

# Chapter 1: Timed Acts Of Worship

## Prelude

Timed acts of worship are of four kinds:

1. Daily acts of worship
2. Weekly acts of worship
3. Monthly acts of worship
4. Yearly, or seasonal, acts of worship

The course of worship, expounded by the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a), has its origin in both the obligatory and recommended devotional acts determined by Islam in its code of law from which further actions branch out. The daily obligatory and supererogatory prayers, the weekly congregational Friday prayers, the obligatory fasting, the ritual *Hajj* Pilgrimage, and the recommended three-day fasting done every month are all indicative of the all-inclusiveness of this system.

To a certain extent and at a certain level, such all-inclusiveness is compulsory or semi-compulsory, while at another level, it gives man the opportunity to worship the Lord and attain self-perfection through these devotional acts within a wisely planned strategy of education, self-purification, and self-refinement.

The classification of these devotional acts also shows the profundity, accuracy, and perfection of this course delivered by the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a), and their attention towards the building of a virtuous community through the acts of worship and this course in particular.

This course comprises various acts such as prayers, fasting, pilgrimage (including the ritual major and

minor *Hajj* and visiting the tombs of holy personalities), struggling against enemies, supplications, litanies, recitation of the Holy Qur'an, almsgiving, building good relations with others, doing charitable acts, seeking knowledge, and other obligatory and recommended devotional acts.

## Daily Devotional Acts

### Daily Prayers, Supererogatory Prayers and Details

According to the code of Islamic law, the performance of the daily ritual prayer is obligatory five times a day amounting to seventeen units of prayer (i.e. *rak'ah*); two at dawn (before sunrise), four just after midday, four in the afternoon, three at dusk (immediately after sunset), and four in the earlier hours of night. This is an object of agreement among all Muslims. On journeys, the four-unit prayers become two units; however, jurists of the various Muslim sects disagree regarding some details and certain conditions.

Along with its particularities, the ritual prayer is one of the most significant pillars on which Islam has been founded. It also represents the best example of the unity of the Muslim nation, since all agree upon it.

It is also the best of all devotional acts after the recognition of Almighty Allah, as is maintained by some traditions because it expresses the relationship and connection between man and the Almighty—a relationship that must be constant and never cut off. For this reason, prayer must not lapse under any circumstance; rather, it must be performed in all states, including health and sickness, security and fear and, when no other means is possible it must even be performed through gestures. [1](#)

One of the highly recommended acts is to offer a number of units of prayer before and after these ritual obligatory prayers. Such supererogatory prayers are *nawafil* (sing. *naflah*) or *rawatib*.

In the traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), the number of the units of these daily supererogatory prayers is twice the number of units of obligatory prayers. They are thirty-four units in all; four units before dawn, eight before afternoon, eight before evening, four after sunset, two in the sitting position after the early night prayer (regarded as one unit only), eight for the night prayer, whose time is between midnight and dawn, two after the night prayer (called *al-Shaf'*), and one after that (called *al-Witr*). [2](#)

Shaykh al-Kulayni has reported through an authentic chain of authority that Hannan that 'Amr ibn Hurayth asked Imam al-Sadiq ('a) to inform him about the prayers the Holy Prophet (S) used to offer.

The Imam ('a) thus answered:

كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ يُصَلِّي ثَمَانِي رَكَعَاتِ الزَّوَالِ وَأَرْبَعًا الْأُولَى، وَثَمَانِيًا بَعْدَهَا، وَأَرْبَعًا الْعَصْرَ، وَثَلَاثًا الْمَغْرِبَ، وَأَرْبَعًا بَعْدَ الْمَغْرِبِ، وَالْعِشَاءَ الْآخِرَةَ أَرْبَعًا، وَثَمَانِي صَلَاةَ اللَّيْلِ، وَثَلَاثًا الْوُتْرَ، وَرَكَعَتِي الْفَجْرِ وَصَلَاةَ الْعِدَاةِ رَكَعَتَيْنِ.

*The Holy Prophet (S) offered eight units before the four units of the obligatory afternoon prayer. He offered four units of the obligatory afternoon prayer; then three units of the obligatory sunset prayer with four units after that; four units of the obligatory early night prayer; eight units of the night prayer with three units of the Witr prayer; two units of the obligatory dawn prayer with two units after that.* [3](#)

Imam al-Sadiq ('a) is reported to have said:

شِيعَتُنَا أَهْلُ الْوَرَعِ وَأَهْلُ الْوَفَاءِ وَالْأَمَانَةِ وَأَهْلُ الزُّهْدِ وَالْعِبَادَةِ، أَصْحَابُ إِحْدَى وَخَمْسِينَ رَكَعَةً فِي الْيَوْمِ وَاللَّيْلَةِ، الْقَائِمُونَ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالصَّائِمُونَ بِالنَّهَارِ، يُزَكُّونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ، وَيَحْجُونَ الْبَيْتَ وَجَعْتَنِي بَيْنَ كُلِّ مُحَرَّمٍ

*Our Shi'ah are the people of piety, faithfulness, and honesty. They are the people of asceticism and worship. They perform fifty-one units of prayer in a single day and night. They pass their nights in devotional acts and their days fasting. They purify their wealth, go on pilgrimage to the House of God, and refrain from committing any forbidden act.* [4](#)

In the book entitled *Misbah al-Mutahajjid*, Shaykh al-Tusi reports Imam al-Askari ('a) as saying:

عَلَامَاتُ الْمُؤْمِنِ خَمْسٌ: صَلَاةُ الْخَمْسِينَ، وَزِيَارَةُ الْأَرْبَعِينَ، وَالتَّخْتُمُ فِي الْيَمِينِ، وَتَغْفِيرُ الْجَبِينِ، وَالْجَهْرُ بِبِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ.

*The signs of true faithful believers are five: Offering the fifty prayers, visitation (of holy shrines) on the Day of Arba'in, wearing a ring on the right hand, pressing the forehead, and raising the voice with bismi-llahir-rahmanir-rahim.* [5,6](#)

## [More Privileges](#)

The Ahl al-Bayt ('a) School has had a number of advantages over the other Muslim sects with regard to prayer and its details. These advantages may be cited as follows:

**First:** Unlike the other Muslim jurisprudential schools, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) School abides by reciting *Surah al-Fatihah* and one other entire *Surah* in the first two units of all prayers. [7](#)

The Ahl al-Bayt ('a) School also recites the *basmalah* (*bismi-llahir-rahmanir-rahim*) in *Surah al-Fatihah* and in all other *Surahs*, because it is an inseparable part of all *Surahs* of the Holy Qur'an as believed by all Shi'ite jurists, and maintained by many traditions and historical practice. Besides, the fact that

all calligraphies of the Holy Qur'an, which Muslims have honestly transmitted since the time of the Holy Prophet (S) and up to the present day, entail that the *basmalah* is an inseparable part of the *Surahs*.

**Second:** According to the jurisprudence of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) School, the *basmalah* should be recited audibly even in the prayers where the recitations of the Qur'anic texts must be uttered inaudibly, such as the obligatory afternoon and evening prayers. This matter was turned into a political issue during the reign of Mu'awiyah when the true righteous Muslims were distinguished from the pro-Umayyad groups through this in particular, especially after Mu'awiyah decided to cancel out reciting the *basmalah* audibly in the prayers—an event to which some historical texts have referred.

**Third:** The Ahl al-Bayt ('a) School abides by the ruling that prostration must be done on earth directly or on whatever plants the earth produces except plants that are edible and plants used to make cloth. In this ruling, jurists of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) School depend upon traditions reported from the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) and Imam al-Sadiq's verdict that reads:

لَا يَجُوزُ السُّجُودُ إِلَّا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ أَوْ مَا أَنْبَتَتْهُ إِلَّا مَا أَكَلَ أَوْ لُبِسَ

*Prostration is impermissible unless made on earth or on plants produced by the earth, except those eaten or converted into cloth.* [8](#)

Likewise, Shi'ite scholars are reported to have forbidden prostration on cotton and linen, because Imam al-Baqir ('a) is reported as saying:

لَا يُسْجَدُ عَلَى الثَّوْبِ الْكَرْسَفِ وَلَا عَلَى الصُّوفِ وَلَا عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِنَ الْحَيَوَانِ وَلَا عَلَى حُطَامٍ وَلَا عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِنَ الثَّمَارِ وَلَا عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِنَ الرِّيشِ

*It is not permissible to prostrate on cotton cloth, nor on wool, nor on a part of an animal, or any food, or any part of fruits, or any part of furniture.* [9](#)

This ruling is supported by the following Prophetic tradition that is reported by al-Bukhari, Muslim, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, al-Darimi, and Ahmad ibn Hanbal:

جُعِلَتْ لِي الْأَرْضُ مَسْجِدًا وَطَهُورًا

*The earth has been made for me a prostration place and pure.*

Likewise, al-Bukhari, Muslim, and al-Nasa'i have reported the Holy Prophet (S) as saying:

الْأَرْضُ لَكَ مَسْجِدٌ

*The earth is a place of prostration for you.* [10](#)

Sunni master Hadithists have also reported the Holy Prophet (S) as saying:

لَا تَتِمُّ صَلَاةُ أَحَدِكُمْ حَتَّى يَتَوَضَّأَ كَمَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى ثُمَّ يَسْجُدُ مُمَكِّنًا جَبْهَتَهُ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ.

*The prayer of any of you is imperfect unless you perform the ritual ablution (wudhu') exactly as Almighty Allah has ordered and then prostrate yourselves on the earth by making your foreheads touch the earth.* [11](#)

These Hadithists also report Khabbab to have said that they (i.e. the Muslims) complained to the Holy Prophet (S) about the heat of the earth that scorched their foreheads and noses when they prostrated in prayers on the earth directly, but he refused to accommodate their complaints. [12](#)

In spite of the existence of so many traditions, all Sunni jurisprudents have disobeyed this ruling and deemed it permissible to prostrate on all things.

In view of these points, the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) comply with this ruling and sometimes carry with them a cake of dry clay or clean stone to prostrate on when they cannot find ground on which they can prostrate in prayer.

Attempting to confuse the Shi'ah and arouse spurious arguments and false accusations against them, the enemies of the Shi'ah have falsely claimed that the Shi'ah worship these stones although they are in fact prostrating ON these materials, not TO them. We seek Allah's protection against such false accusations. [13](#)

Fourth: Adherents of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) School recite the phrase *hayya 'ala khayr al-'amal* (Come to the best deed) twice in the *adhan* (the ritual call to prayer) and *iqamah* (the prefatory part of the ritual prayers) after the phrase *hayya 'ala al-falah* (Come to prosperity). The Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) confirmed it to be an inseparable part of the ritual *adhan* and *iqamah*.

Unlike the other schools of jurisprudence, the Zaydiyyah, [14](#) in addition to the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) School, abide by this ruling which has become one of the distinctive features of the Shi'ah.

As for the third *shahadah* (creed) [15](#) that the Shi'ah include in the *adhan* and *iqamah*, all jurisprudents of the virtuous community unanimously agree that this phrase is not part of the ritual *adhan* and *iqamah*. It is, therefore, incorrect to say it with the intention of its being part of the *adhan*, as it would then become a forbidden innovation.

However, the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) say it in the middle of the ritual *adhan* and *iqamah* making it one of the distinctive features and mottos that distinguish them from the other Muslims. There are two main reasons for this action:

1. This statement by the Shi'ah only intends to expressly declare their loyalty to Imam 'Ali ('a), because he suffered immense injustice and harm. The harshest injustice was practiced by the Umayyads and the Nawasib (the anti-Shi'ah) who adopted the course of cursing him from the pulpits of mosques (i.e. *minbar*: a set of steps in mosques from which sermons are delivered) and in the Friday Prayer sermons (i.e. *khutbah*). Reacting to these wicked attempts to deform the perfect picture of this divine personality, the Shi'ah emphasize their loyalty to Imam 'Ali ('a) whenever they have an opportunity to do so.

2. In various stages of their history, the Shi'ah suffered immense persecution because of false accusations and charges. One of these accusations was the charge of exaggeration about Imam 'Ali ('a) and his descendants. As a result, they raise this motto with the aim of confirming that their belief in Imam 'Ali ('a) is no more than showing loyalty to him, believing in his Imamate, divinely designated leadership, and religious authority, and being the proof of Almighty Allah for His creatures. All this originated from the instruction of the Holy Prophet (S) who declared on the day at Khumm Spring (i.e. Ghadir):

مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَهَذَا عَلِيٌّ مَوْلَاهُ. اللَّهُمَّ وَالِ مَنْ وَالِ الْآهَ وَعَادِ مَنْ عَادَاهُ.

*Behold! 'Ali is now the master of every one who has regarded me as his master. O Allah, (please) support whoever supports 'Ali and be the enemy of whoever incurs the hostility of 'Ali... 16*

The Shi'ah thus hold that Imam 'Ali ('a) is a servant of Almighty Allah and one of His most intimate saints, no more.

**Fifth:** The Ahl al-Bayt ('a) School permits the combining of the midday with the afternoon obligatory prayers at one time and the sunset with the early night prayers at one time, without need of a particular excuse for such combining. In this ruling, this school depends upon traditions that have been reported from the Holy Prophet (S) and the Holy Imams ('a).

In the most reliable Sunni books of Hadith which Sunnis consider thoroughly authentic, it is reported on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas that the Holy Prophet (S) performed the eight units of the midday and afternoon obligatory prayers together; and seven units of the sunset and early night obligatory prayers without separating (in time) one prayer from the other. This tradition has been reported by the five Sunni master Hadithists, [17](#) one of whom is Muslim (al-Nayshaburi) who reported the tradition in the following form:

*The Messenger of Allah combined the midday with the afternoon (obligatory) prayers and the sunset with the early night prayers in Madinah although there was neither fear nor rain.*

When Ibn 'Abbas was asked about the reason, he answered, "The Prophet did not want the matter (of prayer) to be a burden upon his people."[18](#)

In *'Ilal al-Ahkam*, Shaykh al-Saduq has reported, through a valid chain of authority, that Imam al-Sadiq

(‘a) said, “The Messenger of Allah (‘a) performed the midday and the afternoon prayers together, although there was no reason or cause for that. When ‘Umar, who challenged him the most, asked whether a change had occurred in the rulings of prayer, the Holy Prophet (S) answered, ‘No, I only want to make the matter more feasible for my people.’”<sup>19</sup>

Individuals of the virtuous community combine these sets of prayers most of the time as a constant course, although the Holy Prophet (S) and the Holy Imams (‘a) generally used to perform each prayer separately (i.e. each one in its definite time) as is maintained by many other traditions.<sup>20</sup>

**Sixth:** The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) School rubs the feet with the water of *wudhu'* instead of washing them in the ritual ablution (*wudhu'*) for the prayer, unlike other Muslims who usually wash their feet, except in certain states when they rub their sandals with water—a practice that is deemed legal and adopted by some Muslim jurisprudential schools.

In their practice, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and their followers rely upon the holy verse of ablution, which reads:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ (6)

***O you who believe, when you rise up to prayer, wash your faces and your hands as far as the elbows, and rub (with water) your heads and your feet to the ankles. (5:6)***

Although this holy verse clearly states that the feet, like the head, should be rubbed with water and washing is not mentioned for the feet, Muslim scholars other than the Shi’ah have interpreted this holy verse according to their own logic and joined the ‘feet’ to the ‘faces’ and ‘hands’ based upon some traditions, contradicting the obvious meaning of the holy verse.<sup>21</sup>

## **Post-Prayer Litanies**

The post-prayer litanies are supplications, doxologies, and invocations said after the obligatory prayers. Emphasis on these litanies has been laid by the Holy Prophet (S) and the Holy Imams (‘a) in many traditions. Following the obligatory prayers with supplications, doxologies, and invocations is a well-confirmed tradition by which all Muslims abide.

Once again, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and the virtuous community are distinguished from others with regard to these post-prayer litanies in the following points:

1. Litanies of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and their followers are more comprehensive and all-inclusive than others.
2. There are many traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) carrying supplications, doxologies, and litanies said

after prayers.

3. In the literature of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), each supererogatory prayer has its own litanies in addition to the general post-prayer litanies said after all obligatory prayers.

**The most favored post-prayer litany is the following:**

*Repeat the following phrase three times:*

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

*Allah is the Greatest.*

*Repeat the following invocation three times:*

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

O Allah, send blessings upon Muhammad and the Household of Muhammad.

*Finally, say the following litany:*

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَا نَعْبُدُ إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّ آبَائِنَا آلَا وَوَلِينَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ وَحْدَهُ وَحْدَهُ وَحْدَهُ نَجَزَ وَعْدَهُ وَنَصَرَ عَبْدَهُ وَأَعَزَّ جُنْدَهُ وَهَزَمَ آلَا حَزَابٍ وَحْدَهُ فَلَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ وَيُمِيتُ وَيُحْيِي وَهُوَ حَيٌّ لَا يَمُوتُ بِيَدِهِ الْخَيْرُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

*There is no god save Allah; One and Only God; and we are submissive to Him. There is no god save Allah and we worship none save Him, making our devotion sincere in His sight, even though the polytheists may detest it. There is no god save Allah; (He is) Our Lord and the Lord of our fathers of old. There is no god save Allah; alone, alone, alone. He has truly fulfilled His promise, granted His servant victory, made powerful His soldiers, and defeated the parties alone. So, sovereignty be His and praise be His. He grants life and causes to die and, after causing to die, raises from the dead; while He is eternally ever-living and He never dies. All goodness is by His Hand, and He has power over all things.*

Another most favored post-prayer litany is the famous invocation known as *Tasbih al-Zahra'*, which consists of one hundred phrases praising Almighty Allah. The most famous and considerable form of it is to say *allahu-akbar(u)* (Allah is the Greatest) thirty-four times, *alhamdu-lillah(i)* (Praise be to Allah) thirty-three times, and *subhanallah(i)* (Glory be to Allah) thirty-three times.<sup>22</sup>

Additional post-prayer litanies include reciting *Ayat al-Kursi* (2:255), *Surah al-Falaq* (No. 113), *Surah al-*

Nas (No. 113), and Surah al-Tawhid (No. 112), the prostration of thanks (*sajda al-shukr*) and many other post-prayer supplications that can be found in books on supplications.[23](#)

## Recitation of the Holy Qur'an

Recitation of the Holy Qur'an is one of the daily acts of worship. In this respect, Imam al-Sadiq ('a), through a valid chain of authority, is reported to have said:

الْقُرْآنُ عَهْدُ اللَّهِ إِلَى خَلْقِهِ، فَقَدْ يَنْبَغِي لِلْمَرْءِ الْمُسْلِمِ أَنْ يَنْظُرَ إِلَى عَهْدِهِ وَأَنْ يَقْرَأَ مِنْهُ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ خَمْسِينَ آيَةً.

*The Qur'an is Almighty Allah's trust that He has entrusted to His creatures. Therefore, a Muslim individual is required to pay regard to this trust and recite fifty verses of it everyday.*[24](#)

According to another validly reported tradition, Imam al-Ridha ('a) has said:

يَنْبَغِي لِلرَّجُلِ إِذَا أَصْبَحَ أَنْ يَقْرَأَ بَعْدَ التَّعْقِيبِ خَمْسِينَ آيَةً.

*At the beginning of the day, it is required to recite fifty verses of the Qur'an after post-prayer invocations.*[25](#)

According to another tradition, the Holy Prophet (S) said:

مَنْ قَرَأَ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ مِائَةَ آيَةٍ فِي الْمُصْحَفِ بِتَرْتِيلٍ وَخُشُوعٍ وَسُكُونٍ، كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَهُ مِنَ الثَّوَابِ بِمِقْدَارِ مَا يَعْمَلُهُ جَمِيعُ أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ. وَمَنْ قَرَأَ مِائَتِي آيَةٍ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَهُ مِنَ الثَّوَابِ مَا يَعْمَلُهُ أَهْلُ السَّمَاءِ وَأَهْلُ الْأَرْضِ.

*Whoever recites one hundred verses from a copy of the Qur'an everyday with modulation, reverence, and tranquility, Almighty Allah will record for him a reward that is equal to the reward of the deeds of the inhabitants of the earth. Whoever recites two hundred, Almighty Allah will record for him a reward equal to the reward of the deeds of the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth.*[26](#)

From the many traditions regarding the recitation of the Holy Qur'an, we can conclude the following instructions:

1. It is advisable to recite the Holy Qur'an and ponder and contemplate upon it.
2. When Paradise, Hellfire, or the other exhortative topics are recited, the reciter is required to pause a while and think deeply.
3. Recitation of the Holy Qur'an should be done with reverence.

4. The Holy Qur'an must not be recited heedlessly because an impetuous manner has been described by traditions as prattle.

5. It is recommended not to recite more than one part (*juz'*)<sup>27</sup> of the Holy Qur'an per day so as not to recite it entirely in less than a month.<sup>28</sup>

## The Best Times of Worship in a Day

According to traditions and instructions of the Holy Imams ('a), the best times of worship during a 24-hour day are the last third of night—'night' begins at sunset and ends at the rise of dawn—and the period between dawn and sunrise. These two times are distinguished for prayers, supplications, litanies, and whispered prayers.

Traditions have drawn attention to the necessity of spending the dawn in acts of worship and warned against sleeping in the period between dawn and sunrise, which should be spent doing supplications, litanies, recitation of the Holy Qur'an, and earning a lawful living.

The two times of sunrise and sunset have also been introduced as the best times of worship in the Holy Qur'an which recommends mentioning Almighty Allah at these two times. It thus reads:

(وَأذْكُرْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلاً 25)

***Glorify the name of your Lord morning and evening. (76:25)***

Many supplicatory prayers and litanies are to be said in the morning and evening. Shaykh al-Qummi, in *Mafatih al-Jinan*, has cited some of these supplications, the most important of which are *Du'a' al-'Asharat* and Imam Zayn al-'Abidin's supplications in the morning and evening.<sup>29</sup>

## Voluntary Prayers and Prayer of Inadvertence

In addition to their encouragements to offer the daily supererogatory prayers, the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), have encouraged offering more prayers voluntarily,<sup>30</sup> especially at night. Among these prayers are the following:

1. A voluntary ten-unit prayer after the obligatory sunset prayer
2. A voluntary twelve-unit prayer everyday
3. A voluntary four-unit prayer after the obligatory afternoon prayer
4. A special voluntary four-unit prayer before or after noon

5. A voluntary two-unit prayer between the obligatory sunset and early night prayer. According to some traditions, this prayer is called the Will Prayer or *Salat al-Ghufaylah* (prayer of inadvertence) familiar to the individuals of the virtuous community. This prayer is offered in a particular way. It consists of two units: in the first unit, after *Surah al-Fatihah*, you recite the following verses of (*Surah al-Anbiya*<sup>1</sup> 21:87–88):

وَذَا النُّونِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغَاضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ  
الظَّالِمِينَ (87) فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْغَمِّ وَكَذَلِكَ نُنْجِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (88)

***And (mention) Dhu'n-Nun (Jonah), when he went off in anger and deemed that We would not suppress his sustenance. But he cried out in the darkness, "There is no god save You. Be You Glorified! Lo! I have been a wrongdoer." Then we heard his prayer and saved him from the anguish. Thus, we save the believers.***

In the second unit, the following verse (6:59) should be recited after *Surah al-Fatihah*:

وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ  
الْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ (59)

***And with Him are the keys of the Invisible. None but He knows them. And He knows what is in the land and the sea. Not a leaf falls but He knows it, not a grain amid the darkness of the earth, naught of wet or dry but (it is noted) in a clear record.***

After reciting this verse, you should raise both hands for Qunut,<sup>31</sup> saying:

...اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِمَفَاتِحِ الْغَيْبِ الَّتِي لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا أَنْتَ أَنْ تُصَلِّيَ عَلَيَّ مُحَمَّدَ وَآلِهِ وَأَنْ

*O Allah, I beseech You in the name of the Keys of the Invisible (world) that none knows save You; (please) send blessings upon Muhammad and his Household and...*

You may then mention your needs.

Then, you should say the following:

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ وَلِيُّ نِعْمَتِي وَالْقَادِرُ عَلَى طَلِبَتِي تَعَلَّمْ حَاجَتِي فَاسْأَلْ بِحَقِّ مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ لِمَا قَضَيْتَهَا  
لِي.

*O Allah, You are the source of all graces that I have, You have the power to respond to my request, and*

*You know my needs; I therefore beseech You in the name of Muhammad and his Household, peace be upon him and them, to grant me my needs.*

You may then pray to Him for your personal needs, for traditions hold that any one who offers this prayer and supplicates to Almighty Allah will have his requests granted.<sup>32</sup>

6. One thousand units of prayer in 24 hours, a whole day. It is worth mentioning that the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) used to practice this voluntary act persistently.

1. – The Holy Prophet (S) is reported through valid chains of authority to have said at the final hours of his blessed lifetime: *لَيْسَ مِنِّي مَنِ اسْتَخَفَّ بِصَلَاتِهِ وَلَا يَرُدُّ عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ*. He that belittles his prayer does not belong to me and will not join me at the Divine Pond. Imam al-Sadiq ('a), through a valid chain of authority, is reported to have said at the final hour of his lifetime: *لَا تَنَالُ شَفَاعَتَنَا مَنْ اسْتَخَفَّ بِالصَّلَاةِ*. Our intercession shall never reach him who belittles his prayer. Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 3: 16, H. 7 & 3.

2. – This number of units of prayer, which has been proficiently maintained by the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) as they received it from the Holy Prophet (S), is one of the features that distinguish the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) School from the other Muslim schools. The dawn supererogatory prayer and the night prayer are the most preferable of all the supererogatory prayers, since many traditions highlight the merits and rewards obtained from performing these two prayers.

3. – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 3:33, H. 6.

4. – Shaykh al-Saduq, Sifat al-Shi'ah, pp. 2; 'Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 68:167, H. 33 as quoted from the previous reference book.

5. – To explain, this tradition can be quoted as follows:

The signs of a faithful believer are five: (a) Offering fifty-one units of prayer (a day): seventeen units of the obligatory prayers and thirty-four of the supererogatory (nafilah), (b) visiting (Imam al-Husayn's tomb) on Arba'in, the twentieth of Safar; forty days after the martyrdom of Imam Husayn ('a), (c) wearing a ring in the right hand, (d) pressing the forehead (by frequent prostration to Allah), and (5) saying aloud: *bismi'llahi'rrahmani'rrahim* (basmalah: In the Name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful). [Translator]

6. – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 10:373, H. 1. "Offering the fifty" mentioned in this tradition stands for the fifty-one units of prayers that are offered daily. In many traditions, the number fifty replaced the actual number fifty-one either for brevity or because the two-unit prayer that is offered in a sitting posture after the early night obligatory prayer has not been counted in this tradition.

7. – This law is almost unanimously agreed upon by the Shi'ite jurists although there are a few scholars that have cited that it is not obligatory to recite a lengthy Surah completely.

8. – Shaykh al-Saduq, 'Ilal al-Shara'i' 2:341, S. 42, H. 1.

9. – Shaykh al-Tusi, Kitab al-Khilaf 2:436.

10. – Mansur 'Ali Nasif, al-Taj al-Jami' lil-'Usul 1:230, 234; al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li'alfaz al-Hadith, A. s-j-d 2:424, 428.

11. – Shaykh al-Tusi, Kitab al-Khilaf 2:434 as quoted from Sunan Abi-Dawud 1:227, H. 858.

12. – Shaykh al-Tusi, Kitab al-Khilaf 2:436.

As a footnote, the author has mentioned that this tradition has been reported in Sahih Muslim 1:433, H. 619, Sunan Ibn Majah 1:222, H. 675, Sunan al-Nasa'i 1:247, Musnad Ahmad 5:108–110, and Sunan al-Bayhaqi 2:105.

13. – It can be seen that the individuals of the virtuous community usually carry with them a piece of clay taken from the soil of Imam Husayn's tomb (in Karbala') on which they prostrate in prayers. In a booklet entitled 'al-Turbah al-Husayniyah', the great scholar, Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Kashif al-Ghita', has discussed this issue thoroughly.

The individuals of the virtuous community are advised to prostrate on the stone floor of mosques, especially the Sacred Mosque in Makkah, reed-mats or other materials upon which it is lawful to prostrate. They should not carry cakes of clay to these places in order to avoid spurious charges and oppressive campaigns which the enemies of Islam and ignorant people wage against them. Finally, it is Almighty Allah Who is the patron of success, righteousness, and victory.

14. – The Zaydiyyah is a Muslim sect believing in Zayd, the son of Imam 'Ali ibn al-Husayn ('a), as the Imam after his

father. As a condition of Imamate, they specify that the true Imam is the one who leads an armed uprising against the tyrannical ruler. Their school of jurisprudence is greatly influenced by the Sunni jurisprudence. Presently, they live in northern Yemen although they have a history in some regions of Iran.

[15.](#) – The Shi`ah include in the adhan the phrase, “ashhadu anna `aliyyan waliyyu allah (I bear witness that `Ali is the leader by Allah’s command)” after the phrase, ‘ashhadu anna muhammadan rasulu allah (I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah)’, as the third creed. In this, they rely on many narrations reported from the Holy Prophet (S) and the Holy Imams (S) stating that the phrase, “Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah” is not mentioned or written above the gate of Paradise apart from the phrase, “`Ali is the leader by Allah’s command.” However, this does not indicate that the Shi`ah claim that Imam `Ali (‘a) is a prophet, or a god...etc. Allah forbid!

[16.](#) – Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:292, H. 3.

[17.](#) – Namely, al-Bukhari, Muslim, al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Dawud, and al-Nasa’i.

[18.](#) – Mansur `Ali Nasif, al-Taj al-Jami` lil-Usul 1:148.

[19.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa’il al-Shi`ah 3:161, H. 2.

[20.](#) – This issue requires much investigation. Since performing the two prayers at the same time is no more than lenience granted for Muslims in order to make the matter (of performing prayers) easier for them, and the Holy Prophet (S) and the Holy Imams (‘a) used to perform each prayer separately in its definite time, why are the Shi`ah then committing themselves to this combining of prayers all the time? Beyond doubt, to perform two prayers at one time is easier, especially when we take into consideration the current social circumstances, the nature of work, and the structure of modern cities and societies. We may now ask whether this commitment of combining prayers is a manifestation of the Holy Imams (‘a) desire to ease human life in the future or the result of the social and political circumstances their followers had to encounter throughout the history of Islam that forced them to decrease their performance of prayers to some extent.

There is a validly reported tradition, which suggests that the reason for such combining of prayers is to perform the two prayers at the best time of performance of one of them when there is no supererogatory prayer offered between the two. Yet, if there is a supererogatory prayer to be offered between the two, then to combine the two obligatory prayers becomes void. This tradition thus reads:

Two prayers are combined when there is no supererogatory prayer to be offered between them, but if there is any, then combining is canceled.

Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa’il al-Shi`ah 3:163, H. 3.

According to this tradition, the jurisprudentially educated individuals of the virtuous community must separate prayers because they have to offer supererogatory prayers between each pair of prayers, especially the sunset and early night prayers.

At any rate, the individuals of the virtuous community are supposed to pay attention to this recommended Prophetic practice and demanding religious manner.

[21.](#) – In his book entitled ‘Masa’il Khilafiyah (Controversial Jurisprudential Issues)’ `Allamah Sharaf al-Din, dealing with certain issues like rubbing the feet with water in prayers, combining two prayers, rulings of the basmalah, has undoubtedly proven that the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) School is following the right path in all these issues.

[22.](#) – This invocation has been mentioned in the traditions of other Muslim sects, although somewhat different, which is to repeat the three phrases thirty-three times each ending with the phrase allahu-akbar. One tradition only has mentioned that the phrase allahu-akbar should be repeated thirty-four times.

[23.](#) – Shaykh `Abbas al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 12–22.

In this book, general post-prayer litanies (that may be said after all prayers) and particular ones (that are defined for each prayer) are mentioned.

[24.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa’il al-Shi`ah 4:849, H. 1.

[25.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa’il al-Shi`ah 4:849, H. 3.

[26.](#) – Sayyid al-Borujerdi, Jami` Ahadith al-Shi`ah 15:48, H. 3.

[27.](#) – The Holy Qur’an is divided into thirty parts (juz’) and sixty sub-parts (hizb). [Translator]

[28.](#) – Sayyid al-Borujerdi, Jami` Ahadith al-Shi`ah 15:51, S. 13.

[29.](#) – Shaykh `Abbas al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 22–23. See also Sayyid al-Borujerdi, Jami` Ahadith al-Shi`ah

15:444–457.

[30.](#) – Some traditions may hint that these voluntary prayers overlap the daily supererogatory prayers. However, Almighty Allah best knows.

[31.](#) – Qunut is an act of raising the hands for supplication in the second units of prayers.

[32.](#) – These voluntary prayers have been mentioned by al-Hurr al-`Amili in the fifth volume of his book *Wasa'il al-Shi'ah*, pages 247, 246, 250, 286, 247, and 249 respectively.

## Weekly Acts of Worship

### Fridays and Thursday Nights

Fridays and Thursday nights represent the climax of devotional acts during the week. In addition to the daily devotional practices, Friday represents the climax of devotional acts.

Gradation and acceleration of the devotional rate is a method largely used by Islam. With regard to daily worship, acceleration of devotional acts begins at night and in the period of the early dawn up to the time of the obligatory dawn prayer. With regard to weekly worship, this process begins on Thursday night and continues up to the afternoon congregational prayer on Friday.

With regard to monthly worship, the apogee lies within the nights of the full moon (i.e. 13th, 14th, and 15th of the month according to the Islamic lunar calendar). With regard to yearly worship, this process hits its peak in the month of Ramadhan although it starts at the beginning of Rajab.

With regard to the devotional acts in the month of Ramadhan, this process is at its highest during its last ten nights, especially the nights of Qadr, and ends on the night before '«d al-Fitr.

### Supplications of the Days of the Week

There is a supplication for each day of the week. These supplications are reported from Imam Zayn al-'Abidin ('a). They contain highly regarded contents and the name of the day to which it is dedicated. These supplications, again, can be found in some versions of the book *al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah* and Shaykh al-Qummi's *Mafatih al-Jinan*.

### Prayers of the Days of the Week

Shaykh al-Tusi, in his book of *Misbah al-Mutahajjid*, has reported from the Holy Prophet (S) (or on the authority of Anas), a number of recommended prayers for each day of the week except Friday.

As to Sayyid Ibn Tawus, he has reported—in his book of *Jamal al-Usubu'* through a chain of authority

extending to Imam al-Hasan al-Askari (‘a)—a number of prayers for each day of the week. The majority of these prayers and a number of the previously mentioned ones have been reported by Shaykh al-Kaf’ami in his book of *al-Misbah*.<sup>1</sup>

Shaykh al-Tusi, in the same abovementioned book, has reported, although without mentioning the chain of authority, a number of prayers whose rewards are dedicated to the Holy Prophet (S) and the other Infallibles (‘a). Each prayer is offered on each day of the week and then dedicated to each one of the Holy Infallibles (‘a) respectively. These prayers spread over the days of two weeks.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> - Al-Hurr al-`Amili, *Wasa'il al-Shi'ah* 5:289-294.

<sup>2</sup> - Al-Hurr al-`Amili, *Wasa'il al-Shi'ah* 5:284.

## Monthly Acts of Worship

Devotional acts repeated each month are limited because the daily, weekly, yearly course of devotional acts and those dedicated to the various anniversaries and occasions are distributed among the months of the year. Nonetheless, some devotional acts are reported as recommended every month at regular intervals.

### Prayer on the First Day of the Month

There is a special prayer, with special acts offered on the first day of each month. Some religious scholars<sup>1</sup> used to offer this prayer on a regular basis and pay special attention to it. According to the report of Shaykh al-Tusi—in his book of *Misbah al-Mutahajjid* and through a chain of authority, which has been determined to be authentic by some scholars, such as al-Wahid al-Bahbahani—Imam al-Jawad (‘a) has said:

*At the beginning of each month and on the first day, a two-unit prayer may be offered. In the first unit, Surah al-Fatihah is recited once and Surah al-Tawhid repeated thirty times. In the second, Surah al-Fatihah is recited once and Surah al-Qadr repeated thirty times. After completing it, alms should be given. One who does so will gain safety throughout that month.*<sup>2</sup>

Sayyid Ibn Tawus has reported, without mentioning the chain of authority, another two-unit prayer. In each unit of this prayer *Surah al-Fatihah* and *Surah al-An'am* (No. 6) are recited once, to be offered on the eve of the first day of each month.

## Three-Day Fasting Each Month

As maintained by numerous traditions, one of the highly recommended acts performed by the Holy Prophet (S) persistently up to the end of his blessed lifetime was to fast on three days each month.

In his book of *man-la-yahdhuruhu'l-faqih*, Shaykh al-Saduq has reported through a valid chain of authority that Imam al-Sadiq ('a) said:

*The Holy Prophet (S) observed fasting for such a long time that people thought that he would not break his fast. He then broke his fast for such a long time that they thought that he would never fast anymore. He then followed the practice of Prophet David ('a) in fasting; that is, he fasted once every two days. Until he departed life, he used to regularly fast for three days every month. About this method of fasting, he said, "Fasting on these three days is equal (in reward) to fasting for one's whole lifetime and it removes satanic insinuation."... He used to fast on the first Thursday of every month, the first Wednesday after ten days of the same month, and on the last Thursday.*<sup>3</sup>

According to another validly reported tradition, Imam al-Sadiq ('a), commenting on this issue, has said:

*My father used to say, "None is more hated by Almighty Allah than one who, when informed about what the Holy Prophet (S) did, says, 'Almighty Allah will not torture me if I do not show painstakingness in praying and fasting,' thinking that because he himself failed to do certain supererogatory acts the Holy Prophet (S) omitted doing them as well."*<sup>4</sup>

In his book of *al-Muqni'ah*, Shaykh al-Mufid reported the Holy Prophet (S) to have said:

*"When the deeds of my people were shown before me, I found defects and flaws in the majority of them. I therefore added to each obligatory prayer a supererogatory one whose units are twice as many the units of the obligatory so that the obligatory prayer of one who offers the supererogatory will be accepted. Verily, Almighty Allah is too Merciful to refuse, even the third of a deed, which one of His servants does for His sake.*

Thus, Almighty Allah has imposed upon you the offering of seventeen units of prayer every day and night, but the Holy Prophet (S) added thirty-four units. Likewise, Almighty Allah imposed fasting during the month of Ramadhan every year, but the Holy Prophet (S) made it sixty days in a year so as to perfect the duty of fasting. He therefore made it a tradition to fast three days every month; the first and last Thursdays of the month, and the Wednesday in the middle of the month.<sup>5</sup>

According to other traditions, this is the most important fasting especially for those who are unable to fast in Ramadhan, being too weary to fast on those days. Permission has been given to delay the fasting of these days to winter or any other appropriate days. Moreover, other traditions have allowed making up the fasting of these days at other times or replacing them with alms that may be given as half a bushel of food for each day.

Other traditions recommend fasting on the so-called white days of each month: the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth.

[1.](#) – The supreme religious authority, Sayyid Muhsin al-Hakim, used to offer this prayer regularly.

[2.](#) – Al-Hurr al-Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 5:286.

[3.](#) – Al-Hurr al-Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 7:303, H. 1.

[4.](#) – Al-Hurr al-Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 7:305, H. 5.

From this tradition and others like it we can infer the accuracy of the course of equilibrium and moderation in acts of worship and the inaccuracy of the course of extremism and overdoing.

[5.](#) – As is maintained by some other traditions, the sixty-day fasting is completed by the recommended fasting during the month of Sha'ban.

## Yearly Acts of Worship

The acts of worship that are done once a year occupy a vast arena in the system of devotional acts.

They are of three kinds:

### Special Days and Nights

Special days and nights are associated with the yearly acts of worship that have come in the form of rituals.

### Three Blessed Months

The three blessed months are Rajab, Sha'ban, and Ramadhan. Their basic act of worship is fasting, becoming obligatory in the blessed month of Ramadhan. It is thus highly recommended to fast during the month of Rajab.

Fasting during Sha'ban is also highly recommended because the Holy Prophet (S) used to fast for this whole month.

It is obligatory to fast during Ramadhan according to the conditions mentioned by jurists in their books on the practical laws of Islam. Some conditions necessary are: presence in one's hometown, enjoyment of sound physical condition, and absence of any obstacles that may prevent fasting, such as old age, etc.

### Hajj and the First Ten Days of Dhu'l-Hijjah

This includes devotional acts that deal with the ritual *Hajj* and the devotional acts practiced on the first ten days of the month of Dhu'l-Hijjah. In addition to its magnificent spiritual, political, social, and

economic aspects, the unique and distinctive worship of *Hajj*, in its content and practice, combines all the other acts of worship (the ritual prayer, almsgiving, fasting, and self-purification).

We will discuss the last two with brief explanations, having already discussed specific days and nights.

## The Three Blessed Months

### The Month of Rajab

#### Merits of Rajab

Many traditions reported from the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) demonstrate the excellence and merits of the month of Rajab.<sup>1</sup> In his books, *al-Majalis* and *Thawab al-A'mal*, Shaykh al-Saduq has reported that Abu-Sa'id al-Khidri quoted the Holy Prophet (S) as saying:

أَلَا إِنَّ رَجَبًا شَهْرُ اللَّهِ الْأَصَمُّ وَهُوَ شَهْرٌ عَظِيمٌ، وَإِنَّمَا سُمِّيَ الْأَصَمَّ لِإِنَّهُ لَا يُقَارِبُهُ شَيْءٌ مِنَ الشُّهُورِ حُرْمَةً وَفَضْلاً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ، وَكَانَ أَهْلُ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يُعَظِّمُونَهُ فِي جَاهِلِيَّتِهِمْ، فَلَمَّا جَاءَ الْإِسْلَامُ لَمْ يَزِدْ إِلَّا تَعْظِيماً وَفَضْلاً. أَلَا إِنَّ رَجَبًا شَهْرُ اللَّهِ، وَشَعْبَانُ شَهْرِي، وَرَمَضَانُ شَهْرُ أُمَّتِي. أَلَا فَمَنْ صَامَ مِنْ رَجَبٍ يَوْماً إِيمَاناً وَاحْتِسَاباً اسْتَوْجَبَ رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ الْأَكْبَرَ.

*Behold! The month of Rajab is the all-holy month of Almighty Allah and it is a great month. It has been described thus because no other month can reach its holiness and excellence before Almighty Allah. Although they were ignorant, the people of the pre-Islamic era used to hold this month in the highest regard, and when Islam came, this month increased even more in veneration and excellence. Behold! Rajab is the month of Almighty Allah, Sha'ban is my month, and Ramadhan is the month of my people. Behold! Whoever observes fasting on one day of this month, believing in its excellence and intending to seek the pleasure of the Lord, will bindingly win the Grand Pleasure of the Lord.*

The Holy Prophet (S) then enumerated many rewards for those who fast for any number of days this month.<sup>2</sup>

Shaykh al-Saduq has also reported Imam Musa al-Kazim ('a) as saying:

رَجَبٌ نَهْرٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ أَشَدُّ بَيَاضاً مِنَ اللَّبَنِ وَأَحْلَى مِنَ الْعَسَلِ، فَمَنْ صَامَ يَوْماً مِنْ رَجَبٍ سَقَاهُ اللَّهُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ النَّهْرِ.

*Rajab is (the name of) a river in Paradise that is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. Hence, if one fasts for even a single day in Rajab, Almighty Allah will allow him to drink from that river.*<sup>3</sup>

رَجَبٌ شَهْرٌ عَظِيمٌ يُضَاعَفُ فِيهِ الْحَسَنَاتُ وَيَمْحُو السَّيِّئَاتُ. وَمَنْ صَامَ يَوْمًا مِنْ رَجَبٍ تَبَاعَدَتْ عَنْهُ النَّارُ مَسِيرَةَ سَنَةٍ، وَمَنْ صَامَ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ وَجَبَتْ لَهُ الْجَنَّةُ.

*Rajab is a great month during which Almighty Allah doubles the rewards of good-actions and erases the punishments for evil-actions. If one fasts on one day in Rajab, Hellfire moves away from him, a distance of one year of walking. One who fasts for three days in Rajab will bindingly win Paradise.* [4](#)

Through a number of chains of authority, some of which are valid, Imam al-Sadiq ('a) is reported to have said:

إِنَّ نُوحًا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ رَكِبَ السَّفِينَةَ أَوَّلَ يَوْمٍ مِنْ رَجَبٍ، فَأَمَرَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مَنْ مَعَهُ أَنْ يَصُومُوا ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ. مَنْ صَامَ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ تَبَاعَدَتْ عَنْهُ النَّارُ مَسِيرَةَ سَنَةٍ، وَمَنْ صَامَ سَبْعَةَ أَيَّامٍ أُغْلِقَتْ عَنْهُ أَبْوَابُ النَّيِّرَانِ السَّبْعَةِ، وَمَنْ صَامَ ثَمَانِيَةَ أَيَّامٍ فَتَحَتْ لَهُ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَانِ الثَّمَانِيَةِ، وَمَنْ صَامَ خَمْسَةَ عَشَرَ يَوْمًا أُعْطِيَ مَسْأَلَتَهُ، وَمَنْ زَادَ زَادَهُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ.

*On the first of Rajab, (Prophet) Noah ('a) embarked on the Ark; he therefore ordered those who accompanied him to fast on that day. If one fasts on this day in Rajab, Hellfire will go away from him a distance of one year on foot. If one fasts for seven days of Rajab, the seven gates of the Fire will close in his face. If one fasts for eight days of Rajab, the eight gates of Paradise will be wide open before him. If one fasts for fifteen days, his request will be granted. If one fasts for more days, he will gain more rewards from Almighty Allah.* [5](#)

## Rites of Rajab

Shaykh al-Qummi, in *Mafatih al-Jinan*, has divided the rites of Rajab into two sections.

**The first section** comprises the general rites that one is advised to practice each day of the month.

These rites are as follows:

## Supplications

A number of supplications with highly regarded contents should be recited every day of Rajab as reported from Imam Zayn al-'Abidin, Imam al-Sadiq, and Imam al-Mahdi, peace be upon them all. [6](#)

## Formulas of Ziyarah

There is a special formula of *ziyarah* that can be read when visiting the tombs of all the Holy Imams ('a) which is known as *al-ziyarah al-rajabiyyah* (i.e. the *ziyarah* of Rajab). [7](#)

## Litanies

Various formulas seeking forgiveness are reported for every day in Rajab, such as the following one,

which should be repeated one hundred times followed by almsgiving:

*I ask the forgiveness of Allah. There is no god save Him, He is alone without any partner, and I repent before Him.*[8](#)

اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَآ تُوْبُ إِلَيْهِ

The following litany is advised to be repeated one thousand times every day in Rajab:

There is no god save Allah.

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

Another litany that is advised is repeating one hundred times every day in Rajab is the following:

*Glory be to God, the All-majestic. Glory be to Him other than Whom none should be glorified. Glory be to the All-honorable, the All-dignified. Glory be to Him Who has dressed Himself with grandeur that fits none but Him.*

سُبْحَانَ إِلَهِ الْجَلِيلِ سُبْحَانَ مَنْ لَا يَنْبَغِي التَّسْبِيحُ إِلَّا لَهُ سُبْحَانَ أَلَا عَزَّ أَلَا كَرَّمَ سُبْحَانَ مَنْ لَيْسَ أَلْعَزُّ وَهُوَ لَهُ أَهْلٌ

Reports advise that one who is incapable of fasting during the month of Rajab may repeat this litany one hundred times each day.[9](#)

## Recitation of the Holy Qur'an

It is highly recommended to recite the Holy Qur'an in general and in particular to repeat *Surah al-Tawhid* ten thousand times throughout this month.[10](#)

Likewise, it is recommended to repeat the following *Surahs* and litanies three times each day and each night in the months of Rajab, Sha'ban, and Ramadhan:

*Surah al-Fatihah, Ayat al-Kursi, Surah al-Kafirun, Surah al-Tawhid, Surah al-Falaq, Surah al-Nas,* and the following litany:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ

*All glory be to Allah; all praise be to Allah; there is no god save Allah; Allah is the Greatest; and there is neither might nor power save with Allah, the All-high the All-great.*

The following invocation:

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَّآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

*O Allah, send blessings upon Muhammad and the Household of Muhammad.*

The following supplication:

*O Allah, (please do) forgive the believing men and women.*

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَغْفِرْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ

The following prayer of forgiveness, four hundred times:

*I pray to Allah for forgiveness and I repent before Him.*

اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ وَاَتُوبُ اِلَيْهِ

Whoever does the above, will have all his sins forgiven, no matter how many they are.

This rite combines recitations of the Holy Qur'an with litanies and supplications.

## Multiform Prayers

On each night of Rajab, it is recommended to offer the following prayers:

**A two-unit prayer**, in each unit of which *Surah al-Fatihah* is recited once and *Surah al-Tawhid* one hundred times,

**A ten-unit prayer**, in each unit of which *Surah al-Fatihah* is recited once, *Surah al-Kafirun* once, and *Surah al-Tawhid* three times.

**A sixty-unit prayer**, of which a two unit prayer is offered on each night of the month In each unit *Surah al-Fatihah* is recited once, *Surah al-Kafirun* three times, and *Surah al-Tawhid* once. Upon completion, the hands should be raised towards the sky and the following litany recited:

لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ وَهُوَ حَيٌّ لَا يَمُوتُ بِيَدِهِ الْخَيْرُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ النَّبِيِّ الْاَمِيِّ وَاٰلِهِ

*There is no god save Allah, the One and Only, without any partner. To him is the kingdom and to Him is*

*all praise. He gives life and causes to die while He is Ever-living and never dies. In His hand is the good and He has power over all things O Allah, (please) bless Muhammad, the Meccan Prophet, and his Household.*

It is then recommended to pass one's hands over the face while saying the last sentence of this litany. A great reward awaits those who offer these prayers. [11](#)

**The Second Section** deals with devotional acts performed on the special nights and days of Rajab. The most important of these acts are as follows:

### **Acts of the First Night and Day of Rajab**

On the first day of Rajab, it is recommended **to fast**. Next, say a special supplication on sighting the new moon (at night), then bathe, visit Imam Husayn ('a) (at night and during the day) as has been previously instructed, and offer **a twenty-unit prayer after the obligatory sunset prayer**, in each unit of which *Surah al-Fatihah* and *Surah al-Tawhid* should be recited.

The first night of Rajab is one of the four nights (of the year) that should be spent in acts of worship.

On this night, **a thirty-unit prayer**, in each unit of which *Surah al-Fatihah* is recited once, *Surah al-Kafirun* once, and *Surah al-Tawhid* three times, should be offered. There is also another prayer of two units, in each unit of which *Surah al-Fatihah* is recited once and *Surah al-Inshirah* (No. 94) three times. A supplication reported from Imam al-Jawad ('a) is said in addition to other acts. [12](#)

In addition to fasting on the first day of Rajab, the famous thirty-unit prayer of Salman al-Farsi is started on this day by offering ten units, the second ten units are offered on the fifteenth, and the third on the last day of the month. This highly regarded prayer is followed by a litany and a supplication. [13](#)

### **Salat al-Ragha'ib (Prayer of Desires)**

On the first Thursday night of Rajab, after fasting during the day, it is highly recommended to offer the **twelve-unit prayer known as Salat al-Ragha'ib**, which is offered in the period between sunset and the early night prayer. Upon accomplishment of this prayer, it is recommended to repeat the invocation of Almighty Allah's blessings upon the Holy Prophet and his Household seventy times:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

*O Allah, send blessings upon Muhammad and the Household of Muhammad.*

Then, one should prostrate and repeat the following litany seventy times:

*Glorified (is He). Holy (is He). (He is) the Lord of the angels and the Spirit.*

سُبُّوحٌ قُدُّوسٌ رَبُّ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّوحِ

Then, raise the head from the prostration and repeat the following litany seventy times:

*O my Lord, (please) forgive (me), have mercy (upon me), and overlook (my wrongdoings) that You know. Surely, You are the Most High, the Greatest.*

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ وَأَرْحَمْ وَتَجَاوَزْ عَمَّا تَعَلَّمُ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيُّ الْأَعْظَمُ

One may then return to the prostration position and repeat the same litany seventy times:

*Glorified (is He). Holy (is He). (He is) the Lord of the angels and the Spirit.*

سُبُّوحٌ قُدُّوسٌ رَبُّ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّوحِ

Then, one may pray to Almighty Allah to grant him his requests, which will be granted if Allah wills.

About this prayer, the Holy Prophet (S) is reported to have said:

*I swear this by Him Who grasps my soul in His Hand: no male or female servant (of Allah) offers this prayer but that Allah shall certainly forgive all his or her sins even if they are as much as the foam of seas. He/she shall gain the right to intercede for seven hundred persons from his/her relatives already sentenced to Hellfire. [14](#)*

### **Prayer on the Bright (Moonlit) Nights of Rajab, Sha'ban, and Ramadhan**

It has been reported that whoever offers this prayer will win the merits of the three months and will have all his sins, except polytheism, forgiven by Almighty Allah. Two units of this prayer may be offered on the thirteenth night, four units on the fourteenth, and six on the fifteenth. In each unit, *Surah al-Fatihah*, *Surah Yasin* (No. 36), *Surah al-Mulk* (No. 67) and *Surah al-Tawhid* are recited once. Each couple of units should be separated from the next couple by the *Taslim* statement.

On the fifteenth day of Rajab, the famous devotional act known as the Ummi–Dawud Rite may be done. This practice begins by fasting on the fifteenth day, reciting the Holy Qur'an and offering supplicatory prayers. Its advantage is that it contributes to having one's requests granted by Almighty Allah, relieves one's agonies, and saves one from the harm of tyrannical rulers. Details of this practice have been mentioned in *Mafatih al-Jinan*. It is highly recommended to fast on the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth of Rajab.

## Rites of the Night of Mid-Rajab

On the fifteenth night of Rajab, it is recommended to take the ritual bath (*ghusl*), visit Imam Husayn ('a), offer the second part of the prayer of Salman al-Farsi, offer another special prayer, and say a supplication that is dedicated to this day, and spend the whole night in devotional acts. Moreover, this night shares with the twenty-seventh night of the month in a special prayer.

## Rites of the Twenty-Seventh Night and Day of Rajab

A previous reference has been made to this day, which is celebrated by the Shi'ah as the **Day of the Divine Mission**.

About the rewards of the rites that are practiced on the twenty-seventh night of Rajab, Imam al-Jawad ('a) is reported to have said:

*There is a night in Rajab, which carries for people goodness that is more beneficial to them than whatever is exposed to sunlight. It is the twenty-seventh night in the morning of which the Holy Prophet's Divine Mission started. Verily, one who does acts of worship on this night will have the same reward as one who has worshipped Almighty Allah for sixty years.*

When the Imam ('a) was asked about the rites to be practiced on this night, he answered:

*After you offer the Evening Prayer if you take a nap, you will wake up at any hour before midnight. You may then offer a twelve-unit prayer, in each unit of which you may recite Surah al-Fatihah and any other short Surah from the Mufassal, which begins with Surah Muhammad (No. 47) up to the end of the Holy Qur'an. You should separate each couple of units with the Taslim statement. After accomplishing this prayer, you should recite Surahs al-Fatihah, al-Falaq, al-Nas, al-Tawhid, al-Kafirun, al-Qadr, and Ayat al-Kursi each seven times. After all this, you should say the following doxology and supplication:*

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلِداً وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ شَرِيكٌ فِي الْمُلْكِ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ وِليٌّ مِنَ الذُّلِّ وَكَبَّرَهُ تَكْبِيراً اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِمَعَاقِدِ عَرْكِكَ عَلَى أَرْكَانِ عَرْشِكَ وَمُنْتَهَى الرَّحْمَةِ مِنْ كِتَابِكَ وَبِأَسْمِكَ أَلَا عَظَمَ أَلَا عَظَمَ أَلَا عَظَمَ وَذِكْرِكَ أَلَا عَلَى أَلَا عَلَى أَلَا عَلَى وَبِكَلِمَاتِكَ التَّامَّاتِ أَنْ تُصَلِّيَ عَلَيَّ مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَأَنْ تَفْعَلَ بِي مَا أَنْتَ أَهْلُهُ

*All praise be to Allah, Who has not taken to Himself any son, and Who has no partner in sovereignty, nor has He any protecting friend through dependence. And magnify Him with all magnificence. O Allah, verily I beseech You in the name of Your Dignity on the pillars of Your Throne, and in the name of Your utmost Mercy in Your Book. I beseech You in the name of Your Name—the Greatest, the Greatest, the Greatest, and in the name of Your Mention—the Highest, the Highest, the Highest, and in the name of Your Words, the perfect, that You may bless Muhammad and his Household and do with me that which befits You.*

You may then submit your desires. [15](#)

On this night too, it is recommended to perform the ritual bath, visit Imam ‘Ali (‘a), and offer the prayer to which an earlier reference has been made within the rites regarding the night of mid-Rajab. [16](#)

On the last day of Rajab, it is recommended to offer the rest of the units of the prayer of Salman al-Farsi, perform the ritual bath, and fast, for this deed contributes to having all the sins forgiven, both the past and the coming. [17](#)

## The Month of Sha’ban

### Merits of Sha’ban

Many traditions have been reported about the merits of the month of Sha’ban and the great rewards obtained from practicing devotional acts during it. The Holy Prophet (S), to whom this month is attributed, used to fast during this month and encourage others to imitate him by connecting the fasting of this month with the obligatory fasting of Ramadhan.

Shaykh al-Qummi has referred, yet briefly, to some of these traditions.

Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (‘a) is reported to have said:

*Imam ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn Zayn al-‘Abidin (‘a) used to gather all his companions at the beginning of Sha’ban and say to them, “O my companions, do you know what this month is? It is Sha’ban. The Holy Prophet (S) used to say, ‘Sha’ban is my month.’ You should thus fast during this month as a sign of your love for your Prophet (S) and as a sign of seeking nearness to your Lord. I swear by Him, Who grasps my soul in His Hand, that I heard my father Husayn (‘a), saying that he heard Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the Faithful (‘a), saying: ‘Any one who fasts during Sha’ban for the love of the Messenger of Allah (S) to seek nearness to Almighty Allah, Almighty Allah will love him, and draw him nearer to Himself on the Day of Resurrection, and definitely reward him with Paradise.’”* [18](#)

Shaykh al-Tusi has narrated on the authority of Safwan al-Jammal that Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) instructed him to urge all people that he knew to fast during Sha’ban.

“May Allah accept me as ransom for you! There is a reason for this instruction. Is there not?” asked Safwan al-Jammal.

Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) answered:

Yes, there is. When his eyes fell on the new moon of Sha’ban, the Messenger of Allah (S) ordered somebody to declare the following to the people of al-Madinah:

“O people of Yathrib, I bring the message of Allah’s Messenger (S) to you all. Verily, Sha’ban is my

month; therefore, may Allah have mercy upon him who helps me undertake my month.”

Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) then added:

The Commander of the Faithful (Imam ‘Ali) used to say, ‘I never missed fasting during Sha’ban since I heard the call of the Messenger of Allah (S) about this month. Furthermore, I shall never miss it as long as I am alive, Allah willing.’

Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) further said:

*To fast for two consecutive months is considered as Almighty Allah’s acceptance of one’s repentance.* [19](#)

Isma’il ibn ‘Abd al-Khaliq narrated that when the subject of fasting during Sha’ban was once discussed in the presence of him, Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (‘a) said:

*The merits of fasting during Sha’ban are so great that even one who sheds inviolable blood is expected to be forgiven.* [20](#)

Through a valid chain of authority, Shaykh al-Kulayni has reported that al-Halabi, once, asked Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) whether any of his fathers fasted during Sha’ban.

He was thus answered as follows:

*The best of all my fathers did. That is, the Holy Messenger (S).* [21](#)

According to another tradition also reported by Shaykh al-Kulayni through a valid chain of authority, Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) has said:

*When they had some days to fast, the wives of the Holy Prophet (S) would postpone them to the month of Sha’ban so that they would not prevent him from getting what he might want from them. In Sha’ban, they and the Holy Prophet (S) would fast. The Holy Prophet (S) used to say, “Sha’ban is my month.”* [22](#)

In *man-la-yahdhuru’l-faqih*, Shaykh al-Saduq has reported through a valid chain of authority from some scholars—and others from other chains of authority—that Imam al-Baqir (‘a) said:

*Whoever fasts during the month of Sha’ban, his fasting will purify him of all oaths and vows made to commit disobedience including oaths uttered in anger. When a person regrets such oaths, this acts as an apology for them.* [23](#)

In *Thawab al-A’mal*, Shaykh al-Saduq has also reported, through a valid chain of authority on the authority of Isma’il ibn Ziyad on the authority of Imam al-Sadiq (‘a), that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

شَعْبَانُ شَهْرِي، وَرَمَضَانُ شَهْرُ اللَّهِ وَهُوَ رَبِيعُ الْفُقَرَاءِ. وَإِنَّمَا جُعِلَ الْأَضْحَى لِيَشْبَعَ مَسَاكِينُكُمْ مِنَ اللَّحْمِ فَأَطْعِمُوهُمْ.

*Sha'ban is my month and Ramadhan is the month of Allah. It is also the springtime of the poor. The '«d al-Adhha Feast has been established so that the indigent among you may eat their fill of meat; therefore, you should serve them with meat.* [24](#)

It has been also narrated that fasting during the month of Sha'ban is one of the means of gaining the Holy Prophet's intercession on the Day of Resurrection<sup>25</sup> and to fast during as many days as possible of this month improves one's livelihood, protects against the evil of enemies, and allows entrance to Paradise.<sup>26</sup>

## Rites of Sha'ban

As usual, Shaykh al-Qummi has divided the rites of Sha'ban into two sections: The first section involves the general rites that are practiced each day in the month without distinction, while the second section involves the particular rites that are dedicated to certain days and nights of the month.

The rites of the earlier section can be summarized thus:

### Fasting

The most important and highlighted rite in the month of Sha'ban is fasting, which is the distinctive feature of this month, as understood by the abovementioned traditions.

### Litanies

On every day of Sha'ban, it is highly recommended to say certain litanies, especially implorations seeking forgiveness. According to several traditions, it is greatly encouraged to implore Almighty Allah for forgiveness seventy times a day. One who practices it regularly will be included in the Holy Prophet's group on the Day of Resurrection and gain the nearness of Almighty Allah. He will be granted remission of Hellfire and permission to pass the Discriminating Bridge (*sirat*) into Paradise and the Abode of Settlement and have all his sins forgiven by Almighty Allah, even if they be as many as the stars in the sky.

Other traditions have confirmed that to repeat the prayer seeking forgiveness seventy times a day in Sha'ban is equal to repeating it seventy thousand times during other months. The formula of this prayer may be one of the following:

*I seek the forgiveness of Allah and I pray to Him for approval of my repentance.*

ا. سَتَغْفِرُ اللهُ وَ اَسْأَلُهُ التَّوْبَةَ

ا. سَتَغْفِرُ اللهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ وَ اَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ

*I seek forgiveness of Allah, there is no god save Whom, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful, the Ever-living, the Everlasting, and to Him I turn repentant.* [27](#)

Another litany that is reported directly from the Holy Prophet (S) in Sayyid Ibn Tawus's *Iqbal al-A'mal* is recommended to be repeated one thousand times every day during the month of Sha'ban for great reward:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَا نَعْبُدُ إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ

*There is no god save Allah; and we serve none save Him, being sincere to Him in obedience, though the unbelievers are averse.* [28](#)

## **Almsgiving**

Because Sha'ban is described by some traditions as the springtime of the poor, it is highly recommended to give as many alms as possible during this month. Other traditions describe almsgiving in Sha'ban as follows:

*Verily, if any one of you gives alms in Sha'ban, Almighty Allah will breed and multiply those alms in the very same way you breed your camels. Hence, these alms will be as huge as Mount Uhud on the Day of Resurrection.* [29](#)

Moreover, to give alms in this month, even if they be as small as a half date, brings about release from Hellfire. [30](#)

## **Invocations of Blessings upon the Holy Prophet and his Household**

During the month of Sha'ban, it is highly recommended to invoke Almighty Allah's blessings upon the Holy Prophet and his Household as much as possible. In this respect, Ahmad ibn '«sa, in his book of *al-Nawadir*, has reported through a valid chain of authority that Imam al-Sadiq ('a) quoted the Holy Prophet (S) as saying:

رَجَبُ شَهْرُ الْإِسْتِعْفَارِ لِأُمَّتِي. أَكْثَرُوا فِيهِ مِنَ الْإِسْتِعْفَارِ، فَإِنَّهُ غُفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ... وَأَكْثَرُوا فِي شَعْبَانَ مِنَ الصَّلَوَاتِ عَلَى نَبِيِّكُمْ... وَإِنَّمَا سُمِّيَ شَعْبَانُ شَهْرَ الشَّفَاعَةِ لِأَنَّ رَسُولَكُمْ يَشْفَعُ لِكُلِّ مَنْ يُصَلِّيَ عَلَيْهِ فِيهِ

*For my people, Rajab is the month of praying for forgiveness; therefore, implore Almighty Allah for forgiveness in this month as frequently as possible. In Sha'ban, invoke Almighty Allah's blessings upon your Prophet as many times as possible. The month of Sha'ban is called the month of intercession, because your Messenger will intercede for every one who invokes Almighty Allah's blessing upon him in this month.* [31](#)

Some traditions carry a wonderful formula of invoking Almighty Allah's blessings upon the Holy Prophet and his Household in the month of Sha'ban along with a magnificent supplication through which the suppliant seeks the mediation of the Holy Prophet (S).[32](#)

### **Supplications and Whispered Prayers (Munajat)**

There are special supplications and whispered prayers to be said on every day of Sha'ban. Although traditions have not referred to certain supplications in this respect, the Whispered Prayer (*Munajat*) that is reported by Ibn Khalawayh who ascribes it to Imam 'Ali ('a) and the Holy Imams ('a) is familiarly known. This piece of whispered prayer, known as *al-Munajat al-Sha'baniyyah*, contains highly regarded Gnostic statements.[33](#)

The second section involves the rites to be done on **special nights and days of Sha'ban**. Books of *ziyarah* and recommended acts, as well as some traditions, reveal that there are five times in which special interest should be taken. These times are as follows:

#### **First: The first night and day of Sha'ban**

Much emphasis has been laid on fasting on the first day of Sha'ban. Sayyid Ibn Tawus has mentioned a prayer to be offered on the first three nights of this month.

#### **Second: Thursdays of Sha'ban**

There is a special two-unit prayer, in each unit of which *Surah al-Fatihah* is recited once and *Surah al-Tawhid* repeated one hundred times to be offered on the Thursdays of Sha'ban. Upon completion, the invocation of Almighty Allah's blessings upon the Holy Prophet and his Household is repeated one hundred times. Once this prayer is offered, all the requests of this world and the Next World will be granted.

#### **Third: The Third of Sha'ban**

Shaykh al-Tusi, in *Misbah al-Mutahajjid*, has reported on the authority of Imam al-Hasan al-'Askari ('a) the recommendation of fasting on the third of Sha'ban, which is the birth anniversary of Imam Husayn ('a). On this day too, there is a special supplication to be said. In fact, this supplication involves statements of beseeching Almighty Allah in the name of Imam Husayn ('a) and the Holy Imams ('a). It also holds highly regarded contents that express loyalty to Imam Husayn ('a) and the Holy Imams ('a) and commitment to their course.

Imam al-Sadiq ('a) is reported to recommend saying the supplication that Imam Husayn ('a) said on 'Ashura' after he had been surrounded by the enemies.[34](#)

#### Fourth: The mid-Sha'ban Night

Previous references given in the section regarding specific nights and days confirm the merits and rites of this night.

#### Fifth: The Last Days and the Last Night of Sha'ban

About these days, Imam al-Ridha ('a) is reported to have said: If one fasts during the last three days of Sha'ban in order to attach it to the obligatory fasting of Ramadhan, Almighty Allah will determine that he has fasted for two consecutive months.<sup>35</sup>

Abu'l-Salt al-Harawi has narrated that when he visited Imam al-Ridha ('a) on the last Friday of Sha'ban, the Imam said to him:

*O Abu'l-Salt, the majority of the days of Sha'ban have passed. This is its last Friday. You should thus make up for what you have missed in this month by working hard in the rest. You may supplicate, implore forgiveness of Almighty Allah, recite the Holy Qur'an, and repent to Almighty Allah for your sins so that you arrive at the month of Ramadhan with pure sincerity to Him. You must fulfill all the trusts that you are responsible for settling, you must not bear malice against any of your brethren-in-faith, and you must give up any sin that you commit. Fear Almighty Allah and trust Him secretly and openly, for **'if any one puts his trust in Allah, then Allah shall be a sufficient protector for him. Allah will surely accomplish his purpose. Verily, for all things has Allah appointed a due proportion.'** (65:3)*

In the rest of the days of Sha'ban, you may repeat much the following supplication, for Almighty Allah saves many people from Hellfire on account of the sanctity of this month:

*O Allah, If You have not forgiven us in the past days of Sha'ban, (please do) forgive us in the rest of it.* <sup>36</sup>

اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ غَفَرْتَ لَنَا فِيمَا مَضَى مِنْ شَعْبَانَ فَأَغْفِرْ لَنَا فِيمَا بَقِيَ مِنْهُ

Likewise, a supplication to be said on the last night of Sha'ban and the first night of Ramadhan is reported from Imam al-Sadiq ('a).<sup>37</sup>

## The Month Of Ramadhan

### Merits of Ramadhan

Traditions have described Ramadhan as the most preferred of all months without exception. The Holy Qur'an reads:

(شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِنَ الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ) 185

***The month of Ramadhan is that in which the Qur'an was revealed, a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and the distinction. (2: 185)***

Another reason is that it contains the Night of Qadr, which is more preferred than one thousand months. It is also a blessed night on which all divine decrees are decided.

Almighty Allah has imposed fasting during this month because of its excellence and high regard so that people pay more attention to it.

**Ramadhan is thus the month of:**

- **Fasting**
- **Patience and devotional acts, because there are many supererogatory prayers and rites to be carried out during this month**
- **Devotional confinement to mosques (*i'tikaf*)**
- **The Holy Qur'an and the learning of religious laws and beliefs**
- **Supplications, whispered prayers, and litanies**
- **Almsgiving and generous spending**
- **Struggle with the self and against enemies**
- **Repentance**
- **Forgiveness and mercy**
- **Release from Hellfire and gaining of Paradise**

One of the most magnificent texts about the merits and excellences of Ramadhan may be the Holy Prophet's famous sermon that he (S) delivered on the last Friday of Sha'ban to make people realize the actual standing of the month of Ramadhan.

This sermon has been reported by Shaykh al-Saduq in his two books of *al-Amali* and '*Uyun Akhbar al-Ridha* through a highly valid chain of authority known as the Golden Chain of Authority:[38](#)

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّهُ قَدْ أَقْبَلَ إِلَيْكُمْ شَهْرُ اللَّهِ بِالْبَرَكَةِ وَالرَّحْمَةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ شَهْرٌ هُوَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَفْضَلُ الشُّهُورِ وَأَيَّامُهُ أَفْضَلُ الْأَيَّامِ  
وَلَيَالِيهِ أَفْضَلُ اللَّيَالِيِ وَسَاعَاتُهُ أَفْضَلُ السَّاعَاتِ هُوَ شَهْرٌ دُعِيتُمْ فِيهِ إِلَى ضِيَافَةِ اللَّهِ وَجُعِلْتُمْ فِيهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ كَرَامَةِ اللَّهِ  
أَنْفَاسُكُمْ فِيهِ تَسْبِيحٌ وَنَوْمُكُمْ فِيهِ عِبَادَةٌ وَعَمَلُكُمْ فِيهِ مَقْبُولٌ وَدُعَاؤُكُمْ فِيهِ مُسْتَجَابٌ فَسَلُّوا اللَّهَ رَبَّكُمْ بِنِيَّاتٍ صَادِقَةٍ  
وَقُلُوبٍ طَاهِرَةٍ أَنْ يُؤَفِّقَكُمْ لَصِيَامِهِ وَتِلَاوَةِ كِتَابِهِ فَإِنَّ الشَّقِيَّ مِنْ حَرَمِ غُفْرَانَ اللَّهِ فِي هَذَا الشَّهْرِ الْعَظِيمِ وَانْذَكُرُوا  
بِجُوعِكُمْ وَعَطَشِكُمْ فِيهِ جُوعَ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَعَطَشَهُ وَتَصَدَّقُوا عَلَى فُقَرَائِكُمْ وَمَسَاكِينِكُمْ وَقُرُوا كِبَارِكُمْ وَارْحَمُوا

صِيغَارِكُمْ وَصَلُّوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ وَأَحْفَظُوا أَلْسِنَتَكُمْ وَغُضُّوا عَمَّا لَا يَحِلُّ النَّظْرُ إِلَيْهِ أَبْصَارَكُمْ وَعَمَّا لَا يَحِلُّ الاسْتِمَاعُ إِلَيْهِ أَسْمَاعَكُمْ وَتَحَنَّنُوا عَلَى أَيَّتَامِ النَّاسِ يُتَحَنَّنْ عَلَى أَيَّتَامِكُمْ وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَارْفَعُوا إِلَيْهِ أَيْدِيَكُمْ بِالْإِذْنِ فِي أَوْقَاتِ صَلَوَاتِكُمْ فَإِنَّهَا أَفْضَلُ السَّاعَاتِ يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فِيهَا بِالرَّحْمَةِ إِلَى عِبَادِهِ يُجِيبُهُمْ إِذَا نَاجَوْهُ وَيَلْبِيهِمْ إِذَا نَادَوْهُ وَيَسْتَجِيبُ لَهُمْ إِذَا دَعَوْهُ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ أَنْفُسَكُمْ مَرْهُونَةٌ بِأَعْمَالِكُمْ فَفَكُّوْهَا بِاسْتِغْفَارِكُمْ وَظُهُورِكُمْ ثَقِيلَةٌ مِنْ أَوْزَارِكُمْ فَخَفِّفُوا عَنْهَا بِطُولِ سُجُودِكُمْ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى ذَكَرَهُ أَقْسَمَ بِعِزَّتِهِ أَنْ لَا يُعَذِّبَ الْمُصَلِّينَ وَالسَّاجِدِينَ وَأَنْ لَا يَرَوْعَهُمُ بِالنَّارِ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ مَنْ فَطَرَ مِنْكُمْ صَائِماً مُؤْمِناً فِي هَذَا الشَّهْرِ كَانَ لَهُ بِذَلِكَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عِتْقٌ رَقِيَّةٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ لِمَا مَضَى مِنْ ذُنُوبِهِ.

*O people, the month of Allah (Ramadhan) has come to you with blessings, mercy, and forgiveness. This is the noblest of the months to Him. Its days are the noblest of days. Its nights are noblest of the nights. It is the month in which you are invited to be Allah's guests. You have been established as those honored by Him in this month. Your breathing in this month is considered words of His glorification, your sleeping is worship, your deeds are accepted by Him, and your supplications to Him are fulfilled. Then, ask Allah, your Lord, with sincere intentions and pure hearts to help you succeed in fasting this month and reciting His Book.*

*Whoever is deprived of Allah's forgiveness in this great month is at a real loss. Remember the thirst and hunger of the Day of Resurrection through this thirst and hunger. Give charity to your poor and indigent ones, respect your elder ones, be kind to the younger ones, visit your relations of kin, watch your tongues, lower your eyes against what they are forbidden to look at, and guard your ears against what they are forbidden to hear. Be kind to other people's orphans so that others may be kind to your orphans. Repent before Allah for your sins.*

*Raise your hands up towards Him in supplication at the times of prayer. These times are the noblest of the hours during which the Honorable and Exalted God looks upon His servants with mercy, responds when they make supplications to Him, replies to them when they call Him, and fulfills for them what they ask for. O people, you are tied down by your deeds. Free yourselves by means of supplications. Your backs are overburdened with your sins. Make them lighter by means of extended prostrations.*

*Know that the Sublime God has sworn by His Honor that He will not punish or throw into Hellfire those who pray and fall in prostration on the Day on which all the people will rise for the Lord of the Worlds. O people, the reward with the Honorable and Exalted God for whoever provides for the breaking of the fast of any believer in this month is like that of freeing a slave and the forgiveness of all past sins.*

The people said, "O Prophet of God, not all of us are able to do that."

Then, the Holy Prophet (S) answered:

اتَّقُوا النَّارَ وَلَوْ بِشِقِّ تَمْرَةٍ. اتَّقُوا النَّارَ وَلَوْ بِشِرْبَةِ مِنْ مَاءٍ. أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ مَنْ حَسَنَ مِنْكُمْ فِي هَذَا الشَّهْرِ خُلِقَ لَهُ جَوَازٌ عَلَى الصِّرَاطِ يَوْمَ تَزَلُّ فِيهِ الْأَقْدَامُ وَمَنْ خَفَّفَ فِي هَذَا الشَّهْرِ عَمَّا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُهُ خَفَّفَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ حِسَابَهُ وَمَنْ كَفَّ

فِيهِ شَرُّهُ كَفَّ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ غَضَبَهُ يَوْمَ يَلْقَاهُ وَمَنْ أَكْرَمَ فِيهِ يَتِيمًا أَكْرَمَهُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ يَلْقَاهُ وَمَنْ وَصَلَ فِيهِ رَحِمَهُ وَصَلَهُ اللَّهُ بِرَحْمَتِهِ يَوْمَ يَلْقَاهُ وَمَنْ قَطَعَ فِيهِ رَحِمَهُ قَطَعَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ رَحْمَتَهُ يَوْمَ يَلْقَاهُ وَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ فِيهِ بِصَلَاةٍ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَهُ بِرَاءَةً مِنَ النَّارِ وَمَنْ أَدَّى فِيهِ فَرَضًا كَانَ لَهُ تَوَابٌ مِنْ أَدَى سَبْعِينَ فَرِيضَةً فِيمَا سِوَاهُ مِنَ الشُّهُورِ وَمَنْ أَكْثَرَ فِيهِ مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ عَلَيَّ ثَقَّلَ اللَّهُ مِيزَانَهُ يَوْمَ تَخْفُ الْمَوَازِينُ وَمَنْ تَلَا فِيهِ آيَةً مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ كَانَ لَهُ مِثْلُ أُجْرِ مَنْ خَتَمَ الْقُرْآنَ فِي غَيْرِهِ مِنَ الشُّهُورِ. أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ أَبْوَابَ الْجَنَّةِ فِي هَذَا الشَّهْرِ مُفْتَحَةٌ فَسَلُّوا رَبِّكُمْ أَنْ لَا يُغْلِقَهَا عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَبْوَابَ النَّيِّرَانِ مُغْلَقَةٌ فَسَلُّوا رَبِّكُمْ أَنْ لَا يُفْتَحَهَا عَلَيْكُمْ وَالشَّيَاطِينَ مَغْلُولَةٌ فَسَلُّوا رَبِّكُمْ أَنْ لَا يُسَلِّطَهَا عَلَيْكُمْ.

*Fend off the Fire from yourselves (by providing for the breaking of the fast of any believer) even if it be with a piece of a date. Fend off the Fire from yourselves (by providing for the breaking of the fast of any believer) even if it be with a sip of water. O people, whoever behaves courteously in this month will easily cross the Discriminating Bridge on the Day of Judgment on which one's steps are not firm. Allah will ease the reckoning of whoever takes it easy with those whom his right hand possesses (i.e. servants) in this month. On the Day one meets Him, Allah will withhold His Wrath from whoever controls his wickedness in this month. On the Day one meets Him, Allah will honor whoever honors an orphan in this month. On the Day one meets Him, Allah will shower His mercy upon whoever maintains family ties in this month. Allah will deprive of His mercy whoever breaks off his family ties in this month. He will record release from Hellfire for whoever offers even a single unit of recommendable prayers.*

*The reward of whoever carries out an obligatory duty in this month is seventy times as much as that of one who carries out the same duty in other months. The Balance of Deeds of whoever invokes Allah's blessings upon me a lot will be more positive on the Day of Judgment on which the Balance of Deeds of some people will be negative. The reward of whoever recites one verse of the Qur'an in this month is like the reward of one who recites the whole Qur'an in other months. O people, the gates of Paradise are open in this month. Therefore, ask your Lord not to close them in your faces. Similarly, the gates of Hellfire are closed. Therefore, ask your Lord not to open them up to you. Satan is chained down. Therefore, ask your Lord not to let him overcome you.*

The Commander of the Faithful (Imam 'Ali ('a)) said, "I stood up and said, 'O Prophet of Allah, what are the noblest of deeds in this month?'

The Holy Prophet (S) said:

يَا أَبَا الْحَسَنِ أَفْضَلُ الْأَعْمَالِ فِي هَذَا الشَّهْرِ الْوَرَعُ عَنِ مَحَارِمِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ.

*O Abu'l-Hasan, the noblest of deeds in this month are abstaining from what the Honorable and Exalted God has forbidden... 39*

Delineation the merits of the month of Ramadhan is too vast to be covered in this book because this month holds a special significance and the traditions about its merits are numerous. However, the most important topics that are covered by the abovementioned sermon of the Holy Prophet (S), as well as the

traditions of the Holy Imams (‘a) can be summarized in the following points:

1. One should take advantage of this blessed month in which all rites gain special meaning, quantity and quality. In this great devotional season, punishments for evil acts and rewards for kind acts are multiplied. Finally, a golden opportunity to change all past activities into righteous acts or even into the highest ranks of righteousness is available in this month.
2. Fasting during this month does not only mean abstaining from eating and drinking, but also from all forbidden evil acts in addition to turning away from all weaknesses and flaws.
3. In this month, diversity in devotional acts and a practical demonstration of the deeds that take one nearer to Almighty Allah are visible in the coming presentation of the devotional acts and rites of this month.
4. An all-inclusive and comprehensive practical course of worship has been set up in this month to accelerate the devotional practices to cover the entire time of this month.
5. As has been previously cited in our discussion of the Night of Qadr within the particular days and nights of the year, Almighty Allah, in this month in general and on the Night of Qadr in particular, makes crucial decisions about man’s destiny and the descent of His mercy upon His creatures.
6. In this month, man is spiritually, morally, and ethically equipped for resuming higher and more perfect activity after ‘«d al-Fitr.

All Muslims pay much attention to the month of Ramadhan. As a result, this month, in its totality, identifies Muslims and distinguishes them from all other nations and groups.

However, the course that has been established by the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) is still different in particularities and details from the devotional courses adopted by other Muslims for this month.

## Rites of Ramadhan

The rites of Ramadhan can be divided into two main parts. We will try to restrict our discussion to mentioning the titles of these rites along with a reference to their contents, leaving the details, which are too many, to the famous Shaykh al-Qummi’s *Mafatih al-Jinan*.

The **first part** of the devotional acts of Ramadhan involves the **common devotional acts** that are practiced throughout this month without distinction as to the day.

The **second part** involves the devotional acts that are dedicated to **certain nights or days** of the month.

## First Part: The Common Devotional Acts of Ramadhan

This part is further subdivided into four sections:

- Devotional Acts Common to the Nights and Days
- Devotional Acts Common to the Nights
- Devotional Acts Common to Early Dawn
- Devotional Acts Common to Daytime

### Devotional Acts Common to the Nights and Days

Authors of books on supplications and devotional acts have mentioned a number of acts, some of which are as follows:

#### Supplications after each obligatory prayer or at all times

Shaykh al-Qummi has cited three supplications to be said after the obligatory prayers and one supplication to be recited at any time. This supplication is known as *Du'a' al-Hajj*.[40](#)

These four supplications comprise highly regarded contents, including implorations to gain divine permission to perform the ritual *Hajj* Pilgrimage, to observe the Night of Qadr as it should be observed, to be released from Hellfire, to gain Paradise, to have one's sustenance expanded, and to concern oneself with solving the problems of Muslims and achieving their interests.[41](#) Shaykh al-Kulayni and Shaykh al-Saduq, through a valid chain of authority, have mentioned another supplication with more details.[42](#)

#### Recitation of the Holy Qur'an

It is highly recommended to recite, read, and ponder over the Holy Qur'an as much as possible during the month of Ramadhan. According to some traditions, although it is recommended to read the whole Qur'an once every month during other days and months, it is more highly recommended to read the whole Qur'an once every three days in Ramadhan.[43](#)

Through a valid chain of authority, Shaykh al-Kulayni has stated that Imam Musa al-Kazim ('a) deemed recommended reading the Holy Qur'an entirely once or even more every day or night of Ramadhan. Then, the Imam ('a) mentioned a great reward for dedicating the reward of such entire recitation to the Holy Prophet and Imams ('a). One of these rewards is the dedicator will be included with their group on the Day of Resurrection.[44](#)

## Litanies

It is recommended to engage in repeating words of seeking forgiveness from Almighty Allah (*istighfar*), glorifying Him (*tasbih*), praising Him (*hamd*), and professing that He is the One and Only God (*tahlil*) and the Most Great (*takbir*). It is reported that when the month of Ramadhan begins, Imam Zayn al-'Abidin ('a) would utter no other words than words of *tasbih*, *istighfar*, and *takbir*.<sup>45</sup>

## Prayers

The Holy Imams ('a) prepared a course of supererogatory prayers for the nights and days of this month, recommending offering them as much as possible.

## Devotional Acts Common to the Nights of Ramadhan

Authors of books on supplications and devotional acts have mentioned a number of acts, some of which are as follows:

### Breaking the Fast

As fasting ritually extends from dawn to dusk, it should be broken immediately after that by eating and drinking. It is however recommended to delay it after the performing of the obligatory sunset prayer. It is also recommended to break the fast with a date or a sweet food.

While breaking the fast, it is recommended to say a litany or a supplication the most famous formula of which is the following:

O Allah, For Your sake have I fasted, with Your sustenance have I broken my fast, and in You have I trusted.

اَللّٰهُمَّ لَكَ صُمْتُ وَعَلَىٰ رِزْقِكَ اَفْطَرْتُ وَعَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْتُ

Upon eating the first bite, it is recommended to say the following:

*In the Name of Allah; the All-beneficent, the All-merciful. O Liberal in forgiving: (please) forgive me.*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ. يَا وَّاسِعَ الْمَغْفِرَةِ اَعْفِرْ لِي

Such matters bring about a great reward, such as forgiveness and gaining the rewards of all those who have fasted that day.

It is also recommended to recite *Surah al-Qadr* just before breaking the fast.<sup>46</sup>

## Almsgiving

One of the highly recommended acts is to give alms during the nights of Ramadhan, and especially at the time of breaking the fast. When such alms are the food with which the fast is ordinarily broken, no matter how little the amount is, even if it is just a few dates or a drink of water, according to one's capacity, it brings about a great reward. He gains the reward of the deeds done by that fasting person out of the power he has obtained from the food that he gave to him as alms, and winning the reward of manumitting thirty slaves. In addition, the supplication of the almsgiver will be responded to.<sup>47</sup>

## Recitation of the Holy Qur'an

On the nights of Ramadhan, it is highly recommended to recite certain chapters of the Holy Qur'an, such as *Surah al-Qadr* one thousand times and *Surah al-Dukhan* (No. 44) one hundred times, when possible.<sup>48</sup>

## Supplications

The most important formula of supplication said on the nights of Ramadhan is *Du'a' al-Iftitah*, which is an invocation of Allah's blessings upon the Holy Prophet and his Household, a special supplication for the Awaited Imam al-Mahdi ('a), and statements that are regarded as highly spiritual which encourage a person to engage in self-struggle.

Shaykh al-Qummi has also cited three other formulas of supplication for the nights of Ramadhan.<sup>49</sup>

## Prayers

It is recommended to offer one thousand units of prayer that are distributed among the nights of Ramadhan and called the Ramadhan supererogatory prayers. Although there is more than one formula for the distribution of these units of prayer among the nights of Ramadhan, Shaykh al-Qummi, following Shaykh al-Mufid, has chosen a certain formula and described it as the most familiar. This formula is as follows:

On the first twenty nights of Ramadhan, twenty units of this prayer should be offered each night with an interval between each two units. To explain, eight units should be offered after the obligatory sunset Prayer and the others after the obligatory early night prayer. The total is thus four hundred units and the remainder is six hundred. These six hundred units should be offered on the three Nights of Qadr, which are the nineteenth, the twenty-first, and twenty-third of the month. Two hundred units should be offered on each of these three Nights. Thus, one thousand units will be completed.

It is also recommended to offer a two-unit prayer each night, reciting *Surah al-Fatihah* once and repeating *Surah al-Tawhid* three times. After completion of the prayer, the following litany may be said:

*Glory be to Him Who watches over, never leaves anything undone nor is neglectful. Glory be to Him*

Who is Merciful and never does a thing in haste. Glory be to Him Who is vigilant and never forgets one thing over another. Glory be to Him Who is alert and steady, never engrossed with a thing so as to overlook another.

سُبْحَانَ مَنْ هُوَ حَفِيظٌ لَا يَغْفُلُ سُبْحَانَ مَنْ هُوَ رَحِيمٌ لَا يَعْجَلُ سُبْحَانَ مَنْ هُوَ قَائِمٌ لَا يَسْهُو سُبْحَانَ مَنْ هُوَ دَائِمٌ لَا يَلْهُو

After this litany, it is recommended to repeat the following statement seven times:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

All glory be to Allah, all praise be to Allah, there is no god save Allah, and Allah is the Greatest.

After that, it is recommended to say the following supplication once:

Glory be to You, Glory be to You, Glory be to You. O All-Great, forgive my grave sins.

سُبْحَانَكَ سُبْحَانَكَ سُبْحَانَكَ يَا عَظِيمٌ اَعْفِرْ لِي الذَّنْبَ الْعَظِيمَ

Then, it is recommended to invoke blessings upon the Holy Prophet and his Household ten times:

O Allah, (please do) send blessings upon Muhammad and upon his Household.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ

About this prayer, Shaykh al-Kaf'ami has mentioned that whoever offers it will have seventy thousand of his sins forgiven by Almighty Allah.<sup>50</sup>

### Devotional Acts Common to Early Dawn

Authors of books on supplications and devotional acts have mentioned a number of acts, some of which are as follows:

#### Having the Early Dawn Meal (Suhur)

It is highly recommended to eat or drink something at early dawn, preferably flour or dates. For this meal, there are some etiquettes, one of which is to recite *Surah al-Qadr*.

#### Supplications and Whispered Prayers

Supplications and whispered prayers are the most important deeds of early dawn. The most significant

and famous supplication is known as *Du'a' al-Baha'*, which involves statements of glorification of Almighty Allah and imploring in the name of His attributes. About this supplication, which is reported from Imam al-Ridha ('a) to be ascribed to his grandfather Imam al-Baqir ('a), it is reported that it contributes to granting one's requests.

In addition, there is the most magnificent supplication that is reported by Abu-Hamzah al-Thumali carrying his name.

Abu-Hamzah al-Thumali has reported that Imam 'Ali ibn Husayn Zayn al-'Abidin ('a) used to pray the whole night throughout Ramadhan. During the last hour of night, he used to say the following supplication:

*O Allah, do not discipline me by means of Your punishment and do not subject me to Your planned strategy...*

إِلٰهِي لَا تُؤَدِّبْنِي بِعُقُوبَتِكَ وَلَا تَمْكُرْ بِي فِي حِيلَتِكَ...

Very long, eloquent, refined in style and composition, this supplication holds highly considerable contents and a variety of diction. It plays a vital role in spiritual education, evolution and perfection, and reinforces one's relationship with Allah. It also teaches one how to talk to Him confidentially and how to praise and glorify Him.

Furthermore, this supplication presents the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) and confirms their matchless knowledge, leadership, and vital role in the lives of Muslims. It also demonstrates their course in building a virtuous community and their supreme goals, one of which is to create a morally and spiritually perfected group in society.

In addition to these two supplications, there are others to be said at early dawn and can be found in *Mafatih al-Jinan*.[51](#)

### [Devotional Acts Common to Daytime](#)

Authors of books on supplications and devotional acts have mentioned a number of acts, some of which are as follows:

#### [Supplication](#)

A set of texts and supplicatory formulas have been reported to be said during the daytime of Ramadhan. The most important of these is the supplication that begins with the following statement:

إِلٰهُمَّ هَذَا شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلْتَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنَ هُدًى لِلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِنَ الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ...

*O Allah, this is the month of Ramadhan in which You revealed the Qur'an, guidance for humankind and clear proofs of true guidance and distinction (between the right and the wrong)...*

This supplication has been reported by Shaykh al-Tusi, in *Misbah al-Mutahajjid*, and Sayyid Ibn Tawus, in *Iqbal al-A'mal*.[52](#)

There is also another supplication the first statements of which are similar to the statements of the previously mentioned supplication of *Du'a' al-Baha'*. However, this supplication then moves to invoke blessings upon the Holy Prophet, his Household, the prophets, and the angels. It then presents statements of praying for and praising the Holy Prophet (S).[53](#)

### Litanies and Doxologies

Litanies, statements of glorification enumerating the attributes of Almighty Allah are to be said on every day of Ramadhan. In this regard, a ten-passage litany explaining the hearing, sight, creation, knowledge, and kingdom of Almighty Allah, as well as many other similar matters, is to be repeated every day in Ramadhan.[54](#)

### Invocations of Blessings

Shaykh al-Tusi and Sayyid Ibn Tawus have cited a wonderful piece invoking Almighty Allah's blessings upon the Holy Prophet and his Household, as well as praising and commending them, to be said every day in Ramadhan. This invocation begins with the following statement:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا. { لَبَّيْكَ يَا رَبِّ وَسَعْدَيْكَ }  
وَسُبْحَانَكَ...

*“Verily, Allah and His angels send blessings upon the Prophet, O you who believe, call for Divine blessings on him and salute him with a becoming salutation.” Here I am at Your service, my Lord! Doing that which pleases You, and glory be to You...[55](#)*

## Second Part: Devotional Acts Dedicated to Certain Nights and Days

This part can be subdivided into the following sections:

The Devotional Acts of Welcoming the month of Ramadhan

The Devotional Acts of the Bright Nights

The Devotional Acts on the Nights of Qadr

The Devotional Acts on the Last Ten Nights

## The Devotional Acts on Certain Days of Ramadhan

### Devotional Acts on the First Night and Day

Islam and the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) have devoted special attention to the first night and day of Ramadhan and confirmed a number of matters to be done on this night and day, the most important of which are the following:

#### Watching the New Moon

Authoritative traditions narrate that the Holy Prophet (S) and his Household (‘a) used to watch for and welcome the new moon of the month—a procedure that has become one of the highly regarded recommendable acts.<sup>56</sup> In this respect, many supplicatory formulas reported from the Holy Prophet (S) and the Holy Imams (‘a) have been mentioned for this procedure. However, the forty-third supplication of *al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah* may be presented as the most magnificent formula in this respect.<sup>57</sup>

#### Ritual Bathing

On the first night of Ramadhan, it is recommended to perform the ritual bath and ceremonially purify oneself by immersing oneself in a flowing river or pouring thirty handfuls of water on the head.

#### Visiting Imam Husayn (‘a)

It is also highly recommended to perform visitation of Imam Husayn (‘a) this night from close (at his holy shrine) or by reading his *ziyarah* from afar.

#### Supererogatory Prayers

The supererogatory prayers of Ramadhan should be started this night. Another two-unit prayer, in each unit of which *Surah al-Fatihah* and *Surah al-An'am* (No. 6) are recited may be offered. Upon accomplishment, it is recommended to beseech Almighty Allah's protection against fears and ailments.

#### Supplications

Many supplicatory formulas have been reported to be read on the first night of Ramadhan. One of these is the supplication reported by Ibn Tawus from Imam al-Jawad (‘a). This supplication begins with the following statement:

اللَّهُمَّ يَا مَنْ يَمْلِكُ التَّدْبِيرَ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

*O Allah, O He Who controls the management of all affairs, and has power over all things!*

The two *Du'a' al-Jawshan al-Kabir* and *Du'a' al-Hajj* supplications are also reported to be read on this

night.

All the previous devotional acts for the first night of Ramadhan are also performed on the first day of Ramadhan, although with some different formulas for prayers and supplications, except watching for the new moon and visiting Imam Husayn (‘a).

‘Allamah al-Majlisi states that Shaykh al-Kulayni, Shaykh al-Tusi, and others have reported through a valid chain of authority that Imam al-Kazim (‘a) used to say a special supplication on the first of Ramadhan. This supplication begins with the following statement:

...اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِاسْمِكَ الَّذِي دَانَ لَهُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ وَبِرَحْمَتِكَ الَّتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ

*O Allah I beseech You, in the name of Your name before which everything kneels down and in the name of Your mercy which encompasses everything...* [58](#)

### Devotional Acts on the Bright Nights of Ramadhan

A special prayer, mentioned within the devotional acts of Rajab, is common to the bright (i.e. moonlit) nights of the three months. Therefore, the fifteenth night of Ramadhan is included.

In addition, it is recommended to perform the ritual bath and offer other prayers on the bright nights of Ramadhan. However, the fifteenth night is distinguished by visiting Imam Husayn (‘a) and offering some prayers. One of these prayers is a ten-unit one, offered at the tomb of Imam Husayn (‘a) after the obligatory early night prayer. This prayer is, of course, different from the eight-unit night prayer. Another prayer to be offered this night is a hundred-unit prayer, in each unit of which *Surah al-Fatihah* is recited once and *Surah al-Tawhid* ten times. [59](#)

### Rites of the Nights of Qadr

In the previous discussion of the particular days and nights of the year, we mentioned both the common and the private rites of the three Nights of Qadr. We also pointed out the significance of the Night of Qadr.

### Devotional Acts of the Last Ten Nights of Ramadhan

The last ten nights of Ramadhan enjoy such a special significance that the Holy Prophet (S) used to roll up his bed and prepare himself for worship on these nights. To devote one’s efforts to devotional acts on these ten nights denotes an acceleration of the devotional movement of Ramadhan, especially when we take into consideration the fact that the Night of Qadr is one of these ten nights.

Some devotional acts and special supplications are devoted to these nights. For each night, a special supplication has been reported in addition to other supplications that are common to the ten nights. One

of these is the supplication that begins with the following statement:

“...اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ قُلْتَ فِي كِتَابِكَ الْمُنْزَلِ: ”شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ

*O Allah, You have said in Your revealed Book: “The month of Ramadhan in which the Qur’an was revealed...”*

On the twenty–seventh night, it is recommended to take the ritual bath and to repeat the following supplication throughout the night:

اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِي التَّجَافِيَّ عَنِ دَارِ الْغُرُورِ وَالْإِنَابَةَ إِلَى دَارِ الْخُلُودِ وَالْإِسْتِعْدَادَ لِلْمَوْتِ قَبْلَ حُلُولِ الْفَوْتِ

*O Allah, (please) provide me with alienation from the abode of delusion, turning to the abode of eternity, and readiness for death before it is too late.*

On the last day and night of Ramadhan, some special devotional acts, bidding this month farewell, have been reported:

- Performing the ritual bath on the last night
- Visiting Imam Husayn (‘a)
- Reciting *Surahs al-An’am* (No. 6), *al-Kahf* (No. 18), and *Yasin* (No. 36)
- Repeating the forgiveness–seeking prayer one hundred times
- Saying a number of supplications, the most favorable being the forty–fifth supplication of *al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah* and the following one reported from Imam al-Sadiq (‘a):

اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَجْعَلْهُ آخِرَ الْعَهْدِ مِنْ صِيَامِي لِشَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ يَطْلُعَ فَجْرُ هَذِهِ اللَّيْلَةِ إِلَّا وَقَدْ غَفَرْتَ لِي

*O Allah, (please) do not determine my observance of fasting in this month of Ramadhan to be the last of my observances of fasting. I seek Your protection against this day dawning before You forgive me.*

This supplication contributes to having one’s sins forgiven.

### Particular Acts of Days and Nights

Quoting ‘Allamah al-Majlisi in *Zad al-Ma’ad*, Shaykh al-Qummi has mentioned special prayers to be offered on each night of Ramadhan and special supplications to be said on each day in *Mafatih al-Jinan*.[60](#)

This vast and diverse devotional course intends to make man attain self-perfection and serve Almighty Allah on earth and be qualified and prepared for the crucial decisions that are made about this community on the Night of Qadr. The night of ‘d al-Fitr is the night of the fulfillment of promised rewards.

## Hajj and the First Ten Days of Dhu’l-Hijjah

*Hajj* is one of the most important devotional acts of Islam. According to some traditions, it follows the ritual prayer with regard to its significance and favorability in the list of the Islamic devotional acts. Moreover, *Hajj* has been described as one of the two *jihads* (i.e. holy struggle).

In this respect, Shaykh al-Kulayni has reported through a valid chain of authority that ‘Abdullah ibn Yahya al-Kahili heard Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) quoting the Holy Prophet (S) as saying:

هُوَ أَحَدُ الْجِهَادَيْنِ، هُوَ جِهَادُ الضُّعْفَاءِ.

*Hajj is one of the two jihads. It is the jihad of the weak.*

Commenting on this saying, Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) says:

وَنَحْنُ الضُّعْفَاءُ. أَمَا إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ شَيْءٌ أَفْضَلَ مِنَ الْحَجِّ إِلَّا الصَّلَاةُ، وَفِي الْحَجِّ هَهُنَا صَلَاةٌ وَلَيْسَ فِي الصَّلَاةِ قَبْلَكُمْ حَجٌّ.

*We are the weak. Verily, there is nothing better than Hajj except the ritual prayer; however, there is prayer in the Hajj but there is no Hajj in the prayer.* [61](#)

*Hajj* is also the support of the religion and the foundation of its existence. It is thus reported:

لَا يَزَالُ الدِّينُ قَائِمًا مَا قَامَتِ الْكَعْبَةُ.

*This religion is kept existent as long as the Ka’bah is still standing.* [62](#)

The *Hajj* has a historical root that extends to the time before the existence of Adam (‘a) on earth although the divine call to perform *Hajj* as an obligatory duty upon all people actually began at the time of Prophet Abraham (‘a).

In this regard, Shaykh al-Kulayni, through a valid chain of authority, has reported Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) as saying:

لَمَّا أَفَاضَ آدَمُ مِنْ مَنَى تَلَقَّتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ فَقَالَتْ: يَا آدَمُ، بُرِّ حَجَّكَ. أَمَا إِنَّا قَدْ حَجَّجْنَا هَذَا الْبَيْتَ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَحْجَّهُ بِالْفِي

عَامٍ.

When Adam (‘a) returned from Mina (as a ritual practice), he was received by the angels who said to him, “Make lawful your Hajj, for we have been going on Hajj to this house two thousand years before you.”<sup>63</sup>

Through another valid chain of authority, Shaykh al-Kulayni has reported Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) as saying:

لَمَّا أَمَرَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ بِنَاءَ الْبَيْتِ وَتَمَّ بِنَاؤُهُ، قَعَدَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ عَلَى رُكْنٍ تَمَّ نَادَى: هَلُمَّ الْحَجَّ. فَلَوَّ نَادَى هَلُمُّوا إِلَى الْحَجِّ لَمْ يَحِجَّ إِلَّا مَنْ كَانَ يَوْمَئِذٍ إِنْسِيًّا مَخْلُوقًا، وَلَكِنَّهُ نَادَى: هَلُمَّ الْحَجَّ. فَلَبَّى النَّاسُ فِي أَصْلَابِ الرِّجَالِ: لَبَّيْكَ دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ. لَبَّيْكَ دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ. فَمَنْ لَبَّى عَشْرًا يَحِجَّ عَشْرًا، وَمَنْ لَبَّى خَمْسًا يَحِجَّ خَمْسًا، وَمَنْ لَبَّى أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَبَعْدَ ذَلِكَ، وَمَنْ لَبَّى وَاحِدًا حَجَّ وَاحِدًا، وَمَنْ لَمْ يَلْبَبْ لَمْ يَحِجَّ.

When the construction of the House was completed by Abraham (‘a) and Ishmael (‘a) by the command of Almighty Allah, Abraham (‘a) sat in a corner and called out, “Come you all to the Hajj.” If he had called out, “Come to the Hajj,” none would have come except the human beings of that time, but when his call was, “Come you all to the Hajj,” all people even the unborn in the loins of their fathers responded to him, saying, “We do respond to the caller of Allah. We do respond to the caller of Allah...” Thus, those who repeated this statement of response ten times will go on Hajj ten times. Those who repeated it five times will go on Hajj five times and so every one will go on Hajj as many times as he repeated this statement. Likewise, he who repeated it once only will go on Hajj once only and who had not responded will not go on Hajj at all.<sup>64</sup>

Performing the Hajj Pilgrimage is obligatory only once upon any adult who possesses the expenditure of the Hajj journey along with an amount sufficient to provide livelihood to one’s dependents, and that such a journey will not cause disorder in one’s livelihood or personal conditions. At the same time, it is highly recommended to go on Hajj as many times as possible—an act that is preferred to many other devotional acts.<sup>65</sup>

It is also impermissible to suspend the Hajj or to leave the Holy Ka’bah unvisited. In this regard, it is obligatory upon the supreme religious authority to force people to perform this religious duty and fund their journeys if they cannot find money to do so.

Detailed guidance on the performance of this duty is available in books on the practical laws of Hajj, known as *manasik al-Hajj* (Rites of the Hajj).

### **Categories of the Ritual Hajj**

To a great extent, all Muslims unanimously agree upon classifying the ritual Hajj into three categories and upon the basic details of each category. This is of course one of the divine blessings with which

Muslims are endowed and one of the matters that expresses their unity.

The categories of *Hajj* are thus three:

**1. *Hajj al-Tamattu'*:** The most significant and preferred category of *Hajj*, *Hajj al-Tamattu'* is obligatory upon every adult person (old enough to carry out religious duties) who is capable of carrying out this duty and whose place of dwelling is more than ninety kilometers away from the city of Makkah. Referring to such people, the Holy Qur'an says:

ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلُهُ حَاضِرِي الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ (196)

***This is for him whose family is not present in the Sacred Mosque. (2: 196)***

In the Muslim jurisprudential terminology, they are called *ahl al-afaq* (People of the Horizons).

**2. *Hajj al-Ifrad*:** This category of *Hajj* is obligatory upon those who live near Makkah and are present in the Sacred Mosque. In it the performer (of *Hajj*) is required to enter into the state of *Ihram* (i.e. put on two ceremonially white pieces of cloth and pledge to abandon the forbidden acts that violate one's *Hajj* or '*Umrah*'). They start either from the *Miqat* (the starting points for *Hajj*) or from their houses and then perform a single '*Umrah*' (i.e. minor *Hajj*) only. This category of *Hajj* is different from the earlier in the point that it does not require offering a sacrifice to the Holy Ka'bah or slaughtering an animal. Additionally, entering into the state of *Ihram* for this category of *Hajj* is different from the earlier category.

**3. *Hajj al-Qiran*:** This category of *Hajj* is similar to the abovementioned one with one difference. The pilgrim is required to mark the offering that he must offer to the Holy Ka'bah from the first moment of entering the state of *Ihram* until he slaughters it at Mina on the Day of '«d al-Adhha.

### Rites of Hajj al-Tamattu'

In brief, in *Hajj al-Tamattu'* a pilgrim enters the state of *Ihram* to perform the '*Umrat al-Tamattu'*<sup>66</sup> from one of the five places known as *Mawaqit* (sing. *Miqat*) and which had been marked out by the Holy Prophet (S) for the people of the remote horizons as follows:

- (1) Masjid al-Shajarah, which is also called Dhul-Halifah or Abyar 'Ali: the starting point (i.e. *Miqat*) from which the people of Madinah and those who pass by it start their ritual *Hajj*.
- (2) Al-Juhafah: the starting point from which the people of Sham (currently Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine) and those passing by it start their *Hajj*.
- (3) Wadi-'Aqiq: the starting point from which the people of Iraq and those passing by it start their *Hajj*.
- (4) Qarn al-Manazil: the starting point from which the people of al-Ta'if (a city in western Saudi Arabia,

in al-Hijaz Province) and those passing by it start their *Hajj*.

(5) Yalamlam: the starting point from which the people of the Yemen and those passing by it start their *Hajj*.

Entering into the state of *Ihram* means to take off one's ordinary clothes and put on two unstitched pieces of cloth worn as shirt and apron. Then, the pilgrim utters the statement of *Talbiyah* (i.e. responding to the call of *Hajj*), which is in the following form:

لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ. لَبَّيْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ لَبَّيْكَ. إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ وَالنِّعْمَةَ لَكَ وَالْمُلْكَ. لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ.

*Here I am responding to You, O Allah, here I am. Here I am, You have no partner, here I am. Surely, praise, grace, and kingship are Yours. You have no partner.*

A pilgrim must also abstain from a set of matters some of which are inherently forbidden while others are not, such as touching women, using perfume, wearing clothes other than the two pieces of *Ihram*, covering the head with anything, engaging in disputes, hunting, and others.

A pilgrim must then present himself in Makkah to circumambulate the Holy Ka'bah seven times, beginning and ending at the corner on which the Black Stone is placed. Then, he must offer the two-unit prayer of circumambulation at the place known as the Station of Abraham ('a) (*Maqam Ibrahim*).

Afterwards, he must go to al-Safa to begin performing the rite of *Sa'y*<sup>67</sup> from al-Safa to al-Marwah, two small hillocks between which a pilgrim must run slowly seven times; four times from al-Safa to al-Marwah and three times the other way so as to end up at al-Marwah.

The next rite is to have his hair cut short and his nails trimmed.

Immediately after performing this rite, a pilgrim may release himself from the state of *Ihram* and return to his normal state. However, he must wait for the time of *Hajj* to begin. Once it begins, he is required to enter into a new state of *Ihram* for the *Hajj* from the holy city of Makkah on the eighth of Dhu'l-Hijjah. On this day, he must leave for Mount 'Arafat and stay there from midday to the sunset of the ninth of Dhu'l-Hijjah. This rite is known as halting at 'Arafat.

After sunset, he must come down this mountain and move towards the Holy Monument (i.e. *al-Mash'ar al-Haram*) where he must stay until sunrise.

On the tenth of Dhu'l-Hijjah, he must come to Mina to perform the rite of stoning the 'Aqabah statue (*jamarat al-'aqabah*) with seven small pebbles that he must gather from the Holy Precinct of Makkah and the Holy Monument. He must then sacrifice an animal offering, which must be a sheep, a cow, or a camel, and then shave or have the hair of his head cut short. Only then, can he release himself from the state of *Ihram* and do all the legal things that have been made forbidden to him as long as he was in the

state of *Ihram*, except touching women and using perfumes.

He must then come to the Holy House again, circumambulate it seven times, offer a two-unit prayer at the Station of Abraham ('a), and run seven times between al-Safa and al-Marwah. Only then can he use perfume.

In order to have intimacy made lawful for him, he must perform another seven-round circumambulation, known in the jurisprudential terminology of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) School as *Tawaf al-Nisa'* and in the terminology of the other Muslim schools as *Tawaf al-Wada'* (Farewell Circumambulation).

On the eleventh and twelfth nights of Dhu'l-Hijjah, a pilgrim is required to spend half of the night (either from nightfall to midnight, or from midnight to its last hour, at least) at Mina, although it is recommended, and even obligatory under certain circumstances, to spend the thirteenth night there, too.

On the eleventh and twelfth days, and even the thirteenth day for those who spent the last night at Mina, a pilgrim must stone the three statues (known as *al-jamarah al-sughra*, *al-jamarah al-wusta*, and *jamarat al-'Aqabah*) with seven pebbles each.

This is a summary of the method and obligatory rites of *Hajj al-Tamattu'* according to the jurisprudence of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), although there are further details, manners, recommended acts, and even duties to which a pilgrim may be exposed while performing this category of *Hajj*. However, there is no space to mention all these in this book.

This method is largely followed by the other Muslim sects with the exception of a very few details, options, and advancing or delaying in the performance of certain rites and in the rulings appertaining to certain acts of a pilgrim.

### Distinctive Features of Hajj

Under this title, we can refer to three features by which the worship of *Hajj* is distinguished from the other devotional acts.

**First:** *Hajj* comprises several sorts of devotional acts, such as prayer, fasting, *jihad*, and almsgiving. The ritual circumambulation of the Holy House is a sort of prayer, in addition to the ritual prayer that follows each practice of circumambulation, known as *Salat al-Tawaf* (Circumambulation Prayer). Entering into the state of *Ihram*, which imposes abstaining from certain good things and desires, is a sort of fasting. Sacrificing and offering an animal to the Holy Ka'bah is a sort of almsgiving.

The hardships undergone by a performer of *Hajj*, such as the hardship of taking long journeys to Makkah and the exhaustive efforts that come from carrying out the rituals of the *Hajj*, are a sort of *jihad*. Besides, the ritual *Hajj* involves other devotional acts, such as halting at a mountain, stoning the three statues, that represent Satan, with pebbles, and having one's hair cut short or shaved. All these devotional acts are distinctive, unlike all other acts of worship.

**Second:** *Hajj* is a large collective practice and Muslims of various social classes and from every remote path gather on certain days to perform this religious duty collectively and respond to the divine call of Prophet Abraham (‘a). They all move on the same highland and in a unified form to express the actual equality of all human beings and practically achieve the perfect unity of the Muslim nation.

**Third:** The purpose behind the practice of this worship is wide-ranging at both the individual and collective level and in various aspects, including the material, spiritual, social, political, economic, educational, and moral.

Although explanation of this point requires elaborative discourse, it seems possible to explain it by citing some traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) that deal with some of the spiritual and material aspects and the holy purpose of this worship.

Imam ‘Ali (‘a) is reported to have said:

فَرَضَ عَلَيْكُمْ حَجَّ بَيْتِهِ الْحَرَامِ، الَّذِي جَعَلَهُ قِبْلَةً لِلْأَنَامِ، يَرُدُّونَهُ وَرُودَ الْأَنْعَامِ، وَيَأْلَهُونَ إِلَيْهِ وَوَلُوهُ الْحَمَامِ. جَعَلَهُ سُبْحَانَهُ  
عَلَامَةً لِنَوَاضِعِهِمْ لِعَظَمَتِهِ، وَإِذْعَانِهِمْ لِعِزَّتِهِ، وَاخْتَارَ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ سُمَاعًا أَجَابُوا إِلَيْهِ دَعْوَتَهُ، وَصَدَّقُوا كَلِمَتَهُ، وَوَقَفُوا  
مَوَاقِفَ أَنْبِيَائِهِ، وَتَشَبَّهُوا بِمَلَائِكَتِهِ الْمُطِيفِينَ بِعَرْشِهِ، يُحْرَزُونَ الْأَرْبَاحَ فِي مَنَاجِرِ عِبَادَتِهِ، وَيَتَبَادَرُونَ عِنْدَهُ مَوْعِدَ مَغْفِرَتِهِ.  
جَعَلَهُ سُبْحَانَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ عِلْمًا، وَلِلْعَائِدِينَ حَرَمًا، فَرَضَ حَجَّهُ، وَأَوْجَبَ حَقَّهُ، وَكَتَبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَفَادَتَهُ، فَقَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ: وَلِلَّهِ  
(عَلَى النَّاسِ حَجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ (97)

*Allah has made obligatory upon you the pilgrimage (Hajj) to His sacred House, which is the turning point for the people who go to it as beasts or pigeons go towards spring water. Allah, the Glorified, made it a sign of their supplication before His Greatness and their acknowledgment of His Dignity. He selected from among His creation those who upon listening to His call responded to it and testified to His word. They stood in the position of His Prophets and resembled His angels who surround the Divine Throne securing all the benefits of performing His worship and hastening towards His promised forgiveness. Allah the Glorified made it (His sacred House) an emblem for Islam and an object of respect for those who turn to it. He made obligatory its pilgrimage and claim on you, holding you responsible to discharge it.*

*Thus, Allah the Glorified said, “And (purely) for Allah, is incumbent upon mankind, the pilgrimage to the House, for those who can afford to journey thither. And whoever denies, then verily, Allah is Self-sufficiently independent of the worlds. (3:97)”<sup>68</sup>*

Within the famous tradition that al-Fadhli ibn Shadhan has reported from Imam al-Ridha (‘a) with regard to the logic for the religious duties, Imam al-Ridha (‘a) has said:

فَإِنْ قَالَ فَلِمَ أُمِرَ بِالْحَجِّ؟ قِيلَ لِعِلَّةِ الْوَفَادَةِ إِلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَطَلَبِ الزِّيَادَةِ وَالْخُرُوجِ مِنْ كُلِّ مَا افْتَرَفَ الْعَبْدُ تَائِبًا...  
مِمَّا مَضَى مُسْتَأْنِفًا لِمَا يَسْتَقْبَلُ مَعَ مَا فِيهِ مِنْ إِخْرَاجِ الْأَمْوَالِ وَتَعَبِ الْأَبْدَانِ وَالِاسْتِغْثَالِ عَنِ الْأَهْلِ وَالْوَالِدِ وَحَظْرِ

الْأَنْفُسِ عَنِ اللَّذَاتِ شَاخِصاً فِي الْحَرِّ وَالْبُرْدِ ثَابِتاً ذَلِكَ عَلَيْهِ دَائِماً مَعَ الْخُضُوعِ وَالِاسْتِكَانَةِ وَالتَّذَلُّلِ مَعَ مَا فِي ذَلِكَ لِجَمِيعِ الْخَلْقِ مِنَ الْمَنَافِعِ فِي شَرْقِ الْأَرْضِ وَغَرْبِهَا وَمَنْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ مِمَّنْ يَحِجُّ وَمِمَّنْ لَا يَحِجُّ مِنْ بَيْنِ تَاوَجِرِ وَجَالِبِ وَبَائِعِ وَمُسْتَرٍ وَكَاسِبِ وَمَسْكِينِ وَمُكَارٍ وَفَقِيرٍ وَقَضَاءِ حَوَائِجِ أَهْلِ الْأَطْرَافِ فِي الْمَوَاضِعِ الْمُمْكِنِ لَهُمُ الْاجْتِمَاعُ فِيهَا مَعَ مَا فِيهِ مِنَ التَّفَقُّهِ وَنَقْلِ أَخْبَارِ الْأَيْمَةِ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ إِلَى كُلِّ صُنْفٍ وَنَاحِيَةٍ كَمَا قَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: "وَمَا كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنْفِرُوا كَافَّةً فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ" (122) فَإِنْ قَالَ فَلِمَ أُمِرُوا بِحَجَّةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ لَا أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ. قِيلَ، لِأَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَضَعَ الْفَرَائِضَ عَلَى أَدْنَى الْقَوْمِ قُوَّةً كَمَا قَالَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: "لِيَشْهَدُوا مَنَافِعَ لَهُمْ" (28) يَعْنِي شَاءَ لَيْسَعَ لَهُ الْقَوِيُّ وَالضَّعِيفُ وَكَذَلِكَ سَائِرُ الْفَرَائِضِ إِنَّمَا وُضِعَتْ عَلَى أَدْنَى الْقَوْمِ قُوَّةً وَكَانَ مِنْ تِلْكَ الْفَرَائِضِ الْحَجُّ الْمَفْرُوضُ وَاحِداً ثُمَّ رَغَبَ بَعْدُ أَهْلُ الْقُوَّةِ بِقَدْرِ طَاقَتِهِمْ.

...If he asks, "Why have we been ordered to go on the Hajj pilgrimage?" It is said: This is because it is a form of going towards Allah the Exalted and Majestic, asking him for numerous rewards, departing from all evils that one has committed, being repentant for all that he has done in the past, and starting anew what he will do in the future. The Hajj pilgrimage is also done so that one expends his wealth, puts himself to physical trouble, experiences separation from his spouse and children, avoids lust and pleasure, and suffers from the troubles of the trip in the hot and cold weather, in fear, for a long interval in humility, submission, and humbleness.

In addition, the Hajj pilgrimage carries great benefits for all people (such as learning to desire Almighty Allah, fear Him, abandon hardheartedness, make continuous reference to Him, and not lose one's hope and expectation). It reminds people of fulfilling their duties towards their Lord and towards all people: people who live in the deserts or at sea, partake in the Hajj pilgrimage or not, import goods, do business, sell or buy, are dealers or needy, rent riding animals or are too poor to rent any riding animals to go on the Hajj pilgrimage.

It also includes the fulfillment of the needs of the people who live in the vicinity where the Hajj pilgrims gather. It includes the training of individuals in the narration of the traditions from the Immaculate Imams ('a) from one region over to another region. Almighty Allah has said, **"If a contingent from every expedition remained behind, they could devote themselves to studies in religion and admonish the people, when they return to them, that thus they may learn to guard themselves against evil. (9: 122)"**

He has also said, **"So that they may witness advantages for them. (22:28)"** If he asks, "Why have we been ordered to go on the Hajj pilgrimage once and not more?" It is then said: It is because Almighty Allah established the obligatory deeds taking into consideration the weakest people as He, the Exalted and Majestic, has said, '...He must make an offering, as he can afford, but if he cannot afford it...' This refers to a sheep that both the rich and the poor can offer. The other obligatory deeds are established considering the weakest people. One of the obligatory deeds is to go on the Hajj pilgrimage, which is obligatory once in one's lifetime. God has encouraged the rich people to perform it as often as they can.<sup>69</sup>

## Characteristics of the Ahl al-Bayt's View of Hajj

It seems proper to refer, yet briefly, to the Ahl al-Bayt's view of the *Hajj* and their understanding of the role that this worship can play in the life of the Muslim nation in general and the virtuous community in particular. *Hajj*, in its capacity as a religious duty, unites the words of Muslims and expresses the concord and entity of the Muslim nation.

The following distinctive features can add to the general understanding of all Muslims regarding *Hajj*:

### Great Interest

The Ahl al-Bayt ('a) took great interest in *Hajj*. They have discussed all the affairs and details of *Hajj* and given vivid explanations about its reality, history, excellence, value, role, and goals. They have also discussed in detail the laws appertaining to the rites and categories of *Hajj* and presented the various problems and their solutions in the light of the laws of Islam.

By making a simple and swift comparison between the traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) about *Hajj* and the traditions that are reported from others, we can obviously notice the difference. Comparatively, the number of traditions in which the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) have discussed the questions of *Hajj* and transmitted, both directly and indirectly, the Holy Prophet's words and deeds in this regard is quantitatively<sup>70</sup> and qualitatively many times as much as the traditions that are reported from the other Muslim schools in the same field.

The following two samples will confirm this obvious truth:

The tradition that the major Sunni reference books of Hadith report from Imam al-Baqir ('a) on the authority of Jabir ibn 'Abdullah al-Ansari presents many details about the Holy Prophet's last *Hajj* (known as the Farewell Pilgrimage) that cannot be found in any other tradition mentioned in these reference books. This tradition represents a jurisprudential basis for all Muslim schools of jurisprudence in the field of the laws of *Hajj*.<sup>71</sup>

Shaykh al-Saduq, through a valid chain of authority, has reported that Zurarah ibn A'yun once said to Imam al-Sadiq ('a), "May Allah accept me as ransom for you! I have been asking you about the laws of *Hajj* for forty years and you have always given me answers."

The Imam ('a) answered:

بَيْتٌ حُجَّ إِلَيْهِ قَبْلَ آدَمَ بِالْفِي عَامٍ تُرِيدُ أَنْ تُفْنِي مَسَائِلَهُ فِي أَرْبَعِينَ عَامًا؟

*A house to which pilgrimages were made two thousand years before the creation of Adam ('a)—do you expect that you can learn all about it in forty years only?*<sup>72</sup>

This answer obviously shows the wide-ranging scope of the Holy Imam's practical interest in the topic of *Hajj*, just as they show their great interest in the historical aspect of this worship.

### Comprehensiveness of the Devotional Content of Hajj

Not to speak of their vast concentration on *Hajj*, we notice that the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) also took much interest in the devotional contents of all of its rites and laws. We cannot find a performer of *Hajj* practicing any rite without a supplication or a litany before, during, or after it. More precisely, supplications and litanies accompany a performer of *Hajj* from the time he intends to perform *Hajj* until he returns home. Hundreds of traditions deal with this topic.<sup>73</sup>

In a coming chapter, we will discuss some details of the vast devotional contents of *Hajj*.

### Visiting the Holy Prophet (S), the Holy Imams ('a), and Places of Worship

Performers of *Hajj* complete this obligatory devotional act by visiting the Holy Prophet's (S) tomb and mosque—an act common to all Muslims.<sup>74</sup> However, the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) have given this topic much more significance with regard to both quantity and quality.

**With regard to quantity**, they encourage their followers to visit the tombs of the Holy Imams ('a) buried in the al-Baqi' Cemetery: Imam Hasan ibn 'Ali (al-Mujtaba), Imam 'Ali ibn al-Husayn (Zayn al-'Abidin), Imam Muhammad ibn 'Ali (al-Baqir), and Imam Ja'far ibn Muhammad (al-Sadiq), peace be upon them all.

They also recommend visiting the tomb of Lady Fatimah al-Zahra' ('a)—the veracious and pure—the daughter of the Holy Prophet (S). She is said to have been buried in her house<sup>75</sup> that is adjacent to the Holy Prophet's Mosque.

In addition, the Holy Imams ('a) have recommended visiting the tombs of the Holy Prophet's wives, Lady Fatimah bint Asad (Imam 'Ali's mother), the other righteous companions of the Holy Prophet (S), and the martyrs of the Battle of Uhud, topping the list being Hamzah ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib, the Holy Prophet's (S) uncle.

In addition to the previous, there is much interest in visiting mosques and other places where the Holy Prophet (S) offered prayers and said supplications and particular places where historical events or bestowing of divine gifts took place. The following mosques top this list:

- **Mosque Qaba**
- **Mosque al-Fath**
- **Mosque al-Qiblatayn**
- **Mosque Uhud**

- **Imam 'Ali Mosque**
- **Salman al-Farsi Mosque**
- **Lady Fatimah al-Zahra' Mosque**
- **Mosque al-Ghumamah (the cloud)**

Other places the Holy Imams ('a) have recommended visiting are:

- **Ummu-Ibrahim's Chamber** (known as *mashrabat ummi-ibrahim*).
- **Al-Abtuh** in the holy city of Makkah where there are the tombs of Lady Khadijah ('a) (the Mother of the Believers: the Holy Prophet's first wife and Lady Fatimah al-Zahra's mother), Abu-Talib ('a), and other righteous personalities of the early age of Islam.
- **Abu-Talib's Col** (where the Holy Prophet (S), along with his relatives from the Hashemites, were put under a harsh siege by the polytheists of Makkah at the beginning of his promulgation of Islam).
- **Hira' Cave** (where the Holy Prophet (S) used to worship Almighty Allah secretly before he received the divine revelation).
- **Al-Arqam House** (where the first group of Muslims, led by the Holy Prophet (S) met secretly to discuss the affairs of Islam).
- **Dar al-Nidwah** (the place where the chiefs of Quraysh would meet to discuss the latest issues).

The Holy Imams ('a) also recommended visiting all sites that were connected with the history of Islam and reminded Muslims of the dignity, honor, sacrifices, and difficulties that faced the divine mission of promulgating Islam to establish a good link between them and the great history of their religion. They hoped this would arouse their spirit of determination and renaissance, and create the qualities of independence, and self-respect in them.<sup>76</sup>

**With regard to quality**, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) look at visiting the Holy Prophet (S) and Imams ('a) as perfection and completion of the ritual *Hajj*. Many traditions declare and confirm this fact openly. In this connection, Imam al-Ridha ('a) is reported to have said:

إِنَّ لِكُلِّ إِمَامٍ عَهْدًا فِي عُنُقِ أَوْلِيَاءِهِ وَشَيْعَتِهِ، وَإِنَّ مِنْ تَمَامِ الْوَفَاءِ بِالْعَهْدِ وَحُسْنِ الْأَدَاءِ زِيَارَةَ قُبُورِهِمْ. فَمَنْ زَارَهُمْ رَغْبَةً فِي زِيَارَتِهِمْ وَتَصَدِيقًا بِمَا رَغِبُوا فِيهِ كَانَ أُمَّتُهُمْ شَفَعَاءَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

*The disciples and followers of every Imam ('a) are connected to him with a binding covenant that they must fulfill. Among the items of an excellent fulfillment of these covenants is indeed the visiting of the Imams' ('a) tombs. Hence, if one visits their tombs willingly and with the intention of accomplishing their*

desire, the Imams ('a) will intercede for that person on the Day of Resurrection. [77](#)

Isma'il ibn Mahran has reported Imam al-Sadiq ('a) as saying:

إِذَا حَجَّ أَحَدُكُمْ فَلْيَخْتِمْ حَجَّهُ بِزِيَارَتِنَا؛ لِأَنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ تَمَامِ الْحَجِّ

*Any one of you who goes on Hajj must conclude his Hajj by visiting us because this is the finalization of Hajj. [78](#)*

Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the Faithful ('a), is reported to have said:

أَتَمُّوا بِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ حَجَّكُمْ إِذَا خَرَجْتُمْ إِلَى بَيْتِ اللَّهِ؛ فَإِنَّ تَرْكَهُ جَفَاءٌ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُمْ، وَأَتَمُّوا بِالْقُبُورِ الَّتِي أَلْزَمَكُمْ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ زِيَارَتَهَا وَحَقَّهَا، وَاطْلُبُوا الرِّزْقَ عِنْدَهَا

*When you go on pilgrimage to the House of Allah, finalize your Hajj by visiting the Messenger of Allah (S) because to avoid doing this is a type of alienation from him, while you are ordered to avoid alienating yourself. Also, finalize your Hajj by visiting the tombs that Almighty Allah has ordered you to visit and to carry out your duties towards them. Seek sustenance at these tombs. [79](#)*

In *al-Kafi*, Shaykh al-Kulayni has reported Imam al-Baqir ('a) as saying

تَمَامُ الْحَجِّ لِقَاءُ الْإِمَامِ

*The acme of Hajj is to visit the Imam ('a). [80](#)*

[1.](#) – Rajab is the seventh month in the Islamic (lunar) calendar. It comes after Jumada al-Thaniyah (II) and before Sha`ban. In addition to Muharram, Dhu'l-Qa`dah and Dhu'l-Hijjah, Rajab is one of the Four Sacred Months in Islam.

[2.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, *Wasa'il al-Shi`ah* 7:352, H. 9.

According to several traditions, Ramadhan is the month of Almighty Allah—known by all Muslims. It is, therefore, probable that a mistake had taken place in the recording of this tradition with regard to this topic specifically.

[3.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, *Wasa'il al-Shi`ah* 7:350, H. 3.

[4.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, *Wasa'il al-Shi`ah* 7:350, H. 4.

[5.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, *Wasa'il al-Shi`ah* 7:348, H. 1 & 2 as quoted from Shaykh al-Saduq's *man-la-yahduru-hul-faqih*, al-Muqni`, al-Muqni`ah, *Thawab al-A`mal*, and al-Khisal, and Shaykh al-Tusi's *Misbah al-Mutahajjid* and *Tahdhib al-Ahkam*, as well as many other reference books.

Al-Hurr al-`Amili, in *Wasa'il al-Shi`ah*, and Shaykh al-Qummi, in *Mafatih al-Jinan*, have referred to another number of traditions about the excellence and merits of Rajab as well as the rewards of imploring Almighty Allah for forgiveness, and performing acts of worship in it.

[6.](#) – Shaykh `Abbas al-Qummi, *Mafatih al-Jinan*, pp. 132–137.

[7.](#) – Shaykh `Abbas al-Qummi, *Mafatih al-Jinan*, pp. 136.

[8.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, *Wasa'il al-Shi`ah* 7:359, H. 3.

[9.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, *Wasa'il al-Shi`ah* 7:358, H. 1.

- [10.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 7:361, H. 6.
- [11.](#) – Shaykh `Abbas al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 138.
- [12.](#) – Shaykh `Abbas al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 140–141.
- [13.](#) – Shaykh `Abbas al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 142.
- [14.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 5:233. See also Shaykh al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 139.
- [15.](#) – Shaykh `Abbas al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 148.
- [16.](#) – Shaykh `Abbas al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 149.
- [17.](#) – Shaykh `Abbas al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 154.
- [18.](#) – Shaykh `Abbas al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 154.
- [19.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 7:378, H. 33 as quoted from Shaykh al-Tusi's Misbah al-Mutahajjid.
- [20.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 7:360, H. 1.
- [21.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 7:372, H. 11 as quoted from Shaykh al-Saduq's Thawab al-A`mal.
- [22.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 7:360, H. 1, 2 as quoted from Shaykh al-Kulayni's Furu` al-Kafi and other reference books.
- [23.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 7:362, H. 7 as quoted from Shaykh al-Saduq's man-la-yahdhuruhul-faqih, Ma`ani al-Akhbar, and Thawab al-A`mal, Shaykh al-Kulayni's al-Kafi, and Shaykh al-Tusi's Misbah al-Mutahajjid and Tahdhib al-Ahkam.
- [24.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 7:372, H. 12 as quoted from Shaykh al-Saduq's Thawab al-A`mal.
- [25.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 7:373, H. 16.
- [26.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 7:375, H. 24.
- [27.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 7:378–380, H. 1, 2, 4, 5, & 6.
- [28.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 7:378–380, H. 8.
- [29.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 7:378–380, H. 3 & 7.
- [30.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 7:378–380, H. 1.
- [31.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 7:381, H. 10.
- [32.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 7:365, H. 18; Shaykh `Abbas al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 156.
- [33.](#) – Shaykh `Abbas al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 156–169.
- [34.](#) – Shaykh `Abbas al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 164–165.
- [35.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 7:370, H. 8.
- [36.](#) – Shaykh `Abbas al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 171.
- [37.](#) – Ibid.
- [38.](#) – The Golden Chain of Authority (al-Salsalah al-Dhahabiyah) reads as follows:  
 Imam al-Ridha ('a) has reported on the authority of his father, Imam al-Kazim ('a), on the authority of his father, Imam al-Sadiq ('a), on the authority of his father, Imam al-Baqir ('a), on the authority of his father, Imam Zayn al-`Abidin ('a), on the authority of his father, Imam Husayn ('a), on the authority of his father, Imam `Ali ('a), on the authority of the Holy Prophet (S) who said...
- [39.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 7:226, H. 20.
- [40.](#) – Sayyid al-Borujerdi, Jami` Ahadith al-Shi`ah 9:74 as quoted from Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi and Shaykh al-Kaf`ami's al-Misbah.
- [41.](#) – Shaykh al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 176–177.
- [42.](#) – Sayyid al-Borujerdi, Jami` Ahadith al-Shi`ah 9:71, H. 163.
- [43.](#) – Sayyid al-Borujerdi, Jami` Ahadith al-Shi`ah 9:13, H. 26, as quoted from Shaykh al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi.
- [44.](#) – Sayyid al-Borujerdi, Jami` Ahadith al-Shi`ah 9:178, as quoted from Shaykh al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi.
- [45.](#) – Ibid. Such reports indicate the general state of the Imam ('a) in this month. Of course, the Imams ('a) would repeat these devotional words as long as they would not contradict carrying out more important devotional acts or deeds, such as working towards settling necessary daily activities.
- [46.](#) – Shaykh al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 178.
- [47.](#) – Shaykh al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 178.

[48.](#) – Shaykh al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 179. Seemingly, to repeat Surah al-Qadr is equivalent to the litanies of Ramadhan or replacing the required recitation of the Holy Qur'an for those who cannot recite it in such a condensed manner. However, Almighty Allah knows best.

[49.](#) – Shaykh al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 179–183.

[50.](#) – Shaykh al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 183–184.

[51.](#) – Shaykh al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 184–202.

It is worth mentioning that on each night of Ramadhan, at early dawn, or after that, it is obligatory to remember fasting the next day.

[52.](#) – Shaykh al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 202.

[53.](#) – Shaykh al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 207.

[54.](#) – Shaykh al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 213–214.

[55.](#) – Shaykh al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 210.

[56.](#) – Moreover, Shaykh al-Qummi has mentioned that this procedure has been deemed obligatory by some scholars.

[57.](#) – Shaykh al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 215.

[58.](#) – Shaykh al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 217–121.

Although it is reported that Imam al-Kazim ('a) recommended praying to Almighty Allah with this supplicatory formula on the first day of the year, experts have understood that the Imam ('a) meant the first day or night of Ramadhan.

[59.](#) – Shaykh al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 223.

[60.](#) – Shaykh al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 238–242. On page 242, Shaykh al-Qummi has mentioned a notice to be worth considered.

[61.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 8:77, H. 2 as quoted from Shaykh al-Kulayni, Furu' al-Kafi.

[62.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 8:14, H. 5 as quoted from Shaykh al-Kulayni, Furu' al-Kafi and reported through a valid chain of authority.

[63.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 8:5, H. 6 as quoted from Shaykh al-Kulayni, Furu' al-Kafi.

[64.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 8:5, H. 9.

[65.](#) – In many traditions, Hajj is preferred to manumission of slaves, giving of alms, and even holy struggle against enemies. It is recommended to prefer going on Hajj for one's personal worldly affairs. In view of such matters and more details, the Hajj, in the sight of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), enjoys high value and a distinctive particularity. See Sayyid al-Borujerdi, Jami' Ahadith al-Shi'ah 10:149–216 Section: Merits of the Hajj.

[66.](#) – 'Umrat al-Tamattu' is the lesser Hajj (pilgrimage) to Makkah made independently or at the same time of the ritual Hajj, and consisting of a number of devotional rituals performed within the city. 'Umrat al-Tamattu' must be connected to the ritual Hajj.

[67.](#) – Sa'y is the ritual of running between Hill al-Safa and Hill al-Marwah seven times.

[68.](#) – Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 1.

[69.](#) – Shaykh al-Saduq, 'Uyun Akhbar al-Ridha 1:126.

[70.](#) – For instance, the author of Jami' Ahadiih al-Shi'ah has cited eight hundred and thirty one traditions about the history, excellence, and general affairs of the Hajj.

[71.](#) – Mansur 'Ali Nasif, al-Taj al-Jami' lil-Usul 2:153 as quoted from Sahih Muslim and Sunan Abi-Dawud.

[72.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 8:7, H. 12 as quoted from Shaykh al-Saduq's man-la-yahdhuruhul-faqih.

[73.](#) – For instance, al-Hurr al-'Amili, in Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 8:248–338 have dedicated sixty eight sections of his book to discussing the details of the Hajj.

[74.](#) – Exceptions are the Wahhabis who deem forbidden preparing for visiting the Holy Prophet's tomb. However, they deem it acceptable for those who are present at al-Madinah. According to their laws, it is lawful to prepare oneself for visiting the Holy Prophet's Mosque at Madinah and then visiting the Holy Prophet's tomb may come in the margin of visiting his mosque.

[75.](#) – About the burial place of Lady Fatimah al-Zahra' ('a), there are many probabilities, the most apparent of which is that she was buried in her house. However, there is another probability that she was buried in al-Baqi' Cemetery. The disagreement about the burial place of this veracious and pure lady resulted from the historical fact that she, owing to

certain political reasons, willed her burial place to be unknown to people and specifically asked Imam `Ali ('a), her husband, not to allow Abu-Bakr and `Umar to participate in her funeral ceremony because she died without forgiving them. This fact has been reported by all Muslims.

[76.](#) – Unfortunately, it can be noticed that there is currently an attempt through well-organized campaigns to eradicate these traces and cast screens upon them. The perpetrators hope that by attracting attention away from these places they will succeed in making the pilgrims forget them.

[77.](#) – `Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 97: 116, H. 1.

[78.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 14:324, H. 1.

[79.](#) – `Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 97: 139, H. 2.

[80.](#) – Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 4:549, H. 2.

## Identifying the General Political Attitude

Imitating the Holy Prophet (S) and following the instruction of the Holy Qur'an, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) made sure that the season of *Hajj* took the form of an annual meeting held by Muslims in order to declare their general political attitude and the most important situations that are related to all Muslims.

Historically, in the first year of their *Hajj* after the conquest of Makkah, *Surah Bara'ah* (*al-Tawbah*, No. 9) was revealed. The Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet (S) declared a release from all obligations towards the polytheists. This was one of the most significant political attitudes demonstrated by Islam.

In the last season of *Hajj* led by the Holy Prophet (S) and known as the *hijjat al-wada'* (Farewell Pilgrimage), the Holy Prophet (S) delivered a sermon that included all political and social attitudes of Muslims.

At the end of his last *Hajj*, he declared the future leadership as Imam `Ali's and the Muslims' duty towards him. This declaration, which took place in a region called Khumm Spring (i.e. Ghadir), the Holy Prophet (S) openly declared:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَهَذَا عَلِيٌّ مَوْلَاهُ. اللَّهُمَّ وَالِ مَنْ وَالَاهُ، وَعَادِ مَنْ عَادَاهُ، وَأَنْصُرْ مَنْ نَصَرَهُ، وَأَخْذُلْ مَنْ خَذَلَهُ، وَأَحِبَّ مَنْ أَحَبَّهُ، وَأَبْغِضْ مَنْ أَبْغَضَهُ.

*O people, whoever has taken me as master, `Ali is now his master. O Allah, (please) be the friend of him who takes `Ali as master, be the opponent of him who antagonizes `Ali, give victory to him who supports `Ali, disappoint him who disappoints `Ali, love him who loves `Ali, and hate him who hates `Ali.* [1](#)

This event is unanimously reported by all Muslims.

The aforementioned traditions on the goals of *Hajj* also indicate this particular goal and practical outline. Of course, this goal is naturally imposed by the devotional act of *Hajj* and this annual gathering which is

attended by select individuals of the Muslim nation as well as those who are financially capable of performing this religious duty.

## Meeting the Imam and the Leadership of the Muslim Community

The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) emphasized meeting and visiting the Imam (‘a) during the season of *Hajj* in order to get his advice and guidance and to become acquainted with the detailed attitudes towards various issues that concern Muslims. These meetings also intended to provide the Imam (‘a) with a review of the activities of the faithful believers, their problems and common and private questions in addition to other affairs necessitated by the direct connection between the leader and the subjects with regard to the Muslim society and the process of building a virtuous community inside this society.

In this regard, Shaykh al-Kulayni and Shaykh al-Saduq have reported through a valid chain of authority that Imam al-Baqir (‘a) said:

إِنَّمَا أُمِرَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يَأْتُوا هَذِهِ الْأَحْجَارَ فَيَطُوفُوا بِهَا، ثُمَّ يَأْتُونَا فَيُخْبِرُونَا بِوَلَايَتِهِمْ وَيُعْرِضُوا عَلَيْنَا نَصْرَهُمْ.

*The people have been ordered to come to these stones and circumambulate them so that they can then come to us to show their loyalty to us and offer their support for us.* [2](#)

Many other traditions have spoken of the same topic. This proves the significance of meeting the Imam (‘a), which is an organizational trend in the process of building a virtuous community, during this blessed devotional system, considering it one of the devotional acts a faithful believer is required to do.

Moreover, this organizational trend is in reality an Islamic principle that has been put into practice by the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) in setting up the system of building a virtuous community.<sup>3</sup> In plain words, the attachment of the people to their religious leadership and their commitment to the covenants and pledges that they make with their leadership (which may take various forms including following the guidelines, carrying out the commands, and giving complete support to the leadership) is actually one of the principles of Islam to which the Holy Qur’an (‘a) has called, saying:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَأَنَّهُ إِلَيْهِ  
(تُحْشَرُونَ) (24)

***O you who believe, answer the call of Allah and His Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life. Know that Allah intervenes between man and his heart and that to Him you shall be gathered. (8:24)***

## Hajj: Jihad of the Weak

Some traditions have reported the Holy Prophet (S) to have regarded *Hajj* as a type of *jihad* (holy struggle) although he said so about women, who are exempted from the religious duty of *jihad*. In this regard, al-Bukhari has reported that ‘A’ishah said to the Holy Prophet (S), “We, the women, see *jihad* as the best of all deeds. Nonetheless, we are exempted from practicing this deed.”

He answered her, “This is true, but the best *jihad* is to perform an accepted *Hajj*.”<sup>4</sup>

Referring to the same tradition, al-Nasa’i reports the Holy Prophet (S) as saying, “The best and most comprehensive kind of *jihad* is to make a pilgrimage to the Holy House.”<sup>5</sup>

Thus, al-Nasa’i generalizes this ruling to include the old, the children, the weak, and women.

In this connection, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) have given a broader view to the ritual *Hajj* from this angle that it includes all the individuals of the virtuous community who may face exceptional circumstances that prevent them from carrying out the duty of *jihad* for legal and moral reasons. This view stems from the Ahl al-Bayt’s attempt to maintain the idea and spirit of *jihad* and to declare the necessity of practicing this sort of devotional act under all conditions. Of course, this concept is founded on the understanding of the Ahl al-Bayt of the Holy Prophet’s situation and content of this devotional duty.

The partisans of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and the individuals of the virtuous community came under exceptional political circumstances because the tyrannical rulers would wage unjustified campaigns against people for no reason other than gaining a dominant influence over them, making more profit, and levying more financial taxes. This matter reached its climax when some rulers of the Umayyad dynasty refused to accept the conversion to Islam of some Christians so as not to be deprived of the tributes those people would pay as long as they were non-Muslims.<sup>6</sup>

Declaring their religion-based attitude to such practices, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) disallowed the individuals of the virtuous community to participate in such campaigns even though this attitude had a negative spiritual influence on the virtuous community since it deprived them of gaining the moral outcomes of carrying out the religious duty of *jihad* (struggle for the sake of Almighty Allah).

As a substitute, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) advised their followers to go for *Hajj* as frequently as possible because the practice of *Hajj* would compensate for the spiritual, educational, and ethical fruits of *jihad* of which they were deprived because of the political circumstances of those days. Of course, this concept is also founded on their understanding of the Holy Prophet’s tradition.

In the beginning of our discussion of *Hajj*, we have referred to the validly reported tradition of Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) who quotes the Holy Prophet (S) as saying:

*Hajj is one of the two jihads. It is the jihad of the weak.*

Commenting on this saying, Imam al-Sadiq ('a) said:

*We are the weak.*<sup>7</sup>

According to another tradition, Imam al-Sadiq ('a) has said:

نَحْنُ وَشِيعَتُنَا الضُّعَفَاءُ.

*Our Shi'ah and we are the weak.*

These two texts may shed some light on this special situation and understanding of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) with regard to the relationship between *jihad* and *Hajj*—an understanding that can be made clearer through the following texts:

1. Ja'far ibn Muhammad ibn Qawlawayh has reported Imam al-Baqir ('a) as saying:

الْجِهَادُ أَفْضَلُ الْأَشْيَاءِ بَعْدَ الْفَرَائِضِ فِي وَقْتِ الْجِهَادِ، وَلَا جِهَادَ إِلَّا مَعَ الْإِمَامِ.

*When its time comes, jihad is the best of all things save the ritual prayers. However, no jihad is permissible except under the pennon (or the command) of an Imam.*<sup>8</sup>

2. Al-Kulayni and others have reported through a valid chain of authority that Imam al-Sadiq ('a) said:

*'Abbad al-Basri, on his way to Makkah, met Imam 'Ali Zayn al-'Abidin ('a) and said, "O 'Ali, you have left jihad, escaping its difficulty, and come to Hajj and its easiness. Almighty Allah says, "Surely, Allah has bought of the believers their persons and their property for this, that they shall have Paradise. They fight in Allah's way, so they slay and are slain—a promise which is binding on Him in the Torah, the Gospel, and the Qur'an. And who is more faithful to his covenant than Allah? Rejoice therefore in the pledge, which you have made. And that is the mighty achievement. (9:111)"*

*Imam Zayn al-'Abidin ('a) commented, "You may recite what comes next."*

*So, the man recited, "They who turn to Allah, who serve Him, who praise Him, who fast, who bow down, who prostrate themselves, who enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil, and who keep the limits of Allah. And give good news to the believers. (9:112)"*

*The Imam ('a) thus commented, "If we find persons enjoying these characteristics, we will definitely leave Hajj and practice jihad with them because it will then be better than Hajj."*<sup>9</sup>

According to another form of the tradition, Imam Zayn al-'Abidin ('a) said, "If such people appear, we will never prefer anything to *jihad*."<sup>10</sup>

A reference to this situation of the Holy Imams ('a) has been previously made within the discussion of *jihad*.

3. Imam al-Sadiq ('a) is validly reported to have quoted Imam 'Ali ('a) as saying:

لَا يَخْرُجُ الْمُسْلِمُ فِي الْجِهَادِ مَعَ مَنْ لَا يُؤْمِنُ عَلَى الْحُكْمِ، وَلَا يُنْفِذُ فِي الْفِيءِ أَمْرَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ؛ فَإِنَّهُ إِنْ مَاتَ فِي ذَلِكَ الْمَكَانِ كَانَ مُعِينًا لِعَدُوِّنَا فِي حَبْسِ حَقِّنَا وَالْإِشَاطَةِ بِدِمَائِنَا، وَمِيتَتُهُ مِيتَةٌ جَاهِلِيَّةٌ.

*A Muslim must not participate in jihad with one who cannot be regarded as a just ruler and who does not apply the laws of Almighty Allah to the spoils of war. If one violates this order and then dies in that place, he will definitely be determined as having supported our enemies in confiscating our dues and shedding our blood. Thus, he will die the same death of those who have not accepted Islam.* [11](#)

## **The Course of the Devotional Acts During The Hajj Season**

The devotional acts of *Hajj* are the following:

Devotional Acts Attached to the Rites of *Hajj*.

Devotional Acts on the Day of 'Arafat.

Devotional Acts on the First Ten Days of Dhu'l-Hijjah.

Devotional Acts on the *Tashriq* Days.

### **The Devotional Acts Attached to the Rites of Hajj**

Jurisprudents have mentioned some etiquettes and recommended acts to be practiced in the midst of carrying out the obligatory rites of *Hajj*. Such etiquettes and acts include ritual bathing, prayers, supplications, and litanies. The most eminent of them are:

**1.** While preparing oneself for entering into the state of *Ihram*, it is recommended to clean the body from dirt, trim the nails, remove the hairs of the armpits and pubes, and clip the moustache. For those who intend to perform the ritual *Hajj*, it is recommended, in addition to all these, to comb the hair of the head and the beard from the first day of Dhu'l-Hijjah.

It is further recommended to bathe oneself ceremonially before entering into the state of *Ihram* and to say a special supplication during the bathing and while putting on the uniform or *Ihram*.

Before entering into the state of *Ihram*, it is also recommended to offer a prayer, be it an obligatory or a six or two-unit supererogatory prayer. Another special supplication is said immediately before entering into the state of *Ihram*.

In addition to uttering the obligatory statement of *Talbiyah*, it is recommended to add other statements comprising words praising Almighty Allah and words beseeching Him. It is also recommended to repeat the statement of *Talbiyah* at different places and on different conditions until the houses of Makkah can be seen.

2. Upon entering the Holy Precinct, which is a vast circular area surrounding the holy city of Makkah, it is recommended to get off whatever one is riding, perform ritual bathing, take off the shoes, and say a special supplication.
3. For entering the city of Makkah and the Sacred Mosque, it is recommended to bathe oneself ceremonially. At the door of the mosque, it is recommended to offer salutations to the Holy Prophet and Prophet Abraham, peace be upon them both, mention the Name of Almighty Allah through a special formula, praise Him by saying another special formula, and turn the face towards the Holy Ka'bah while uttering a third special formula of supplication.
4. Upon approaching the Black Stone, it is recommended to say certain litanies and supplications. Likewise, it is recommended to beseech Almighty Allah and say more litanies, invocations of blessings upon the Holy Prophet (S) and a special supplication while kissing the Black Stone.
5. During the ritual circumambulation, there are special supplications to be said on each round and at certain places. These include the gate of the Holy Ka'bah, the corner of the Ka'bah facing Yemen (known as *al-Rukn al-Yamani*), the Black Stone, the backside of the Ka'bah, the flipside of the gate of the Ka'bah,<sup>12</sup> and Hijr Isma'il, (the fence built by Prophet Ishmael ('a) around the tomb of his mother).
6. Upon accomplishing *Salat al-Tawaf* (the Circumambulation Prayer), it is recommended to thank and praise Almighty Allah, invoke His blessings upon the Holy Prophet and his Household (S), and supplicate to Him while prostrating.
7. Upon drinking water from Zamzam Spring, it is recommended to say a special supplication and pour a little amount of that water on the head, belly, and back.
8. Upon performing the ritual running between al-Safa and al-Marwah, it is recommended to say some special litanies, invocations of blessings upon the Holy Prophet and his Household (S), and supplications. It is also recommended to recite certain chapters of the Holy Qur'an on al-Safa and al-Marwah and while running between them.
9. The same recommended acts that are done at entering into the state of *Ihram* for the *Hajj* may be repeated for the *Ihram* of the '*Umrah*. The only difference is that entering into the state of *Ihram* for performing '*Umrah* may be followed by saying certain supplications while heading for Mina and on the way to Mount 'Arafat. At Mina, it is recommended to spend the whole night in devotional acts, especially at al-Khif Mosque. There is also another special supplication to be said while heading for Mount 'Arafat.

**10.** In the second section, the devotional acts and etiquettes practiced on the Day of ‘Afarat will be mentioned, because some of these acts are practiced on this day by both performers of *Hajj* and *‘Umrah*.

**11.** At the Holy Monument, it is recommended to say a supplication at the red dune that lies to the right side of the road, slow down one’s steps, and spend the Night of ‘«d al-Adhha in acts of worship and supplications.

In this regard, a hadith reads:

*If possible, try to spend the whole night in acts of worship, because as reported, the gates of heaven remain open on this night because of the voices of the believers who buzz like bees. On this night, Allah, Majestic be His praise, says, “I am your Lord and you are My servants. You have fulfilled your duties towards Me; therefore, it is incumbent upon Me to respond to you.” Thus, He excuses whoever He wishes and forgives whoever He wishes on this night.* [13](#)

In addition, there are some supplications reported to be said on the Night of ‘Arafat.

Immediately after the obligatory dawn prayer, it is recommended to praise and thank Almighty Allah, enumerate any amount possible of His graces and favors, invoke His blessings upon the Holy Prophet and his Household, and then say a supplication dedicated to this time.

It is also recommended to run about one hundred steps at *Wadi Muhassar* (a valley lying on the way between Jam’ and Mina) and then say a special supplication while running there.

**12.** Upon stoning the large statue along with the other statutes representing Satan, it is recommended to be ritually pure, say a special supplication while collecting the pebbles, say the *takbir* statement while throwing them along with a special supplication, and say another special supplication on the way back to Mina.

**13.** Upon offering and slaughtering an animal, it is recommended to say a special supplication and to undertake the process of slaughtering or, if this is not possible, put the knife on the neck of the animal and put the hand on the slaughterer’s hand.

**14.** Upon having one’s hair shaved or cut short, it is recommended to say a special supplication.

**15.** Upon performing the ritual circumambulation for *Hajj*, it is recommended to do the acts that have been previously cited for performing the ritual circumambulation for *‘Umrah*. In addition, it is recommended to say a special supplication while standing at the door of the Sacred Mosque before starting this rite.

**16.** There are more recommended acts to be done by a performer of *Hajj* during his/her residence in Makkah. These acts can be summed up as follows:

- a) It is recommended to mention Almighty Allah as frequently as possible.
- b) It is recommended to recite as many chapters of the Holy Qur'an as possible or recite it entirely during one's residence in this city.
- c) It is recommended to drink from the water of Zamzam Spring and say a special supplication thereat.
- d) It is recommended to catch as many glimpses as possible of the Holy Ka'bah, for a great reward is obtained from this act.
- e) It is recommended to circumambulate the Holy Ka'bah seven rounds ten times a day: three at the first hour of night, three at the last hour of it, two immediately after dawn, and two immediately after midday.
- f) It is recommended to circumambulate the Holy Ka'bah sixty-three times during residence in Makkah. If this is not possible, then fifty-two rounds will be sufficient. If this is not possible either, then one may circumambulate any number of rounds possible.
- g) It is recommended to enter inside the Holy Ka'bah, bathe oneself ritually before doing so, say a special supplication while entering, offer prayers, offer another special two-unit prayer, offer prayers at the four corners of the Ka'bah followed by a special supplication, and repeat the *takbir* statement and a special supplication while leaving.
- h) It is recommended to do another circumambulating, which is called the Farewell Circumambulation, when preparing oneself for leaving Makkah. Following this, it is recommended to kiss the Black Stone, praise and thank Almighty Allah, invoke His blessings upon the Holy Prophet and his Household, and say a special supplication.

For acquaintance with the details of all these acts, the reader should refer to books on the rites and laws of *Hajj*. [14](#)

The course presented demonstrates the wide scope of the contents of *Hajj* as viewed by the Ahl al-Bayt ('a)—a course that cannot be found in any other Muslim school.

### **The Devotional Acts On The Day Of 'Arafat**

The Day of 'Arafat, the ninth of Dhu'l-Hijjah, has a special significance and value in Islam as does the night preceding it, which is a blessed night on which repentance is accepted, supplications responded to, and acts of obedience to Almighty Allah awarded the reward of one hundred and seventy years of worship.

Almighty Allah has called His servants to obey and serve Him on this day, stretching before them the tables of His kindness and magnanimity. On this day too, Satan is more humble, despised, driven away, and angry than any other day. The Day of 'Afarat is thus a day of supplication and imploration. [15](#)

It has been narrated that Imam Zayn al-'Abidin ('a), on the ninth of Dhu'l-Hijjah, heard someone begging people for help. He ('a) said to him, "Woe is you! Are you begging other than Almighty Allah on such a day while even fetuses in wombs are expected to be included in His mercy on this day and become delighted?"

For this day, there is a wide-ranging course of devotional acts and rites. All these acts and rites are to be practiced during the ritual halting on Mount 'Arafat during the *Hajj* season. However, some traditions show them to also be practiced by other people in their own countries, especially those visiting Imam Husayn's tomb about which a tradition holds that Almighty Allah looks at the visitors of Imam Husayn's tomb on the ninth of Dhu'l-Hijjah before he looks at the performers of *Hajj* who are standing on Mount 'Arafat.

Likewise, Talhah ibn Zayd has reported on the authority of Imam al-Baqir ('a) on the authority of his father on the authority of Imam 'Ali ('a) who said:

لَا عَرَفَةَ إِلَّا بِمَكَّةَ، وَلَا بَأْسَ أَنْ يَجْتَمِعُوا فِي الْأَمْصَارِ يَوْمَ عَرَفَةَ يَدْعُونَ اللَّهَ

*The Day of 'Arafat should not be celebrated anywhere save Makkah. It is however not objectionable for the people of a country to gather on this day and supplicate before Almighty Allah.* [16](#)

## Rites on the Night before the Day of 'Arafat

Shaykh al-Qummi has cited a course of the rites on the night preceding the Day of 'Arafat, which will be cited hereinafter, albeit briefly:

### Supplications

It has been reported that whoever says the following supplication on the night preceding the Day of 'Arafat, as well as on Thursday nights, will have all his/her sins forgiven by Almighty Allah:

...اللَّهُمَّ يَا شَاهِدَ كُلِّ نَجْوَى وَمَوْضِعَ كُلِّ شَكْوَى

*O Allah Who witnesses all secrets of hearts, Who is the object of all complaints...*

This supplication holds highly regarded contents, including statements praising and thanking Almighty Allah, recollection of His signs, and beseeching Him in the name of these signs to grant requests of this world and the next.

### Litanies

Highly recommended is repeating one thousand times the Four Statements of Glorification (*al-Tasbihat*

*al-Arba'ah*).

### Visiting Imam Husayn ('a)

It is highly advisable to visit the tomb of Imam Husayn ('a) this night.

### Rites on the Day of 'Arafat

#### Ritual Bathing

It is recommended to perform ritual bathing at midday.

### Visiting Imam Husayn ('a)

It is highly recommended to visit the tomb of Imam Husayn ('a) and address him with a special formula of *ziyarah*.

#### Prayers

It is recommended to offer a two-unit prayer in each unit of which *Surah al-Fatihah* is recited once and *Surah al-Tawhid* repeated fifty times. This prayer, which is offered after the obligatory afternoon prayer and before beginning the supplications of this day, should be offered outdoors.

#### Fasting

Those who will not faint as a result of uttering many supplications on this day are recommended to fast. Of course, this act does not include those performing the rite of halting on Mount 'Arafat because travelers are exempted from fasting.

#### Litanies

Many formulas of litanies are reported for this day. One of these is the litany of praising Almighty Allah, glorifying Him, and professing Him as the One and Only God and as the Greatest of all, using all the expressions mentioned in the Holy Qur'an.

#### Supplications

Too many are the supplicatory formulas that are reported to be said on the Day of 'Arafat. However, the most significant, magnificent, and comprehensive of all these is Imam Husayn's supplication on the Day of 'Arafat—a marvelous supplicatory formula that he ('a) recited one day in the midst of a group of people during the last hours of the Day of 'Arafat. This supplication, which is considered singular in its form and eloquence, includes highly regarded contents.

The supplication of Imam Zayn al-'Abidin ('a) on this Day is another wonderful formula. This supplication is mentioned in *al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah* under prayer No. 47.

## Personal Supplications

On this day, it is highly recommended to pray to Almighty Allah for the good of one's brothers-in-faith and relatives, especially parents.

Actually, the devotional acts dedicated to this day, cover all the hours of this day.

## The Devotional Acts On The First Ten Days Of Dhu'l-Hijjah

For the first ten days of Dhu'l-Hijjah, a set of both particular and general devotional acts are reported. The Holy Prophet (S) is reported to have said that nothing is more desirable to Almighty Allah than practicing acts of worship on these ten stated days. Of course, the tenth day is the Day of '«d al-Adhha. The summary of these devotional acts can be presented as follows:

### Fasting

It is highly recommended to fast during the first nine 17 days of Dhu'l-Hijjah, for it is equal in reward to fasting during one's whole lifetime.

### Prayers

Between the obligatory sunset and early night prayers on these days, it is recommended to offer a two-unit prayer in each unit of which *Surah al-Fatihah*, *Surah al-Tawhid*, and the following verse (7:142) are recited once:

وَوَاعَدْنَا مُوسَى ثَلَاثِينَ لَيْلَةً وَأَتَمَمْنَاهَا بِعَشْرٍ فَتَمَّ مِيقَاتُ رَبِّهِ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً وَقَالَ مُوسَى لِأَخِيهِ هَارُونَ اخْلُفْنِي فِي قَوْمِي  
(وَأَصْلِحْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ) (142)

***We appointed with Moses a time of thirty nights and completed them with ten more, so the appointed time of his Lord was a complete forty nights. Moses said to his brother Aaron: Take my place among my people, act well, and do not follow the way of the mischief-makers. (7: 142)***

### Supplications

On these days, it is recommended to say the special supplication that is reported by Shaykh al-Tusi and Sayyid Ibn Tawus from Imam al-Sadiq ('a) in addition to other supplications that are reported to have been gifted by Archangel Gabriel to Prophet Jesus, the son of Mary, peace be upon them.

### Litanies

A special formula of litany that is reported from Imam 'Ali ('a) is recommended to be said on these days.

It is worth mentioning that there are other special acts to be done on the first day of Dhu'l-Hijjah

exclusively. [18](#)

## [The Devotional Acts On The Tashriq Days](#)

The *Tashriq* Days [19](#) (the 11th, 12th, and 13th of Dhu'l-Hijjah) are the three days that follow '«d al-Adhha. There are certain devotional acts that are common to the Day of '«d Adhha and the *Tashriq* Days. The most important of these acts is the rite of stoning the three statutes (*jamarah*), which is an obligatory rite for the performers of *Hajj*. Besides, there are other recommended acts to be done on these days:

### [Offering an Animal in Sacrifice](#)

It is recommended to slaughter an animal in sacrifice on '«d al-Adhha although it is also lawful for those who are not participating in the *Hajj* season to offer such animals on the eleventh and twelfth days, or the thirteenth day at Mina.

### [Litany](#)

It is recommended to repeat the famous statements of *takbir* specified for this occasion. These statements are as follows:

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ عَلَى مَا هَدَانَا اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ عَلَى مَا رَزَقَنَا مِنْ بِهِمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ عَلَى مَا أَبْلَانَا.

**Allah is the Greatest. Allah is the Greatest. There is no god save Allah. Allah is the Greatest. Allah is the Greatest. Allah is the Greatest. All praise be to Allah. Allah is the Greatest for He has guided us (to the right path). Allah is the Greatest for He has endued us with the cattle quadrupeds. All praise be to Allah for the graces He has given us.**

For those performing the *Hajj* rites, it is recommended to repeat these statements beginning with the obligatory afternoon prayer on '«d al-Adhha up to the thirteenth of Dhu'l-Hijjah after performing the obligatory and supererogatory prayers at Mina.

For those who are in their homelands, it is recommended to repeat these statements until the dawn of the twelfth of Dhu'l-Hijjah.

[1.](#) – Hashim Ma`ruf al-Hasani, *Usul al-Tashayyu`*, pp. 39.

[2.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, *Wasa'il al-Shi'ah* 10:252, H. 1; Shaykh al-Kulayni, *al-Kafi* 4:549, H. 1.

[3.](#) – This topic has been discussed with further details in Book III of this series under the title: *The General System of the Virtuous Community*.

[4.](#) – Mansur `Ali Nasif, *al-Taj al-Jami` lil-Usul* 2:106–107.

[5.](#) – Mansur `Ali Nasif, *al-Taj al-Jami` lil-Usul* 2:106–107.

[6.](#) – This subject is a critical historical issue that should be discussed on other occasions.

- [7.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 8:77, H. 2 as quoted from Shaykh al-Kulayni, Furu` al-Kafi.
- [8.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 8:83, H. 17.
- [9.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 11:32, H. 3.
- [10.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 11:34, H. 6.
- [11.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 11:34, H. 8.
- [12.](#) – Also called al-Multazam and al-Muta`awwadh, this place, which is commonly known as al-Mustajar (the place of seeking aid) is situated before al-Rukn al-Yamani and directly behind the gate of the Holy Ka`bah. It is the place wherefrom Lady Fatimah bint (daughter of) Asad entered the Holy Ka`bah and gave birth to Imam `Ali ('a). Many traditions have conveyed the merits of this place. Imam `Ali ('a) is reported to have said, "At al-Multazam, you should confess to Almighty Allah all of your sins that you can recollect. As for the sins you may have forgotten, you should express them by saying, '(please) forgive all our sins, including those, which Your keeper-angels recorded, but we have now forgotten.' Verily, whoever confesses his sins at this place, mentions them, and prays to Almighty Allah to forgive him, it will be incumbent upon Almighty Allah to forgive him." [Translator]
- [13.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 10:44, H. 1.
- [14.](#) – The translator of this book has compiled a guide book on the laws and rites of Hajj and `Umrah in English language. This book is entitled The Rites of Makkah and Madinah, with some general laws of Hajj and `Umrah, compiled by Badr Shahin, published by Ansariyan Publications. [Translator]
- [15.](#) – Shaykh `Abbas al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 253 & 258.
- [16.](#) – Al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi`ah 10:32, H. 2.
- [17.](#) – It is of course unlawful to observe fasting on the tenth of Dhu'l-Hijjah, because it is a feast day (i.e. `«d) and all feast days are forbidden to fast according to the laws of Islam. [Translator]
- [18.](#) – Shaykh `Abbas al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp. 251–252.
- [19.](#) – The Tashriq (brightened) days are given this name either because the meat of the sacrificed animals shines on these days when left under sunlight in order not to decay or because these animals should be offered for the sake of Almighty Allah and not slaughtered before sunrise. (Quoted from Fathullah Ahmad, Mu`jam Alfaz al-Fiqh al-Ja`fari, pp. 78) [Translator]

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