has quoted from his forefathers that the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said: "On the Judgment Day, a caller from inside the throne will announce: "O' people, Close your eyes,

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<sup>1</sup> Usd ul-Ghabah, Vol. 5, p. 522.

<sup>2</sup> Usd ul-Ghabah, Vol. 5, p. 522.

<sup>3</sup> Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 43, p. 40; al-Isti'ab, Vol. 4, p.1895; Usd al-Ghabah, Vol. 5, p. 52.

<sup>4</sup> al-Isti'ab, Vol. 4, p. 1895; al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer, Vol. 22, p. 402; Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 43, p. 51; Rayaheen ash-Sharia, Vol. 1, p. 218.

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for the daughter of the dearest to Allah (i.e., the Prophet) is going to her castle..."<sup>1</sup>

The holy Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) many times said, in similar ways: "Fatima (p.b.u.h.) is part of me, the light of my eyes, and the fruit of my heart. Whoever harms her, harms me, and whoever makes her happy, makes me happy. She will be the first of my family to join me."

Regarding Fatima (p.b.u.h.), her husband and children, he said: "O' Lord, you know that these are my household, and the dearest people to me. Thus, love whoever loves them; and be enemy to whoever is their enemy..."<sup>2</sup>

Umar ibn Khattab quotes the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) as saying:

"Fatima, 'Ali, Hasan, Husain will be in the highest Heaven, in a white dome with the Throne of the Beneficent as its ceiling."<sup>3</sup>

### **Zahra's Divine Position**

Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) said: "If Amir ul-Momenin had not married Zahra (p.b.u.h.), there would have been no one, on earth, equal to her until the Day of Judgment."<sup>4</sup>

He also said: Fatima has been called Zahra because the Glorified Allah created her from His Glorious Light. When it shone, all the heavens and the earth were bright with that light and the angels' eyes were closed, and they bowed down before Allah. Then they said, "O' Our Lord and Master, what is this light?"

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<sup>1</sup> Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 43, p. 62; Usd ul-Ghabah, Vol.5, p. 523, from Imam Ali (p.b.u.h.); al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer, Vol. 22, p. 400, from Imam Ali (p.b.u.h.).

<sup>2</sup> Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 43, pp. 23, 24, 39; A'lam an-Nisa, Vol. 4, p. 125.

<sup>3</sup> Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 43, p. 76.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Kafi, Vol. 1, p. 461; Kitab al-Hujjat, section regarding Zahra's birth; 'Ilal ash-Sharaee', p. 178.

Allah revealed to them, "It is a light from My Light, which is in Heaven. I took it from My Glory, and put it in the lines of one of my messengers, who is the best from this light, Imams will come, and who will be steadfast in obedience to My Commands."<sup>1</sup>

Someone asked Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) that why Fatima was named Zahra. He replied: "Because, when she was standing in prayer, her light shone for those in Heaven, the way the stars shine for those on earth."<sup>2</sup>

Yunes ibn Zabiyan<sup>3</sup> has quoted from Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.), "Do you know what the exegesis of Fatima is?"

I said: "O' my Master. Please tell me why she was named Fatima!"

The Imam said: "She is preserved idol worship."<sup>4</sup>

Imam Sadiq has also stated:

"Fatima was called Muhaddathah because angels descended from Heaven and addressed her (as they addressed Mary): 'O' Fatima, God chose you and purified you; and chose you from among all women."<sup>5</sup>

Hazrat Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) said: "O' Fatima, do you know why you have been named Fatima?" Then he himself added;

"Because your followers and you will be saved from the fire."<sup>6</sup>

Ibn Abil-Hadid said, "Ali's marriage to Zahra occurred after Allah, with the angels as witnesses, married them (in Heaven)."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 43, pp. 12, 14, 15.

<sup>2</sup> Elal ash-Sharaee', p. 181.

<sup>3</sup> Muhammad Baqir ibn Muhammad Taqi Majlisi. [Nahla needs to translate the rest of this.]

<sup>4</sup> Dala'il al-Imamat, p. 10.

<sup>5</sup> Dala'il al-Imamat, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> Ilal ash-Sharaee', p. 179.

### **Zahra's Devotion to Allah**

Imam Hasan (p.b.u.h.) said:

"There is no one more devoted to Allah than Fatima (p.b.u.h.). She stood [in prayer] until her feet swelled."

He also said:

"My mother worshipped [Allah] at her prayer niche (*Mihrab*) a great deal and I heard her praying for all the Believers, except herself..."<sup>2</sup>

### **Her Contentment and Forbearance**

Whenever a needy person went to the door of Fatima's house, she gave him (her) something, even if it was the last bit of bread for her family's nourishment, while they remained hungry. Mijlisi quotes a tradition from Jabar ibn 'Abdullah,<sup>3</sup> saying: "One day, the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) asked: "Why is your face pale?" she replied: "O' Messenger of Allah, it is from hunger." The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said: "O' my God, please remove her hunger and take away her difficulties." Jabar said: "By Allah, as soon as his prayer was finished, Fatima's (p.b.u.h.) face fills with color and, after that day, she never suffered from hunger."<sup>4</sup>

Once, the holy Prophet and the people were waiting for Bilal, the mu'adhdhin. When he arrived, the holy Prophet asked: "Why are you late?" Bilal said: "I went to Fatima to pay her what I owed her. She was grinding flour and her son,

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<sup>1</sup> Sharh Nahj ul-Balaghah, Vol. 9, p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 43, pp. 76, 82; *Rayaheen ash-Sharia'*, Vol. 1, p. 179.

<sup>3</sup> Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Num\_n Baghdadi, known as ibn Muallim, was born in 336 AH and died in 413 AH. He was a teacher of sheikh Toosi and Seyed Murteza. Muf\_d is a well-known Shi'a Jurisprudent who has written about 200 books.

<sup>4</sup> Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 43, p. 62.

Hasan, was near the mill crying. I asked her what I should do, to pick up the child, or grind the flour?" she replied: "I'll take care of the child." So I took over the grinding and that is why I am late." The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said: "You were merciful to her and Allah be merciful to you."<sup>1</sup>

The heavy house work, such as grinding flour and making bread injured Zahra's hand. Ali (p.b.u.h.) told her to go to the holy Prophet and ask for a servant. Fatima went to the Prophet. She felt ashamed and did not say anything for a while, but finally made her request. The holy Prophet said: "So that your virtues may not diminish, I will teach you an invocation that will both help you and bring you reward (Thawab)." He then taught her the Fatima's Invocation.<sup>2</sup>

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Salman said: "Fatima was grinding oats and Husain was crying because he was hungry. I said: "O' Daughter of the Prophet! Why do you not ask Fizzah<sup>3</sup> to help you?"

She replied: "The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said that housework should be divided such that Fizzah works one day, and I work the next day. Fizzah worked yesterday."<sup>4</sup>

From what has been said, it is clear that the Prophet (p.b.u.h.), despite his love for his daughter, and the fact that he was ruler of the Muslims, with all their wealth and means under his control, gave nothing to Zahra (p.b.u.h.). Instead, he encouraged her piety and taught her to praise Allah, and she accepted that. She obeyed the commands of Allah, and was satisfied with

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<sup>1</sup> Bihar ul-Anwar, vol. 43, p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> Man la-Yahdarat al-Faqih, Vol. 1, p. 320.

<sup>3</sup> The virtuous woman who helped Hadrat Fatima (p.b.u.h.). Her story is told in a later Chapter.

<sup>4</sup> Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 43, p. 28.

## 32. Safinah

pleasing Allah and His Messenger, showing her faith and submission to Allah.

Many times it happened that there was nothing in the house to eat, but Fatima (p.b.u.h.) never complained, because she did not want Ali (p.b.u.h.) to be ashamed and unhappy. Allah, because of this respect, sent Divine food, fruit, and clothing to them.<sup>1</sup>

Accounts of Zahra's generosity and sacrifices are many and so well known that it is not necessary to mention them all.<sup>2</sup>

Fatima's excellence and virtues were so great that even Aisha could not neglect them. She said: "I have never seen anyone more similar to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) than Fatima."

Whenever she entered the room, the Prophet stood up. He was kind to her and kept her close to him." Aisha also said, "I never saw anyone more truthful than Fatima, except for her children."<sup>3</sup>

When someone asked Aisha about her rebelling against Ali, she said: "Leave me alone! By Allah, among men, there was none more beloved to the Prophet than Ali, and, among women, there was none more beloved than Fatima."

Ibn Abdul-Bar and Ibn Athir have related a tradition from Jumayi ibn Umayr in which he asked Aisha, "Who is the most beloved to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.)?"

She said: "Fatima."

I asked: "And among the men?"

She said, "Ali."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bihar ul-Anwar Vol. 43, pp. 59, 68, 73, 77.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example: Rayaheen ash-Sharis, Vol. 1, pp. 180-185; Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 43, p. 81.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Isti'ab, Vol. 4, p. 1896; Bihar ul-Anwar, vol. 43, pp. 25, 68.

<sup>4</sup> Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 43, p. 38; al- Isti'ab, Vol. 4, p. 1897; Usd ul- Ghabah, Vol. 5, p. 522.







## **With Infallibles**

*Learning about the life of Infallible Imams (p.b.u.t), regardless of familiarizing us more with their high statues, it can also teach us very constructive lessons. In this part of the magazine through recourse to literature, to offer a page of their life's history of Imam Hasan Askari (p.b.u.h.) – the 11<sup>th</sup> Imam of Shia- under the title of "Great Secret".*

### **The Great Secret (story)**

*It was a few days that the holy Imam Hasan Askari (p.b.u.h.) was in his sickbed. The spies had surrounded Imam's house. The news of his sickness had spread among the people too. They thought that the caliph had poisoned the Imam; but didn't dare to say anything out of fear of the caliph's soldiers. But whenever they saw me in the streets, they asked about Imam's health and prayed for him.*

*I could feel that the Imam was spending his last days. I was about to go crazy out of grief. I knew that I was getting close to hard and dark days, days which I could no longer have access to the Imam as easily as before. But there was nothing I could do. I had no idea of what I could do. I wanted the Imam to be happy and healthy forever so that I could be at his service and take his orders immediately.*

*Two weeks ago Imam Hasan Askari had sent for me and said, "Oqaid, go to Abol-adyan's house and ask him to come here immediately."*

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I mounted a swift horse and passed through the dusty and dirt covered pathways, the green fields of "Samera", its long line of palm trees; and arrived at Abol-adyan's house. He was eating breakfast. We greeted each other and then I conveyed Imam's message to him. He put down the bite he was holding and got up to change his clothes. Then he mounted his horse and started off.

Imam was waiting for him at home. Abol-adyan greeted the Imam and kissed his hand. Imam gave him a few letters. He had to take the letters to Madayen and bring back the replies.

Abol-adyan took the letters, kissed them and put them on his eyes. Imam had confidence in him and sent him for conveying important messages. Then, Imam looked at Abol-adyan with tearful eyes and said, "You are a good friend. So I shall give you some news."

After a short pause he continued, "Your trip will take fifteen days. When you come back, I will no longer be among you."

Abol-adyan started to cry loudly. He knelt down in front of the Imam and took hold of his hand, kissing it several times. Imam's hand got wet from Abol-adyan's tears. Imam stroked his head with a hand full of kindness. Abol-adyan asked, "My lord, what should we do?"

Imam said, "Be patient and, for God's sake, tolerate the upcoming hardships."

Abol-adyan became silent and tried to hold back his tears and asked again, "After you, how can we find the "Promised Mahdi", and how can we recognize him?"

Imam said with a smile, "You can recognize the Promised Mahdi in three ways;

1. He will perform my funeral prayer.
2. He will ask the replies of these letters from you.
3. He will describe the contents of the pouches which will be brought for me."

One week after Abol-adyan's departure, Imam's health suddenly deteriorated. One day, as I was sitting by his side, someone knocked on the door. One of the servants opened the door. The premier of the caliph (vizier) and a few of his staff entered the room. The vizier kissed Imam's hand and sat before him, next to his feet and said, "I heard about your illness. I went to the caliph and informed him about you. He immediately ordered five of his best physicians to attend your health and cure you. God's willing you shall get well soon." Then vizier ordered the physicians to stay there, and paying his respect went away. I knew that there was something more. For sure, the Abbasid government had poisoned the Imam; otherwise there was no way that vizier could get informed this soon.

I knew some of those physicians. They were proficient in their work but they worked for the caliph and took out his plans. That is why I was suspicious of them.

Day by day, Imam's physical condition worsened. His strong and healthy body had turned unbelievably pale and thin.

### 36. Safinah

Five days later, the vizier came to visit the Imam again and kissing his hand said, "O my God! How thin and pale you have turned?"

One of the physicians whispered to the vizier, "His health is really terrible and he will pass away in a few days."

The vizier ordered them to stay there for longer and report every incident. I secretly heard what they said and conveyed them to the Imam. Imam knew everything.

A few hours later, the town's judge, accompanied with some of the aristocrats and a number of soldiers, came in and greeted the Imam and said, "The caliph has ordered these soldiers to stay here, and keep an eye on you."

By the order of Imam, we had submitted to God's will and were watching the caliph's game in silence. Those days were the hardest in my life.

The soldiers had eyes on us and followed us everywhere. How I hated the caliph! He counted the Imam's existence as a great danger for his government and that is why he had arrested and imprisoned the Imam several times. Once he sent the Imam to "Wasif's jail". He had ordered the guards to watch out for what the Imam did and to annoy him. But Imam's character influenced the guards greatly. Wasif found out about the sudden change in the attitude of the guards. He, a stonehearted and cruel man, went to the caliph and told him that his guards, who had been frivolous and immoral men, have become believers of the Imam and turned into virtuous

and praying men. He added if the Imam stayed in jail any longer, all of the guards would convert and they would revolt against the caliph. The caliph got worried and ordered for release of the Imam. This news was later told to Imam, by one of his followers who was in the caliph's palace.

The soldiers and spies searched every where. They had found out that the "Promised Mahdi" is the son of Imam Hasan Askari (p.b.u.h.). And that he will fill the world with justice and fairness and will put an end to all tyrants. The physicians were careful. The midwives occasionally examined the wives in the home of the Imam so that if they saw any sign of pregnancy, they would inform it to the caliph. But God had uncovered his secret and completed His light long ago.

On the eighth of the month, Imam's health got worse than before. That is why he asked for my presence. I went to him quietly. The soldiers were all sleeping. Imam told me to close the door. Then he asked for a pen and paper, so that I could write a few letters to the Shias in different towns. Imam spoke in a quiet voice and I wrote down whatever he said. This is his letter to the Shias of "Medina",

"...I invite you, oh Shias, to be pious and to struggle for God's satisfaction, and also to be honest and truthful. If you borrow something, give it back to its owner, whether he is a believer or a sinner. Be attentive and careful towards your prayers and prolong your prostrations. Be kind towards your neighbors and be gentle towards others.

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"...if you act likewise, they will tell each other that they are the Shias and followers of the Ahlul Bayt. These words will please us. Try to be pious, because piety causes honor and glory. So, you should try to be the cause of our honor and glory, rather than the cause of our disgrace and shame. Attract the hearts of the people toward us and discharge any bad and false unlawful accusations from us.

We are the household of the prophet. Qur'an counts us as sinless and infallible and has considered a right for us. Anyone apart from this household who claims such a right is a liar and a non-believer.

Then we gave some medicine to Imam. At that time, apart from Imam, there were three other people present in the room; "Narjes khatoon"; the wife of Imam, and the mother of Imam Mahdi; the "Promised Mahdi"; who was five years old; and I, being the confidant of the Imam.

At this time the call to prayer echoed through the dark and gloomy sky of the town from the mosque. Imam handed me back the bowl of medicine to perform his morning prayer. I brought a piece of cloth and spread it on his legs so he could perform his ablution.

Imam prayed in the same sitting position. Then he took the bowl of medicine and brought it to his mouth; but his hand shook and the bowl hit against his teeth. Narjes Khatoon took the bowl from his hand. At that moment, his soul flew from his body; and his holiness went to meet his God.



The room was filled with crying and weeping. The soldiers opened the door and entered, but there was no sign of Imam Mahdi. The news immediately got to the caliph and his vizier. After some time, Imam Hasan Askari's brother, Jafar, came into the room, anxious and drowsy. When he saw the lifeless body of Imam lying on the floor, he took a deep breath and covered his face in his hands, asking me to take the body into the yard to prepare and wash it for burial.

I didn't like Jafar. He was a corrupt and immoral man! He was a friend of the caliph and the vizier and obeyed them. All of the Shias kept distance from him.

Imam had tried to guide him in the right path several times, but there was no result. Jafar wanted to take advantage of the situation and introduce himself as the successor of Imam Hasan Askari (p.b.u.h.) to the people. For this reason, he wanted to pray on the dead body of the Imam. Because he had heard that by the Order of God, only the successor of Imam has the right to pray on the dead body of an Imam.

I was sure that God would reveal the true face of Jafar, but at the same time, I was nervous. I knew that something will come up, but I didn't know what that was.

I took the body of the Imam to the yard. That night the sky was darker than ever. The moon had hidden itself behind thick clouds. There was a chill in the air.

The date palm trees were howling under the lashes of the wind. Crying could still be heard from the house.

#### 40. Safinah

The soldiers were careful and awaited for that "Great Secret". Little by little the darkness of the sky faded and turned bright. A group of the Imam's followers and friends, who had become informed of the event, had come there. They too were crying and hitting themselves on the chest and head. At that moment, Jafar entered the yard. The soldiers went to him one by one and congratulated him on his imamate! Jafar pretended to be very sad.

At that time, Abol-adyan came back from his trip and when he saw the tearful eyes of the people, scratched his face with his nails and his face was covered with his tears and blood.

We were ready for funeral prayer. Jafar stood up and prepared himself for prayer. Everyone present in the yard, stood behind him. He brought his hands up to start praying. Suddenly a handsome boy appeared in front of him and pulled at his garment saying, "step back uncle! I have the right to pray on the body of my father!"

Jafar turned pale and became as white as a sheet, and immediately went to one side.

One of the soldiers asked him, "Who is this boy?"

Jafar answered, trembling "How am I supposed to know?"

But I recognized that child. He was the "Promised Mahdi", the twelfth Imam of the Shias. I felt exceedingly from the inside.

After the prayer, Imam Mahdi told me, "Tell Abol-adyan to bring the answers to the letters."

I gave him Imam Mahdi's message. He was stunned, like all other people who were present there. The soldiers were frozen on their spots. Imam passed them and went into the room. A moment later the soldiers came to themselves and searched the entire house. But there was no trace of his holiness.

When the sun spread its golden rays in the town, we took the body of Imam Askari (p.b.u.h.) to the square of the town. The news spread in the town and every shop was closed. The whole people came to the square, crying at the loss of the Imam. The town of "Samera" had never seen such a huge crowd of mourners.

Abol-adyan and I had sat in a corner, next to Imam Mahdi when a group of the Shias came to on us and told about what was happening in the town. They had come from Iran and had a bag with them. Imam informed them about the contents of the bag. They, who had become surprised about the knowledge of the Imam, gave the bag to the Imam, kissed his hand and went out.

Abol-adyan gave the reply of the letters to Imam Mahdi and went out of the house, having tears in his eyes, in the loss of Imam Hasan Askari (p.b.u.h.), and a smile on his lips in the joy of seeing Imam Mahdi.

At that time, I recalled the promise of God who had said,

*"God will complete His Light, although the disbelievers may not like this."*



## **Islam and Freedom**

Mansour Pahlavan (Ph.D) \*

***Abstract:** from the Islamic point of view, freedom is considered as one of the human's natural rights. It is also introduced as God's blessing, and as a mankind's value. "Tohid" -unity of God- which is the most essential and fundamental principle of Islam has a very close relation with freedom. In fact, freedom and equality can be inferred from Tohid. The divine decrees found in Qur'an and Hadith emphasize on freedom of religion and government, enjoying personal independence, and freedom of speech.*

***Key words:** freedom, Islam, attachments to the world, Qur'an, worship.*

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Note: The present article was a lecture given by Dr. Pahlavan at Texas woman's university on 11/ April / 2005 in answer to the invitation of its associate professor and chairman of Department of Sociology. The topic of the conference was "Freedom of Conscience in Islam" or "Personal Freedom in Islam".

### **Statement of the Problem**

In recent years, the attempts have been done to introduce Islam against the modern civilization, and to humiliate Muslims in international society. Unfortunately, some unaware, ignorant, and simple-minded people by writing articles or taking inappropriate measures extend credit to that point of view. One of the symbols of modern civilization and also intrinsic tendencies of all mankind is freedom which is always considered as the most valuable human's merit. Nowadays the West is the most noted claimer of it. But the truth is that not only Islam is in compatibility and agreement with freedom, but also freedom is one of the greatest mottos of it. Here, we study the place of freedom in Islam in a theoretical framework.

#### **1- Freedom, The Blessing of God**

From an Islamic view, freedom is the God's blessing donated to all human beings; and this is human being who destroys it in social, political, and economical affairs and accepts slavery to people like him.

In a speech from Amir ul-Momenin Ali (p.b.u.h) it goes: "Do not be the slave of others, for God has created you free."(Nahj al-Balaghe1117/3, letter 31)"

#### **2- Freedom: A Human Value**

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Not only is freedom respected highly in Islam, but also as freedom is a human's value, all human beings regardless of their religions and beliefs, should attempt to make it and keep it.

In a speech of Imam Husain (p.b.u.h) - the third Imam of Shia – he addressed the vicious people: " If you do not have religion and do not scare of the day of doom, at least be free in this world and do not accept slavery."

From the Islamic great leader's point of view, freedom is a human value and people of different religions and nations should respect it.

### 3- Freedom and Unity of God

"Tohid" means "Unity of God", and one of its levels is "Tohid in action". It means that we should only obey Him, and do not be servant of others. "Tohid in action" will be resulted in elimination of slavery. It is said that the Pharaoh who claimed of being God, did not intend to be recognized as creator of heavens and earth; but as he said: " obey me and do not obey anyone else!" Pharaoh restricted the freedom of Egyptians,

"And he treated them as slaves."

"And on the earth, through extending his territory and exerting his power, he considered him better and above others, even his agents did not have the right to approve or deny anything without his permission."<sup>1</sup>

He addressed the sorcerers and said:

*"You have believed in Him before I permit you to!"* (Qur'an; 7: 123)

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Mizan 5/16



The holy prophet's representatives went to Iran, Rome and other places to invite people to Islam, took the message of freedom with them.

One of those representatives, in response to the Iran's army leader who asked about their aim, said, "We are here to help anyone who wants to be the servant of God and not the servant of people; improve their life from misery to happiness and welfare; and set people free from the cruelties of traditions and customs, and gave them the Islamic justice."<sup>1</sup>

Yes, Tohid means eliminating the gods and lords of properties, power and injustice and Tohid will bring equality of freedom and justice.

#### **4. Freedom of Religion**

If religion is defined, as belief in God, and praying and social practice of a group, actually, the possibility of omitting those beliefs will be zero. In another word, it is impossible to force people to accept and support an unwanted thing in their hearts and minds, or dictate a way of thinking to them. The holy Qur'an points to this logical reality and states:

*"There should be no compulsion in religion."* (Qur'an ; 2:256)

In another verse, it is said to the unbelievers:

*"You have your religion, and I have my religion."* (Qur'an; 109:6) and thus the Almighty God confirms freedom of religion, providing the acceptance of its results and consequences. The holy Qur'an explicitly states on behalf of the believers and faithfuls:

*"We do not differentiate any of His messengers."* (Qur'an; 2:285) They all have been sent to guide us and their laws and orders will lead human beings to salvation.

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<sup>1</sup> Tarikh 401/2

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On the other hand, the holy Qur'an advises Muslims to have friendly relationships with the followers of other Divine Books and to emphasize on the commonalities of their beliefs, and to avoid the differences. It states: *"Say: "people of the book, [let us] rally to a common formula to be binding on both us and you"* (Qur'an; 3:64)

To the holy Qur'an holding the title of Muslim, Christian or Jew is not enough for salvation: *"Those who believe, and those who are Jews, Christians and Sebeans; [in fact] anyone who believes in God and the Last Day, and acts honourably will receive their earnings from their God; no fear will lie upon them nor need they feel saddened."* (Qur'an; 2:62)

### **5- Freedom of Choosing Government**

From an Islamic view, people are free in choosing governorship; and God does not force any governorship on them.

The holy Qur'an indicates: *"God does not change what any people may have until they change whatever they themselves have."* (Qur'an; 13:11)

The people themselves choose the type of governorship. Even if people do not want prophet's or infallibles' governorship, the prophet and infallibles will not force their government upon the people. The clear examples of this fact are apparent in the life of all faithful leaders of Islam and Shia Imams, in the establishment of their government.

The holy prophet of Islam suffered and tolerated all tortures during 13 years in Mecca. Due to the oppositions of the people of Mecca, he migrated from Mecca; but perceiving the public requests and desires of Medina's citizens, he entered there, and accepted to govern them. After the holy prophet, Imam Ali

(p.b.u.h) was the best choice for being the leader of Muslims, but out of nonacceptance and people's reluctance he kept silence for 25 years. Watching the public desires and requests, he said: "If the people had not come to me and supporters had not exhausted the argument ... , I would have cast the rope of Caliphate on its own shoulders..."(Nahj al-Balaghe; sermon3)

This trend is also identifiable in the life and tradition of the third Imam. Imam Husain did not head for Iraq until he received the requests of Iraqis; all wanted him to accept the governorship. On his way to kofa - the capital city of his father's government period- they stopped him and asked him why he travelled to Iraq. He said: "The people of this city wrote me that they do not have any leader or governor and demanded that I come to them. I trusted them, but they broke their promises, even though the number of the letters was 13000 for me to come, when I became closer and become aware of their tricks, I decided to return, but Hurr ibn Yazid stopped me. So let me be free to return."<sup>1</sup>

And when he was prohibited from returning, in an unequal war, Imam Husain and his followers all became martyrs.

The life and trend of the other Shia Imams all confirm this truth; from an Islamic view, public willing and desires is an obligatory and fundamental requirement in choosing the form of governorship.

## **6- Freedom in Personal and Private Affairs**

Islam puts emphasis on enjoying personal and individual freedom. This religion believes no one has right to interfere with the other individual's private life.

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<sup>1</sup> Akhbar Attaul; 276

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Everyone is free to choose the place of his (her) residence. If he (she) does not feel comfortable, he may move to another place. Qur'an addresses the oppressed people of the world and states: *"Is not God's earth so vast that you might settle down elsewhere on it?"* (Qur'an; 4:97)

- Everyone is free to reveal his (her) individual and personal talents and abilities. The holy Qur'an says:

  - "Say: everyone acts according to his own disposition"* (Qur'an; 17:84)

- Everyone is free in choosing their spouse, and no one can choose a spouse for the other, regardless of being his (her) parents or guardian. From an Islamic view, women are free in choosing their husbands and proposing him.

- No one has the right to have doubt or suspicion about others. The holy Qur'an states: *"You who believe, refrain from conjecturing too much; even a little suspicion forms a vice..."* (Qur'an; 49:12)

- No one has the right to disturb the other's privacy. The holy Qur'an says: *"...Do not spy on one another"* (Qur'an; 49:12) In Islam, no one has the right to inspect what others eat, wear, and do.

- No one has the right to enter others' houses without the owners' permission, Qur'an says: *"You, who believe, do not enter any houses except your own homes..."* (Qur'an; 24:27), and states: *"If you do not find anyone in them, still do not enter them until permission has been granted you."* (Qur'an; 24/28)

## 7. Freedom of Speech

One of the significant branches of freedom in society is freedom of speech. Islam extends credit to this right. In Islam, it is believed that speech is taught by God, and no one may neglect this capacity and oppose it. In holy Qur'an, it is said: "...Created man, taught him self-expression..." (Qur'an; 39:18)

On the other hand, it states: "*The ones who turn aside from the arrogant ones lest they serve them, and turn toward God, will have good news: proclaim such to my servants who listen to the Statement and follow the best in it.*" (Qur'an; 39:18)

Therefore, the presence of various statements and speeches in society is necessary to enable us to choose the best one out of them. The holy Qur'an confirms the doctrine of talk among different groups of society, regardless of being faithful or unbelievers. The holy prophets Moses and Aaron were ordered to go to Pharaoh, who claimed he be a god, and talk to him gently: "...Speak a soft word to him..." (Qur'an; 20:44)

To order people to join good and forbid evil which are rules of Islam are also good examples of having the right of speech: first, there should be various statements of good and evil deeds in society, and then we ask people to join good and avoid evil deeds. In a narrative from the Islam's leaders we read:

"It is in the presence of different thoughts and conflict of ideas that the true thought and the best idea comes in to existence."<sup>1</sup>

## 8- Freedom and Prophethood

Some believe that the holy prophets or their successors are guardians of mankind, and therefore, being faithful is against being free. While the holy prophets themselves were the

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<sup>1</sup> Bahar Al-Anvar

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heralds of freedom and they were sent to break the chains of slavery from the human beings.

As the holy Qur'an says about the holy Prophet: "*...and relieves them of their obligation and the shackles which have lain upon them...*" (Qur'an; 7:157) In the holy Qur'an, the role of the holy Prophet of Islam is introduced as the role of a teacher of ethnic, as it said: "*...to recite His verses to them and purify them and teach the Book and wisdom...*" (Qur'an; 62:2) And if people do not listen to his message, he has no right on them.

The holy Qur'an says: "*We have guided him a long the [right] part, whether he is thankful or thankless*" (Qur'an; 76:3). It is interesting to know that none of the wars of the holy

Prophet was aggressive. All of them were to defend Muslims, or fight with the opponents' plots and tricks. Although after the demise of the Prophet, some rulers and caliphs chose the policy of conquest and attack other countries.

## 9- Freedom and Worldly Concerns

One of the reasons of elimination of freedom is love and care for worldly belongings. Attachment to property, means, position and the other belongings of the world can lead human beings to their slavery. The holy prophet said: "How bad on the slaves of coins and servants of gold coins."

In the school of Islam, the value of soul of human being is superior than the worldly concerns which may lead to the mankind slavey.

Imam Ail (p.b.u.h.) compared the world to chewed morsel of ancestors and says: "Is there no free man who could leave this chewed morsel (of the world) to those who like it? Certainly, the only value of you is Paradise. Therefore, do not sell yourself except for Paradise." (Nahj Al-Balaghe 694, saying 465)

## 10- Freedom and the Next World Concerns

Sometimes prayers are due to the love and attachment to the means of the other world. This kind of prayer can prepare the tools of the attachment: Attachment to the gifts and blessings of heaven or to remain aloof from the torture of the other world. These loves sometimes result in the eliminating of freedom of mankind; but if human being regardless of the hell or heaven, and only for the sake of appreciating God's kindness pray Him, no fear of feeling attached to the world will be felt.

Imam Ali (p.b.u.h) says: " A group of people worshipped Allah out of desire for reward surely. This is the worship of trades. Another group worshipped Allah out of fear; this is the worship of slaves. Still another group worshipped Allah out of gratefulness; this is the worship of free men."(Nahaj Al-Balaghe 646; saying 238)

Though, in the holy Qur'an, fear and desire are respectively introduced as the prohibiting and encouraging factors in doing goodness or committing sins, but it says the basic motivation for faithful people is seeking the satisfaction of God and reaching to this point is a high status: *"God has promised believers, whether they are men or women, gardens through which rivers flow to live in forever, and goodly dwellings in the gardens of Eden. Yet approval by God is greatest; that will be the supreme Achievement!"* (Qur'an; 9:72)

Imam Ali (p.b.u.h) in his litanies introduces the distance from God even more difficult than tolerating the tortures of hell and says: " o' God, i will stand your torture, but how can i stand your distance from me and oh, my God! I will stand the heat of

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fire of hell but how can I stand not looking at your Benediction?"<sup>1</sup>

### **11- Freedom and Impiousness**

Freedom does not mean to be impious, lustful or aggressor to the other people's rights.

For example, a Muslim can not be addicted by the excuse of being free or drawn in lust by the excuse of freedom.

This inference from the meaning of freedom is not only against the true meaning of freedom, but also it is against the freedom, and is very slavery. Imam Ali (p.b.u.h) says:" the servant and slave of lusts is more than a slave."<sup>2</sup> and also says:" the servant and slave of lust is the slave who will never be free."<sup>3</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Freedom is recognized as one of the fundamental rights in Islam. In Islam the huge emphasis is placed on having individual freedom in choosing the governorship.

Separation from materialistic and worldly attachments and of mundane and body lusts is counted among the most significant discussions on freedom in Islam.

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<sup>1</sup> Mafatih Al-Jinan, 65

<sup>2</sup> Ghorar al-Hakam and Dorar al-Kalem;352/4,N.6298

<sup>3</sup> in explanation of Ghorar al-Hakam and Dorar al-Kalem;352/4,N.6300



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## **With the Holy Qur'an**

### **Introduction**

*Introducing Islam as a social doctrine, based on its integrative and harmonious principles relevant to the individual and social life of mankind, is of the most significant issues of today's life. To this end, the holy Qur'an is the only perfect, comprehensive and authentic document can be relied upon. Qur'an is the book of life. We can clearly perceive that all its verses are verses of life and movement. Its theoretical and practical teachings are all parts of the same system in which mankind- possessing God's sound Fitrat (nature) - turn into a perfect human being, the one who enjoys the harmonies and successful life in this world, and deserves a good end as well; the one who knows how he should be with his God and himself, and how he should treat others, and how to spend his life and how to live his life.*

## Advise Your Children like This:

*"My dear son, keep up prayer, command what is proper and forbid dishonor. Endure patiently whatever may afflict you; for that shows determination in [handling] matters."*  
(Qur'an; 31:17)

Imam Sajjad (p.b.u.h.) states about the right of the children is: "know he is a part of your essence and is a part of the tree of your being in this world; and their good or bad relate to you."

Parents have duties towards their children:

- Observing equality and justice among their children, even in kissing them.
- Choosing good names for their children.
- Disciplining their children to behave politely.
- Teaching the holy Qur'an to them.
- Teaching them writing, swimming and shooting.
- Feeding them with pure food.
- Preparing them for marriage.
- Growing them up in the ethnically health and good environment.
- Respecting them.
- Reaching them to love the holy prophet and Ahlul Bayt and recite Qur'an.
- Ordering their children to (look for) knowledge.
- Making them familiar with the school of Ahlul Bayt and infallible Imam's traditions.
- Ordering their children to start praying at 7 years old and being strict about their praying.

It is a great wonder that according to some of the narratives, parents can be cursed by their children in the same way as the parents can curse their children.

### **In Marriage, Proportion is the Basis.**

*"Bad women are for bad men, and bad men are for bad women; while good women are for good men, and good men are for good women."* (Qur'an; 24: 26)

The philosophy and aim of marriage is getting to peace and tranquility. Love, peace, and companionship can only be reached through observing equalities in choosing spouse.

Marriage should not be regarded as a significant and valuable event in life only; it is also a rebirth for mankind.

Marriage means founding a common life and becoming one soul in two bodies to reach peace and tranquility, creation of generations, and training our children to become better than us. The prerequisite for all these things, for girls and boys, is being wise in choosing the spouse, and being religious, good-tempered, descent, and polite are of the other criteria in choosing the spouse.

The holy prophet said:

"I introduced Zaid Ibn Haretha to Zainab, daughter of Jahash, as her husband and gave Miqdad to Zaba'a'e, daughter of Zobair as his wife, to teach you that the dearest of you toward God is the most religious one."<sup>1</sup>

Regarding the proportion and suitability which exist in the marriage of the holy Prophet to Khadijah, and Ali to Zahra,

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<sup>1</sup> Al Mizan Al- Hekmat ,P. 2252. Vol.5

they should be our models in choosing our spouse. In a tradition it goes," If there was not Ali, there was no equal partner for Zahra to get marry to."<sup>1</sup>

**But women and men are equal in their spiritual values and in getting to perfection.**

*"We will reward those who have been patient with their earnings according to the finest deeds they have been doing. We shall let anyone who acts honorably, whether it is a man or a woman, provided he is a believer, lives a happy life and reward them with their earnings for the finest deeds they have been doing." (Qur'an; 16:97)*

The criteria of being superior to others before God is good deed, not being men or women. Whoever becomes a virtuous man or woman will be endowed with the pure life. This verse is a comprehensive statement, describing the ethnical and religious equalities of men and women and also it explains the values of women's status in an Islamic view, which is a convincing answer to those who abuse the natural differences or sometimes legal differences exist and expressed between men and women to inject materialistic and western thoughts in Islamic societies.

Is there any greater honor for a woman than what the holy Prophet of Islam told about the virtues and magnificence of the greatest ladies of Islam, "If all goodness, beauties and virtues had gathered together and incarnated in a human being, it was Fatima; Fatima is the perfection of all goodness's and virtues of the world. My daughter, Fatima, is the best of the world's

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<sup>11</sup> Fazael Al-Khamse, vol.2, p.149

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people, regarding the essence of creation and values and magnanimity".

Yes, Zahra is the perfect epitome for all men and women who want to be like her.

**The religious women should be modest, and do not reveal their beauties for the Strangers.**

*"Bad women are for bad men, and bad men are for bad women; while good women are for good men, and good men are for good women."* (Qur'an; 24: 31)

According to this verse, ogling is forbidden for women as it is for men and they are also obliged to avoid staring and looking at opposite sex for sexual enjoyment. Covering nakedness of women from others, men or women is incumbent on them.

In this verse, which is the main verse of covering (Hijab) in the holy Qur'an, 4 issues are brought into light:

1) Women do not reveal their beauties. It means that women do not have right to reveal those beauties which are attractive, even if those beauties do not reveal their bodies. In narratives necklace, arm lace, rings and collyrium are regarded as hidden ornaments.

2) Before descending this verse, women put the sides of their scarves behind their shoulders; therefore, a part of their necks or bosoms were appeared.

3) Women can avoid using their covering in front of their close relatives with whom marriage is

forbidden (mahram) and they are counted in the verse.

4) While walking, the religious women do not walk in such a way that draws other people's attention to her.

### **The Religious Men Do Not Ogle.**

*"Tell believers to avert their glances and to guard their private parts that are chaster for them. God is in formal about anything they may produce."* (Qur'an; 24: 30)

Although, women are ordered not to reveal their beauties and should be modest and have Hijab, some people not few in numbers do not comply with this order and do follow their sexual desires. They try to beautify themselves for stranger men. Therefore, religious men should control their eyes. Another command of this verse is that men should cover their nakedness from others' sights- to be men or women!

The subtle point of this verse is the word "avert" which means shortening the looking.

The Almighty God does not say while facing strangers close your eyes; because by closing the eyes one can not walk and do activities. But He says: *"do shorten your look from women's face and body."*

The holy prophet said:

"Looking (at the opposite sex) is a poisonous arrow of Satan. The one who closes his eyes from this kind of looking, God will give him a faith which he will taste its sweetness."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Bihar Al-Anvar, vol,104,p.38

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He also said, "The first look is not on purpose; the second look is on purpose, and the third one is devastating."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mizan Al-Hikmah, vol.13,p.6324





**Then a Christian  
Fell in Love with Ali (p.b.u.h)**

*This article is an interview with George Jordac, the author of "Ali, the Voice of Human Justice" done by a group of Iranian authors, among them Reza Amir Khani.*

***An Interview with George Jordac***

*The house of George Jordac is located in Al-Hamra district. The Christian place in North West of Beirut. Beirut is an exhibition of different nations and religions. It's interesting that a country of 1000 mc and 6 million people has registered 18 official religions. I was always thinking that what a Lebanese character is like? What characteristics from a Lebanese personality?*

*How can such a small country be so news-making and progressive in culture? What else but language does relate this country in which there is no sign of Arabs to other Arab countries?*



## 62. Safinah

George Jordac, the famous Lebanese author, is well-known to all Ali's lovers of the world by his book, "Ali, The Voice of Human Justice".

The study of George Jordac on Ali's life is not just a research about the life and characteristics of Imam Ali (p.b.u.h); it is the story of someone's love to the soul of a great and superhuman character.

The house of George Jordac is in Al-Hamra district, the Christian place in North West of Beirut. Beirut is an exhibition of nations and religions. It is interesting that a country of 1000 mc and 6 million people has registered 18 official religions.

I was always thinking that what a Lebanese character is like? What characteristics make a Lebanese personality?

How can such a small country be so news-making and progressive in culture? What else but language does relate this country in which there is no sign of Arabs to other Arab countries?

The author whose over 1,000,000 volumes of his book has been sold in the Shia world should live in such a place.

George Jordac's house was situated in an old building in a middle-class Street. Alhamra house was a flat of about 100 m, replete with newspapers, books and brochures.

*G. J.:* "I was born in 1896 in Morjaoon village", located in south of Lebanon. A village which its inhabitants have the literature propensity just like other villages around it. In Lebanon to be from a village is a sign of loyalty. I'm from Morjaoon. Morjaoon consists of 2 words "Morj" and "oyoon" (springs), the place in which the springs come in to the land! Our village was full of springs and I had a happy childhood. I ran away from school every day and went to one of these

springs. The school principal and teachers were always looking after me - the naughty, and always-running- child - and every day complained about me to my family. In my family, only my brother, Foad Jordac, supported me."

*R.A.:* The famous Foad Jordac?

*G. J.:* Yes, my older brother, Foad Jordac, was a poet and bibliophile, and very interested in reading. He attracted me to this way. Whenever my mother and father, teacher or school principal complained, he defended me and said to me "Out of school, you will learn more!"

The fact is that after perceiving my interest and hard working in reading literature, one day, he gave me a heavy book as a gift and said: "All literature of Arabs is summarized in this book..."

*R.A.:* Nahajal Ballaghe?!

*G. J.:* Yes, I took Nahjil balaghe with me and ran away from school and sat by a spring, while leaning on a rock, drowned in the sea of Nahjol balaghe.

*R.A.:* So, this book made you know Imam Ali (p.b.u.h)?

*G. J.:* No! I was only fascinated by Imam Ali's literary language and not his personality. Do not forget that we were Christians and lived in a Christian village; we were not so much interested in Imam Ali! Though, whenever we had some guests, my brother, Foad, recited some poems, praising the commander of Faithful (Imam Ali), and that helped me!

*R.A.:* How could you become closer to the perfect personality of Imam Ali?

*G. J.:* When I entered university, I studied Arab literature and Arab's philosophy and later I taught them.

Again in both of these fields, literature and philosophy, I found Ali (p.b.u.h) a great person.

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I made up my mind to do a serious research on this character, from Eghad and Taha Husain to Shia's scholars. I read whatever written about Imam Ali (p.b.u.h). Reading these books, I understood that all were discussed about his Walayah (Islamic jurisprudential guardianship), his rightness and rightlessness, and his great personality has been lost in these arguments. They stuck to the Caliphate issue to the cost of not perceiving Ali's illuminate face.

They saw Ali's government ship but his humane character is neglected. I did not satisfy. (I can't quench my thirst knowing him.) So, I scrutinized his great and exceptional personality. I came back to the Marjaiyoon spring's side and to my childhood's Nahjol balaghe!

I wrote all my books about Imam Ali in this way... .

*R.A.:* Professor! Please tell us about the first books, "Ali, The Voice of Human Justice".

*G. J.:* You may think that it is published by the help of Muslims! But it is wrong! While I was writing, the editor -in-chief of Alresale Magazine came and asked me to give it to him to make parts of it published in continuous issues.

I did not accept, but after watching his persistence on his demand, finally I gave him two parts of it.

Immediately, after its publication, the Bishop and hermits of Kermelyeh tribe (from Christian Marooni branch) said: "I myself will publish this book with my own financial resources", naturally I became very happy.

*R.A.:* And then Muslims found you, yes?

*G. J.:* No! Actually, first Christians learned about the book and came to me surprisingly and happily. They said: "you honor the Arabs!" They collected money to pay the cost of the

book's publication to me. I said: "I didn't publish this book with my money and the chairman of Karmiye's hermits did it.

They went to the chairman.....He said: "No, I did not do that. The money of its publication came from the priests and hermits who pray here. Go and give this money to poor people."

Much later he said to me: "I love Imam Ali and out of his blessings, our poor people also gained prosperity".

*R.A.:* Professor! What did Muslims do at last?

*G.J.:* First, Ghasem Rajab –owner of a school in Baghdad–took the book and carried the book around the holy shrine of the Commander of the Faithful people; after him, some Shia brother republished this book again and again.

*R.A.:* Have you ever been to Najaf?

*G.J.:* No! I haven't been there! But I went to Karbala two times for delivering speech. I did pilgrimage of Imam Husain, his son... .

*R.A.:* Professor Jordac asked us "do we know Le Martin?"

I said: "Yes!" and he continued that he had found a book from Le Martin in one of the Paris's book stores about your prophet and the book was very old and precious. Unfortunately, Muslims don't search for these things. For example, no Muslim ever tried to translate the book "Ali and Al-Sorat Al-Ferinsiyyah"(Imam Ali and the French Revolution) into French. Is not translating such a book a service to Islam? Should the Christians translate this book? If does not the book "Imam Ali and Arabs nationality" which is clearly states how Imam Ali started from nationality issue and without resorting to nationalism got to humanism, deserve some research? **I believe that Imam Ali's place is higher than Christ.**

I'm fascinated with his great humanistic personality. We were Christians and naturally we have no belief in Imam Ali's Imamat. (And we are very surprised what a kind of disbelief it is that he didn't mention Ali's name without adding Imam title before it!) I was brought up in a Christian family, which has no belief in these things. But let me tell you a funny story of my life. My father was a mason. He sold his works to the other villages; he kept two stones (rocks) in the house and worked on them for two years. Then, after finishing his work, he hung them on the house's entrance.

*R.A.:* What was written on them?

*G.J.:* He laughed and answered: "No generous man is but Ali (p.b.u.h), and no sword is but Zolfaghar."

*R.A.:* And this is Ali. Therefore, it is not surprising that even those who do not even believe in God keep a picture of Imam Ali with respect. It is not surprising that in Maroni's church there is a prayer that by making a little change in its word order, it will become very similar to Dua Komeil.

It is not surprising that Michal Nae'e'meh in his foreword to the Jordac's book wrote: "This is the picture of the greatest alive men of Arabs after the prophet". It is no surprise ....



## Book review:

As- saheefatul- kaamilatus- sajjadeeyah: (the psalms of Islam) the perfect book of Imam Zaynul-Abidenn Ali Ibnul Husain Sajjad. Translated by William C. Chitick with a foreword by S.H.M Jafri. London: The Muhammadi Trust of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 1988.

Sedighe Shakeri\*

***Abstract:** Al-Sahifat al-Sajjadiyya is the oldest manual of supplications among other Islamic sources, and one of the seminal works of Islamic spirituality. This writing is here to introduce its annotated translation accompanied by another work attributed to Zayn al-Abidin (grandson of Imam Ali (p.b.u.h), "The Treatise on Rights". Together, the texts contribute significantly to the understanding of Islamic spirituality and the Muslim's standing in relation to God and the community, not only in the early period, but, given the widespread use of the Sahifa as a devotional guide, up to the present time. It is a book of prayers and sublimations but could be easily regarded as the best book of principles and values of Islam and in fact the humanity.*

***Keywords:** Imam Zayn al-Abidin, Al-Sahifat al-Sajjadiyya, supplication, prayer, Dhikr(invocation), names of God, Islamic spirituality*

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\* Master of Science in library and information science of National Library and Archives of Iran

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The book was originally published in August 1988 in London, and it has been edited for over 10 times and reprinted at least twice in Qom. Also, recently a new edition without the Arabic text was published.

The present book brings alive for the non-Arabic speaker the power and the subtlety of the supplications transmitted from one of the most venerated religious authorities of early Islam, Ali b. al-Husain b. Ali b. Abi Talib, better known as Zayn al-Abidin (the ornament of the worshipers) in which he taught the Muslims the essence of Islamic spirituality through his supplications.

The book is translated in English with an Introduction and annotation by William C. Chittick who translated something which is untranslatable. Among all the varieties of Arabic literature, supplications, especially those of the Imam Zayn al-'Abidin, are perhaps the most difficult to translate into an alien tongue. He must be congratulated on his courage and vision, and on his grasp of the inner meanings of such an emotionally charged and subtle Arabic text. He has admirably rendered into English not only the meaning but also the feelings enshrined in these spontaneous utterances of the heart. Also, he provided a very comprehensive introduction in clear language particularly to the some basic concepts of the book (authenticity, validity, textual history, or even the literary beauty of these supplications) as the writer of these lines found some of them useful to introduce the book.

## **A brief look at the life and works of the author and translator**

### **- A short biography of Ali Ibn Al- Husain (p.b.u.h)**

Ali Ibn Al- Husain is the fourth Imam. His epithet was Abu Muhammad and was popularly titled as "Zaynu'l-Abidin". According to most sources, he was born in Medina, on 5th Shabaan in the 38th year of Hijrah. His mother was Shahr Bano, the daughter of King Yazdgerd, the last pre-Islamic ruler of Persia. She was brought as a captive to Medina during the caliphate of Umar. She embraced Islam and married Imam Husain (p.b.u.h.). She died after giving birth to her only son. Imam Zaynu'l-Abidin spent the first two years of his infancy in the lap of his grandfather Ali ibn Abi Talib and then for twelve years he had the gracious patronage of his uncle, the second Holy Imam al-Hasan ibn Ali. In the year of 61 AH, he was present in Karbala, at the time of the gruesome tragedy of the massacre of his father, his uncles, his brothers, his cousins and all the companions of his father; afterwards he suffered from heartless captivity and imprisonment at the hands of the devilish forces of Yazid.

Being released from confinement, Imam went to live in Medina with his family and to lead a quiet life. He resided in Medina until his death in the Muharram of 95 A.H. He was the object both of great sympathy because of the massacre of his family, and of veneration as the great grandson of the Prophet. He dedicated his life to teaching and worship; and became an authority on prophetic traditions and law.

He used to go to the mosque of the Prophet and some times prayed there all night. These were special prayers in the shape of supplications with great significance than mere ritual. These

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prayers were memorized by his companions, written down by his two sons, Mohammad and Zaid. All these supplications were later collected by his companions in the shape of a book which was named "Al Sahifat al- Sajjadiyya". It is known also as Zabur (Psalm) of Ale Muhammad. The collection is an invaluable treasury of wonderfully effective supplications to the God in inimitably beautiful language. Through these prayers the Imam gave all the necessary guidance to the faithful during his seclusion.

### **- Life and works of William C. Chittick**

Professor William C. Chittick is a dominant Islamist and researcher in the studies and researches related to the Islamic issues, Persian literature, Philosophy, Sufism and Islamic spirituality. He is one the world's leading translators and interpreters of the mystical poetry of Jalaluddin Rumi and also is recognized for his translation and interpretation of the writings of the great Sufi theorist and poet, Ibn Arabi.

William C. Chittick was born and raised in Milford, Connecticut, in 1943. He did his B.A. in history at the College of Wooster (Ohio) and then went to Iran, where he completed a Ph.D. in Persian literature at Tehran University in 1974. He taught comparative religion in the humanities department at Aryamehr Technical University in Tehran and, for a short period before the revolution, was assistant professor at the Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy. He returned to the United States in January, 1979. For three years he was assistant editor at the Encyclopedia Iranica (Columbia

University), and from 1983 he has taught religious studies at Stony Brook.

Chittick is author and translator of twenty-five books and one hundred articles on Islamic thought, Sufism, Shi'ism, and Persian literature. The range and authenticity of Chittick's books have no parallel in the list of English-language books on Islamic spirituality. His more recent books include: *The Sufi Doctrine of Rumi* (2005), *The Meccan Revelations* (of Ibn Arabi), translated by William C. Chittick, (2002), *The Heart of Islamic Philosophy: The Quest for Self-Knowledge in the Teachings of Afdal Al-Din Kashani* (2001), *Sufism* (2000), *The Self-Disclosure of God: Principles of Ibn Al-'Arabi's Cosmology* (SUNY Series in Islam) (1997), *The Vision of Islam* (Visions of Reality. Understanding Religions), co-authored with Sachiko Murata (1995), *Imaginal Worlds: Ibn Al-Arabi and the Problem of Religious Diversity* (SUNY Series in Islam) (1994), *Faith and Practice of Islam; Thirteenth Century Sufi Texts* (SUNY Series in Islam) (1992), *The Sufi Path of Knowledge* (1989), *The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rumi* (SUNY Series, Islamic Spirituality) (1983) and etc.

### **What are As- saheefatul- kaamilatus- sajjadeeyah and al-sahifa's related books?**

The title *Al-Sahifat al-Sajjadiyya* means simply "The Book of al-Sajjad". *Al-Sajjad* is one of the titles given to Zayn al-Abidin and signifies the one who constantly prostrates himself in prayer. The book is often called *Al-Sahifat al-Kamilat al-Sajjadiyya*, that is, the "Perfect", or "Complete", book of al-

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Sajjad. According to one of its commentators, Sayyid Alikhan Shirazi, the word *kamila* refers to the perfection of the style and content, some sources state that the adjective was added to differentiate it from another incomplete version of the work, which is known among the Zaydis.

Many supplications have been handed down from Imam Zayn al-Abidin in addition to those recorded in the text of the *Sahifa* as given by this book, and various scholars have collected these together in a series of works known as the "second *Sahifa*" the "third *Sahifa*" and so on. The second *Sahifa* which is about as long as the *Sahifa* itself, was compiled as the sister of the *Sahifa* by Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Hurr al-Amili, author of the famous *Wasa'il al-Shi'a*. A third *Sahifa* was put together by the author of *Riyad al-ulum* Mirza Abd Allah ibn Mirza Isa Tabrizi, known as Afandi and a student of Majlisi. The longest of the published versions is *Al-Sahifat al-Sajjadiyyat al-khamisa* (The Fifth *Sahifa* of al-Sajjad') by Muhsin al-Amin, the well known contemporary author of *A'yan al-shi'a*. It includes all the supplications included in the previous *Sahifas*; 130 of these are found in the first and second *Sahifas* and 52 are added.

The *Sahifa* has been called by various honorifics, such as Sister of the Qur'an, Gospel of the Folk of the House, and Psalms of the Household of Muhammad.

### **The main body of the book**

According to Shi'ite tradition, Zayn al-Abidin had collected his supplications and taught them to his children, especially

Muhammad al-Baqir and Zayd. In later times the text became widely disseminated among Shi'ites of all persuasions. It was generally known from earliest times and has been handed down by numerous chains of transmission, while its authenticity has never been questioned.

The main supplications that make up the Sahifa of Imam Ali ibn al-Husain and form the main body of the present book are about 54. Each supplication is illustrated in book in 3 columns the first is the Arabic text, and then comes the transliteration and the third columns stands for the English equivalence. Throughout the book, wherever necessary the translator has illuminated the concepts through the footnotes.

Also there are some additional supplications appended to some copies of the Sahifa which are about 29 that are included in this book as Addende. They consist of the supplications for the days of the week, the whispered prayers of the repenters, the complaints, the fearful, the hopeful and etc.

This comprehensive book of prayer has been a mainstay of the practical dimension of religion, its lived spirituality, for countless souls down through the ages. It not only engages the deepest dimensions of the yearning of the seeker for God, but also contains penetrating insights into the psychology of the soul, acute observations of the nature of life in this world, and meditation upon the divine qualities and attributes. They are not, however, merely supplications; they embody comforting answers to many questions with which the man of his time and the man of our time are confronted. In addition, the book contains moral and ethical teachings, the ideal behavior of the Muslim in daily life, in relation to parents, children, friends and enemies, that are all the more compelling in being presented in the context of a dynamic relationship between the

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soul and its Creator. There is presented here, in fact, a veritable treatise on 'Human Rights' but linked to human and spiritual duties.

#### **Some important characteristics of the book**

-Exhaustivity of the book in terms of presenting the main supplications attributed to the Imam Zayn al-Abidin (supplications of Sahifa and Treatise on rights) other than supplications or relatively short sayings and letters. "Risalat al-Huquq" is especially important for the manner in which it deals with many of the same themes as the Sahifa in a different style and language.

-Professor Chittick's reedition of this classical text into fluent and elegant English stands as an indisputable masterpiece of translation. The present translation of the Sahifa follows the Arabic original with as much literal accuracy as could be contrived while maintaining a readable and understandable English text. The translator has kept Arberry's Koran Interpreted in view as the model of how this might be done. He has been particularly concerned with maintaining consistency in rendering terms and preserving the concreteness of the original terminology, feeling that the meaning of the text cannot be grasped without due regard for its form. Also, in the introduction he refers to the point that "Where difficulties arose in interpreting the meaning of the text, I have followed the commentary of Sayyid 'Alikhan Shirazi. I have also profited from the excellent Persian translation and commentary by 'Ali Naqi Fayd al-Islam and the



less useful Persian translation of Mirza Abu l-Qasim Sha'rani. I have not tried to be exhaustive in the notes, aiming only to identify proper names, clarify obscurities, and point to a few of the Qur'anic references in order to suggest how thoroughly the text is grounded in the revealed book. In a few cases I have mentioned relevant hadith or discussed the different interpretations offered by the commentators".

-The introduction written by the translator is really a rich source of information on the book and its related subjects that is strongly recommended to read.

-Al-Sahifa al-Sajjādiya, like all supplication books, has dominant characteristics of which are the following:

1. It represents the most perfect freedom from the material world, full devotion and fleeing to Allah, the Most High. Such qualities are the most valuable in this world. In this respect let's listen to the Imām's words:

"O Allah, I showed sincerity by cutting myself off from everything but You. I approached You with my whole self. I averted my face from everyone who needs Your support. I ceased to ask from any who cannot do without Your bounty. I saw that the needy who seeks from the needy is foolish in his opinion, and misguided in his intellect. How many people have I seen, my God, who sought exaltation through other than You and were abased, who wanted wealth from someone else and became poor, who tried to rise high and fell down low! Observing the

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likes of them corrects a prudent man; his taking heed gives him success; his choosing the best guides him to the path of right.

2. It shows that the Imām, peace be on him, had perfect knowledge of Allah, the Exalted, and had firm faith in Him. Such knowledge and faith did not result from sentiment or tradition; rather they resulted from deep thinking and pure mind. In his book, the Imām has mentioned many theological views on which the Muslim theologians and philosophers depended in writing about the Necessary Being (Allah). Now, let's read another paragraph of his supplication wherein he has mentioned the tremendousness of the Wise Creator. He, peace be on him, said:

"Praise belongs to Allah, the First, without a first before Him, the Last, without a last behind Him. Beholders' eyes fall short of seeing Him, describers imaginations are not able to depict Him. He originated the creatures through His power with an origination. He devised them in accordance with His will with a devising.

3. It contains absolute humbleness and lowliness before Allah, the Exalted, and with this it has been distinguished from the other supplications of the pure Imāms, peace be on them. In the preface of his *Sahifa*, al-Fādil al-Asfahāni said: "Though the supplications of our master, Imām Zayn al-'Ābidin, peace be on him, are numerous, they are distinguished from those of the infallible Imām, peace be on him, by showing pleading, lowliness, and neediness to Allah, the Most High." He added: "Allah, the Exalted,

singled out each of the Imāms with a quality which does not exist in other than him, such as bravery in Imām "Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, and his son al-Husain, peace be on him, gentleness and lament in Imām Zayn al- Ābidin's supplications, especially as it concerns the supplications of al-Sahifa al-Kāmila, which our companions Sometimes call the "Psalms of the Household of Mohammed" and sometimes they call it the "Gospel of the Folk of the House"

Let's pay attention to another part of his supplications in which he pled to Allah. He, peace be on him, said:

"My Lord, my sins have silenced me, and my words have been cut off. I have no argument, for I am the prisoner of my own affliction, the hostage to my works, the frequenter of my own offense, the confused in my intended way, the thwarted. I have brought myself to a halt in the halting place of the abased sinners, the halting place of the wretched and insolent, those who think lightly of Your promise. Glory be to You! What insolence I have insolently shown toward You! What delusion with which I have deluded myself! My master, have mercy on my falling flat on my face, the slipping of my foot, grant me my ignorance through Your clemency, and my evildoing through Your beneficence, for I admit my sin and confess my offense: Here are my hand and my forelock! I am resigned to retaliation against my soul! Have mercy on my white hair, the depletion of my days, the nearing of my term, my frailty, my misery, and the paucity of my stratagems! My Master, and have mercy upon me when my trace is cut off from this world, my mention is effaced

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among the creatures, and I join the forgotten, like the forgotten ones! My Master, and have mercy upon me at the change of my form and state when my body decays, my limbs are scattered, and my joints are dismembered! O my heedlessness toward what was wanted from me! My Master, have mercy upon at my mustering and uprising and on that day, appoint my standing place with Your friends, my place of emergence with Your beloved ones, and my dwelling in Your neighborhood! O Lord of the worlds!

4. It has opened doors to hope and expectation through Allah's mercy, which embraces all things, for whatever sins and crimes man commits, he should not despair of Allah's mercy, forgiveness, and munificence. In one of his supplications, Imām Zayn al- Ābidin, peace be on him, said:

"O my Allah, by Your mightiness and majesty, if You ask about my sins, I will demand Your pardon, and if You demand my ignobility, I will demand Your munificence."

Most of the Imām's supplications are full of hope which fills the souls with radiance, ambitions, and trust in Allah's pardon and forgiveness.

5. It has opened doors to wonderful debates with Allah, the Exalted. Such debates are full of firm proofs for asking him, the Exalted, for pardon. Let's listen to some of them. He (peace be on him) says:

"My Allah, if You do not forgive Your friends and those who obey You, then where shall the sinners go? If You do not show generosity to those who are sincere to You, then whom shall the evildoers ask for help? My Allah, You have revealed pardon in Your Book, and You

have commanded us to pardon him who wrongs us. We have wronged ourselves, so pardon us, for You are worthier of that than us. You have commanded us not to repel a beggar from our doors. I have come to beg You; therefore, repel me not from Your door! You have commanded us to do good. We are your slaves; therefore release our necks from the Fire!"

6. Most supplications of the Sahifa contain moral programs which purify man's soul. The following is one of them:

"O Allah, bless Mohammed and his Household, cause my faith to reach the most perfect faith, make my certainty the most excellent certainty; take my intention to the best of intentions, and my works to the best of works! O Allah, complete my intention through Your gentleness, rectify my certainty through what is with You, and set right what is corrupt in me through Your power!

7. It is among the spiritual and moral sources in Islamic thought. Therefore, it is a remedy for the perplexed souls, and fresh fountain from which the Allah-fearing and those who turn to him in repentance drink. It represents the philosophy of supplication, which the believer uses as a ladder to climb to Allah, and which makes him reach the highest degree of perfection, for there is nothing in this world's life higher than communicating with Allah, the Exalted, the Creator of the universe, and Giver of life. Surely perplexed souls find their objectives in supplication, for they feel tranquility after anxiety, and hope after despair. Sincere supplication takes man to the Kingdom and frees him from material pleasures. The

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immortal *Sahifa* of al-Sajjād has clearly contained this brilliant philosophy of supplication.

"Supplication is a beautiful literature, a blessed conversation, a rich language, a valuable religion, genuine eloquence, divine trace, and of prophetic scent."

Among the aspects of splendor and eloquence in the supplications of the Imām, is that he elaborated on describing the bliss, luxury, and beautiful palaces of the Garden, for he wanted men to wish for it through doing good deeds. Also he elaborated on frightening men with the Fire and severe punishment to make them refrain from committing sins. In this he followed the holy Qur'ān, which elaborated on describing the Garden and the Fire in many of its verses, for the same reasons which we mentioned. The rhetoricians have mentioned that the elaboration on such matters is among the highest and the most wonderful degrees of eloquence.

### **Resources:**

1. Al-Qarashi, Bagir Sharif. *The life of Imam Zayn al-Abidin*. Qom: Ansariyan publication, 2000.

## Questions and Answers

### Love of Ahlul Bayt

Allame Amini

*Questions and Answers is an interactive part which provides the readers with scientific and academic answers to their questions.*

The Late Ayatullah Allameh Haj Skeikh Abdol Husain Amini had a 4-month travel to Syria. On his trip, he visited scholars of different schools of Islam and delivered some speeches.

Once he went to visit the Syrian national library (Darolkotob – Al- Vataniyeh), where someone asked three questions from Ayatullah Amini:

Q: "This doubt was always in my mind and I couldn't solve it up to now; I can't figure it out why Shia, having such great scholars like you, exaggerates about Ahlul –bayt of the holy Prophet?"

We know that all Muslims are interested in Imam Ali and his progeny, but what is the reason of their trend, exaggerating about their love of Ahlul –bayt?"

And now the answer:

It is necessary to learn about the nature of love and hate first. They are 2 attributes, which come to heart and go out of it frequently. The first one shows the eagerness of soul and its willingness; and the other indicates the unwillingness of soul and its opposition. Since, all creatures - materialistic ones or spiritual ones, in whole or in detail- upon receiving any thing immediately will make a judgment - and will do one of these two things: to love or to hate

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To love: after finishing its picturing and evaluation in the mind and approving it, the feeling of love will fill heart and an affection bond will be made between that thing and the heart.

Or it is not reflected in the heart, and no bond is made; therefore heart opposes it. This is the truth of love and hate.

Love and hate, as they need reasons for their appearance they will need more reasons and causes to give them strength or make them weak. It means that in explaining the strength and weakness of love and hate, it is needed to recourse to the strengths and weaknesses of their reasons.

So, in fact, love and hate are measured according to their creative reasons and causes.

The only "Being" who is worth loving is The Almighty God. His attributes such as Beauty and Majesty, the clear signs of His Greatness and Glory, and each His kindness and Mercy, though countless in number- are enough reasons to love Him eternally.

Yes, God's names, which are 1000 names or more, and each of them points to one of His attributes, and also points to the other names of Him tacitly, all lead us to love Him. Even one of them is enough to make human being serve and love God!

Thus, the Almighty God has priority to be loved; and if a reason of love is found in other things, it is in fact a ray of His Grace, the light of His attention and kindness. Because the life begins and ends in Him.

Therefore, if one gives priority to someone else except Him in loving, he goes astray; if one, in loving and friendship, gives priority to someone else except Him deviates from sound mind. In fact, he has preferred "the possible" being over the "Necessary Being". So, it is on God to punish such a person. As He Himself states: *"Say: if your fathers, your wealth your*



*earnings, and the business you dread will fall off, plus the dwellings you are so fond of, are all dearest to you than God and His messenger, or striving for His sake, then wait around till God bring His command to pass God does not guide such immoral folk!"* (Qur'an; 10: 24)

Since, these attributes – the attributes of God are unlimited - therefore, the love which is the result of these attributes is unlimited.

This friendship, in every level and stage, is of no exaggeration and extremities.

For exaggeration means going out of the limits and boundaries of principles, and whatever lacks limits and measures (something which is immeasurable) is out of exaggeration.

The reason of difference in people's love towards God is in the differences they have in their knowledge of the motives and causes of love. Yes, love and interest are motives, and their extremes determined by the extend of that knowledge.

The following verse points to a mutual love between God and His servant:

*"Say: If you have been loving God, then follow me; God will then love you and forgive you your offences"* (Qur'an; 10: 231)

And from the most outstanding pious people and well-known devoted servants of God who drew love and care of God to himself is Ali (p.b.u.h). The holy Prophet introduces the one who enjoys from this kind of mutual love and care in "Rayat" tradition which is a true, firm, and repeatedly narrated by successive generations, and unified between Shia and Sunnite. It says: "Tomorrow I will give the flag to someone

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whom his God and the prophet love him, and he loves God and the prophet as well."<sup>1</sup>

When mutual love between God and His servant happened, the servant will deserve blessings and greatness. The capability of becoming close to God will happen for him, in an Islamic tradition it is quoted that the Almighty God says:

*"Always my servant continues drawing near to me through the voluntary prayers (nawafil), to the point that I love him, and when I love him, I become his ear, to hear through it, and his eye, to see through it, and a hand to have charisma over other people and a feet to go by it, and if he asks me some thing, I'll give it to him and if he seeks shelter of me, I'll become his shelter."<sup>2</sup>*

This person is placed in the utmost of God's love, and he is the secret connection between God and the faithful people. He is the way between God and His servants, and people will reach the happiness of this world and next world by following him and by him. Such a great person has the state of "priority and primary premises" in love. It means that this person possessing these specialized virtues and qualities, after God, should be loved before and above other things.

This true tradition from the holy Prophet denotes to the above – mentioned points: "Love God for his feeding and love me for the love of God."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Al Ghadir

<sup>2</sup> Sahih Bokhari, v.7,p.190

<sup>3</sup> Sahih Tirmazi, 13:201, Mostadrek Hakem,3;149. Baghdad's Tarikh; v.4;160.

This is one of the reasons of the love of "The holy Prophet" and of course, there are lots of other motives and reasons, which are beyond the scope of this article. Regarding his firm and close connection to the Supervisor and Master of this world, and his great, special and unique character, and the virtues that his heart and soul bear, he deserves love!

Only one of these reasons is enough for a mankind – after loving God – to fall in love with him.

Therefore, "the prophet", regardless of his nature, essence, families, and virtues and regardless of his creation, temper, growth and increase, which are all specifically for him is worth loving; paying attention to the fact that every thing on and around this world is created for him and if he wasn't, no human being was created and no land was flattened...is enough for us to love him more than our lives and souls. And in Qur'an, his Walayah (guardianship) is equal to the walayah of God. But, people are not the same in his love. For, the stages and levels of their knowledge and recognition of God and His prophet are various.

Ghortabi said: "Whoever has a true faith in God, is not deprived of this love. But people are different in His love. Some gain significant profits from it, and some gain less, such as those lustful people who commit sin most of the times.

Even though, from these people (the second group), there are ones whom upon hearing the holy Prophet's name, their desire to meet him is more than their desire to meet their wives, and children, to the extent that they accept to put their lives in danger to meet him. The one, who refers to his soul, undoubtedly will understand this issue.

Likewise these people, there are those who love to visit his tomb and shrine more than anything else in their lives.

This is because of the love of him that they are bearing in their hearts, but, unfortunately, the love of these people, last a very short-time and will be destroyed by negligence. And to "save this feeling" everyone should ask God for help.

The true tradition from "Anas ibn Malek" from the Holy Prophet: "The holy Prophet said: "I swear to God whom my life is at His hand, no one of you has faith, unless I'll be more dearer than his father and children, and all people in his heart."

In another tradition "Abuhorairah" relates from the holy Prophet: "I swear God, whom my life is at His hand no one of you have faith, unless I'll be the dearer than his father and children in his heart."

In another tradition, the holy Prophet said: "The one who possesses 3 characteristics, will taste the sweetness of faith:

1. God and the holy Prophet, in his eyes, will be greater than other creatures.

And in another word narrated by Bokhari:"... when God and his Prophet be dearer than any one else.

And also, in a narrative by Abdolluh Ibn Hesham: "We were at the presence of the holy Prophet. The prophet took the hand of Omar Ibn Khattab in his hand, while Omar said: "Oh, messenger of God! You are the loveliest and dearest to me than other things but my life!"

The holy Prophet said: "No, I swear God who my life is at His hand, this kind of love has no profit for you till I become dearer than you in your eye."

Omar said: "Now, you become the same as you said, I swear to God! Now, you are even dearer than me in my heart." The holy Prophet said: "Oh, Omar, now?"

And in a true tradition from Abobakr Maleki from Anas, as the forth narrator from Prophet: "No servant, I swear to God,

has no faith, till I become dearer in his eyes than his family, his children and all people."

"Nasibi" in "Favaed" from Abo-Leili-Ansari from the holy Prophet said: "No one, I swear God, has no faith, till I become dearer in his eyes than his family, his children, and all people."

Imam Fakhr Razi in the 7<sup>th</sup> volume of his Interpretation Book said: "For sure, saying prayers for the holy Prophet is a great statue and for this reason this pray is recited at the end of daily prayer, "Allahomma Salle Ala Muhammad va Ale Muhammad". This kind of reverence is not expressed for anyone else except the family of the Prophet, and all of these indicate that the love and care for Prophet's family is incumbent on us."

To the point that he stated: "The family of Prophet are equaled with the Prophet in five things:

1. Saying benedictions upon the holy Prophet and his family in the prayers.
2. In purification and infallibility (inferred from the verse of Tathir.
3. In saying hello to them
4. In avoiding giving them charities
5. The necessity of loving them.

Therefore, it is clear that according to the holy Qur'an, traditions, reason, logic and credence, the love and care for the Prophet's family is in the line of the love and care for the holy prophet. Love and care for them can not be separated from the love for the holy Prophet, and love for holy Prophet is not separated from the love for God.

According to many authentic traditions, the "love of the Prophet's family" is of great importance, and is regarded as the

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necessary element of Islam religion and is of logical obligatory, and in line with love for the holy Prophet.

Defining specific borders for love to constrain Muslims' feelings in it is far from sound logic.

How can we find such comprehensive knowledge to understand all the virtues of this noble family; the fact is that people's knowledge about them is not similar. Understanding and perceiving the depth of their virtues are out of the natural possibilities, and we never can understand them fully. No one, despite his (her) knowledge, is capable of understanding all of their virtues.

You will become aware of your incapacibilities in appreciating their virtues when you choose one of their virtues and do your best to pay your debts to it; just then the truth will become apparent to you and you will find no way out except admitting your incapacibilities in loving them as they deserve.

## Database introduction

*Name of the website: Islamic occasions*

*URL: <http://www.ezsoftech.com/islamic/default.asp>*

*Language: English*

*Subject: Islamic occasions, Islamic calendar, 14 infallibles, holy wars, etc.*

*Founder: Akramulla Syed*

**"Islamic Occasions Network"** is a humble effort to serve the spiritual, informational, cultural, educational and social needs of the worldwide Islamic community in particular and non-Islamic community in general. It is a non-profit Internet-based group working to present the ideals and sublime teachings of Islam to the world, as directed by our Holy Prophet Mohammad (Highly Praised) and his Ahlul Bayt (p.b.u.t.), to remove the misconceptions about the world's fastest growing religion Islam and finally inviting people towards the most beautiful way of life. It has no connections with any political or religious organization, and associated with no school of thought other than that of Ahlul Bayt (p.b.u.t.).

The founder of the network "Akramulla Syed" realized the need for a comprehensive Islamic website, because of the vast amount of information on the Internet, it's easy to come across incorrect information about Islam and Muslim people. Particularly in today's world, misconceptions about our faith are rampant. Hence, he laid the foundation of this Islamic website in 1998 with only few articles. Since then it is a continuous process of addition of different sections, to fulfill the needs of different sections of the worldwide community. Today "islamicoccasions" website is grown to be

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Islamic Occasions Network: This website is about different Islamic Occasions throughout the Islamic calender, each occasion has been written briefly. And many websites throughout the world link our Islamic Occasions in their website, example <http://www.jaffari.org>, <http://www.islamicentre.org>, <http://www.muslimyouth.ca> and etc

**<http://www.ezsoftech.com/stories/stories.asp>**

Moral Stories: This website contains lots of moral stories for different age group of people. Stories from the life of prophets and Imams as well as from the lives of ordinary people, which teach us extraordinary morals.

**<http://www.ezsoftech.com/ramadan>**

Holy Ramadan: This website contains information related to Muslim Holy month of Ramadhan, for Muslims as well as non-Muslims who like to learn about fasting, prayers, charity, celebration and etc. This link is one of the sublinks of the Islamic calendar. There are other links about all the months from Moharram to Dhu Al-Hijjah as well e.g. <http://www.ezsoftech.com/moharram> in which important information about the events of the month is provided.

**<http://www.ezsoftech.com/mazloom>**

Mazloom Husain (p.b.u.h): This website contains all the information related to Muslim Holy month of Mohurram, and all the sacrifices carried out by the family of Prophet (p.b.u.h), particularly



Imam Husain (p.b.u.h) and his companions to save dignity of Islam.

**<http://www.ezsoftech.com/hajj>**

Hajj-e-Baytullah: This website contain all the information related to Muslim pilgrimage called as Hajj, preparation of Hajj, process of Hajj, history of Hajj, till Eid Al-Adha, the festival of sacrifice in Islam in the memory of great Prophets Abraham and Ishmael (p.b.u.t).

**<http://www.ezsoftech.com/akram>**

Islam Page: This website is about the introduction of Islam to Muslims as well as non-Muslims, talks about purpose of life, Christianity, comparative religion, prophecies about the Holy Prophet of Islam in Hindu, Christian and Jewish Scriptures (religious books), Shia Sunni unity and much more

**<http://www.ezsoftech.com/islam>**

Islam for Dummies: This website contains very basic information about Islam for anyone who likes to learn about Islam and particularly very useful for non-Muslims.

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Free Screensavers and wallpapers: This website contains beautiful wallpapers, screensavers and presentations for people to download freely for their computers

**<http://www.ezsoftech.com/quiz/register.asp>**

Islamic Occasions News Letter / Mailing List: Here people register their name and details to receive emails from the website on various important Islamic subjects.

It is good to point that "Islamic calendar", "14 infallibles" and "holy wars" are the links which contain the main content of the website. Each of them contains many links that are considered to be rich source of information.

And finally the interesting point about the site is the forum (discussion group) in which there is the process of asking and answering the questions between those with information need and people who have special knowledge about the subjects.

Visiting the website is highly recommended.

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