

First Means –God's Remembrance (Dikhr)

God's-remembrance or invocation (*dhikr*) could be regarded as a starting 'point for the esoteric movement or spiritual migration, of a wayfarer towards the Nearness of the Lord of Universe. A wayfarer through invocation gradually lift himself above the horizons of material world stepping inside the Celestial World of beauty and illumination, becomes complete and perfect eventually attaining the highest exalted position of God's Nearness.

God's invocation is the soul behind all the worships as well is the greatest aim behind their explanation, because the merit of each worship depends upon the degree of attention paid by the worshiper towards that particular act. The Qur'anic-verses and traditions have made plenty of recommendations about the importance of invocation. For example the Holy Qur'an said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا

“Oh ye who believe! Remember God–Almighty with much. Remembrance. (33: 41)

And said:

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا
سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

“(such as) Those who remember God–Almighty, standing, sitting; reclining, and consider the creation of the heavens and the earth (and say): Our Lord! Thou createdst not this in vain. Glory be to thee! Preserve us from the doom of fire. (3: 191)

And said:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّىٰ وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّىٰ

“He is successful who groweth, and remembereth the Name of his Lord, so prayeth. (87: 14–15)

And said:

وَأَذْكُرِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلاً

“Remember the Name of the Lord at morning and evening. (76:25)

And said:

وَأَذْكُرُ رَبَّكَ كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحُ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَارِ

“Remember thy Lord much. and praise (Him) in the early hours of night and morning. (3: 41)

And said:

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَانذُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ

“When ye have performed the act of worship. remember God–Almighty standing, sitting. and reclining. (4: 103)

Imam al–Sadiq (a.s.) said:

عن ابي عبدالله (ع) قال: من اكثر ذكر الله عز وجل اظله الله في جنته.

“Whoever offers a lot of invocation. God–Almighty will reward him Paradise where he would live forever happily under the shadow of His grace.”¹

'Also, he said to his companions:

عن ابي عبدالله عليه السلام في رسالته الى اصحابه قال: واكثروا ذكر الله ما استطعتم في كل ساعة من ساعات الليل والنهار. فان الله عمّر بكثرة الذكر. والله ذاكر من المؤمنين. واعلموا ان الله لم يذكره احد من عباده المؤمنين الا ذكره بخير.

“As much as it is possible do remember God–Almighty at every hour during day and night because He has ordered His servants to offer a lot of invocation. Whoever remembers God–Almighty is reciprocated by him. Know that there is not a single believer who does not remember God–Almighty but that God–Almighty too remembers him with goodness.”²

Imam al-Sadiq further said:

عن ابي عبدالله عليه السلام: قال الله لموسى: أكثر ذكرى بالليل والنهار وكن عند ذكرى خاشعا وعند بلائي صابرا واطمئن عند ذكرى واعبدي ولا تشرك بي شيئا إلي المصير. يا موسى! اجعلني ذكرك وضع عندي كنزك من الباقيات الصالحات.

“God-Almighty said to Moses (a.s.): ‘to remember Him a lot throughout the day and night. During invocation be humble, during calamity be patient, and during My Remembrance be calm and relaxed. Worship Me alone and do not associate any partner with Me. Every body shall have to return towards Me. Oh Moses! Regard me as your provision of the Hereafter and deposit the treasurers of your righteous deeds near Me.”³

At another place he said:

عن ابي عبدالله عليه السلام قال: ما من شئ الا وله حد ينتهي إليه فرض الله عزوجل الفرائض فمن أداهن فهو حد هن ; و شهر رمضان فمن صامه فهو حده والحج فمن حج فهو حده إلا الذكر فإن الله عزوجل لم يرض منه بالقليل ولم يجعل له حدا ينتهي إليه ثم تلا: يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا – فقال: لم يجعل الله له حد ا ينتهي إليه، قال: وكان أبي كثير الذكر لقد كنت أمشي معه وإنه ليذكر الله وآكل معه الطعام وإنه ليذكر الله ولقد كان يحدث القوم وما يشغله ذلك عن ذكر الله وكنت أرى لسانه لازقا بحنكه يقول: لا إله إلا الله، وكان يجمعنا فيأمرنا بالذكر حتى تطلع الشمس. (الى ان قال) وقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله: ألا اخبركم بخير أعمالكم وأرفعها في درجاتكم وأزكاها عند مليكم وخير لكم من الدينار والدرهم وخير لكم من أن تلقوا عدوكم فتقتلوهم ويقتلوكم؟ فقالوا: بلى، فقال ذكر الله كثيرا. ثم قال: جاء رجل إلى فقال: من خير أهل المسجد؟ فقال: أكثرهم لله ذكرا. وقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله: من اعطي لسانا ذاكرا فقد اعطي خير الدنيا والآخرة.

“For every thing there is a limit except God’s Remembrance which is infinite and beyond limits. There are religious mandatory obligations which are performed in accordance to prescribed limits. e.g.: The fasting during the month of Ramadhan is limited to thirty days, and similarly the Hajj Pilgrimage is limited to performance of certain prescribed Hajj rituals , but contrary to all of them God’s-Remembrance does not has any limits and He has not limited himself to a prescribed or minimum amount of invocation. Then he recited the following verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا

“Oh ye who believe! Remember God-Almighty with much remembrance and glorify him early, and late. (33: 41-42)

“In the above verse God-Almighty has not fixed a limit for His Remembrance. Then he said: ‘My father (Imam al-Baqir a.s.) used to offer a lots of invocation, while walking with him I found him remembering

God, when we used to sit together for eating he was still busy with invocation, and even while talking to the people he was not negligent from invocation.

I could see his tongue almost attached to his throat while chanting: there is no god except God–Almighty (la illahi Illallahu). After the morning prayer he used to assemble all of us together and ordered to offer invocation until sun rise.

“Then he quoted from the Holy Prophet (S) who said: shouldn't I inform you about your best deeds which would bring for you more distinctions as compared to any other deed ? Which is purest and most desirable before God–Almighty. Is much better for you as compared to silver, and gold even is superior than the Holy struggle for the sake of God–Almighty.’

The people asked: “Oh Prophet of God! Please tell us.”

“Do a lots of God's Remembrance.” Replied the Holy Prophet (S).

“Then the Imam said: A man asked the Holy Prophet (S): “Who is the best among the believers ?” “The one who offers a lot of invocation.” Replied the Holy Prophet (S). He further said:

“Who possesses a invoking tongue has indeed been blessed with the goodness of this world and the Hereafter.”[4](#)

The Holy Prophet (S) said to Abu Dharr:

فى وصية ابى ذر قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله: عليه بتلاوة القرآن وذكر الله كثيرا فانه ذكر لك فى السما
ونور لك فى الارض.

“Recite the Holy Qur'an and do a lots of invocation, which will become a means for your remembrance in the Heavens and will produce illumination for you upon the earth.”[5](#)

Imam al-Hasan [6](#) (a.s.) quotes from the Holy Prophet (S)

عن الحسن بن على عليه السلام قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله: بادروا الى رياض الجنة، فقالوا: ما
رياض الجنة؟ قال: حلق الذكر.

“Take lead towards the Gardens of Paradise. 'Which are the Gardens of the Paradise? Asked the companions ? 'The rings of invocation Replied the Holy Prophet (S).”[7](#)

Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said:

عن الصادق عليه السلام قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله: ذاكر الله فى الغافلين كالمقاتل فى الفارين له

الجنة.

“The one who is a reciter of God’s invocation among negligent is like a struggler waging war in the battlefield alone, while the others are fleeing away. Paradise for such a combatant is compulsory.”⁸

The Holy Prophet (S) said to his companions:

ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله خرج على اصحابه فقال: ارتعوا في رياض الجنة. يا رسول الله وما رياض الجنة؟ قال: مجالس الذكر، اغدوا وروحوا اذكروا. ومن كان بحب ان يعلم منزلة عند الله فلينظر كيف منزلة الله تعالى عنده، ينزل العبد حيث انزل العبد الله من نفسه واعلموا ان خير اعمالكم

عند مليكم وازكها وارفعها في درجاتكم وخير ما طلعت عليه الشمس ذكر الله فانه تعالى اخبر عن نفسه فقال: انا جليس من ذكرنى.

“Do utilize the gardens of the Paradise.” Which are these gardens of the Paradise ? Asked the companions.

‘The assemblies of invocation; remember God–Almighty at morning and evening. ‘Whosoever wants to know about his rank and position before God–Almighty, must see how is the position of God in his own life. Because, ‘He elevates a servant exactly to the same position –which was assigned to God–Almighty by the servant in his own life.

Know that your best and the most purest deeds which will elevate your rank and position before the Lord and is better than any thing else of this universe is – God’s–Remembrance, because God–Almighty had said: “Whoever remembers me –I become his companion.”⁹

The above Qur’anic verses and traditions presented here as examples of invocation show its importance clearly. Now let us investigate what is the aim behind the invocation.

A) The Aim of Invocation (Dikhr)

Earlier, it was clearly demonstrated that God’s Remembrance is a great worship and is one of the best method of self–building, self–perfection and spiritual migration towards God–Almighty. Now let us examine what is really meant with invocation whose importance has been so much emphasized in traditions and Qur’anic verses.

Does it means simply recital of sentences like: Glory to God, All praises belong to God and there is no god but God (subhan allahi, walhamdu lillahi, wala ilaha illal– lahu) or is there any other aim behind this?

Do these sentences without paying any inner attention towards their esoteric meanings could still provide

such important effect? The phrase invocation in the dictionary has been defined in the sense of simply recital as well as in the sense of recital with heart's presence. Similarly, is the case in traditions where this phrase has been used with both meanings i.e. recital with tongue as well recital with heart's presence.

In traditions it has been narrated that Prophet Moses (a.s.) while reciting hymns, asked God–Almighty:

فيما ناجى به موسى عليه السلام ربه: الهى ما جزا من ذكرك بلسانه وقلبه؟ قال: يا موسى اظله يوم القيامة بظل عرشى وأجعله في كنفى.

*“Oh God! What is the reward for some one who remembers you by tongue and heart? 'I will place him under the shadow of My Throne and My Own Protection on the Day of Resurrection.”*¹⁰

Therefore, as could be seen in the tradition the phrase invocation has been used in both senses i.e. invocation by means of tongue as well as invocation by means of heart. Also, there are plenty of traditions in which invocation has been used in both meanings, but mostly it has been used in the sense of heart's presence with esoteric attention –which is indeed true and perfect invocation.

God’s Remembrance may be defined as a state of spirituality and discerning the truth with esoteric attention towards the Lord of Universe, and knowing that He is the Overseer and Supervisor of all our actions at all times. Someone who remembers God–Almighty in such a manner, acts according to His commands, performs compulsory obligations and sustains himself from forbidden acts. Therefore, from the point of view of these considerations we may conclude that invocation is not an easy thing. The Holy Prophet (S) said to Imam ‘Ali (a.s.):

فيما اوصى به رسول الله (ص) عليا: يا على! ثلاث لاتطبقها هذه الامة: المواساة للاخ في ماله. وانصاف الناس من نفسه. وذكر الله على كل حال. وليس هو سبحان الله والحمد لله ولا اله الا الله والله اكبر, ولكن اذا ورد على ما يحرم عليه خاف الله عنده وتركه.

“There are three things of special strength for my Ummah:

First: Fellowship and equality with brother believer in wealth.

Second: Treading others justly against the self

Third: God's Remembrance in all situations.

“What is meant with invocation is not simply recital sentences like: Glory to God; All praises belong to God; and there is no god but God (Subhan allahi, Wal hamdu lillahi wala ilahi illallahu), rather invocation is defined as the state of being so much in remembrance of God–Almighty that whenever one is

encountered with a forbidden act, he should fear God–Almighty and should refrain himself from its commitments.”¹¹

The Commander of the Faithful Imam ‘Ali (a.s.) said:¹²

قال على عليه السلام: لا تذكر الله سبحانه ساهيا ولا تنسه لاهيا واذكره ذكراً كاملاً يوافق فيه قلبك لسانك و يطابق اضمارك اعلانك ولن تذكره حقيقة الذكر حتى تنسى نفسك في ذكرك وتفقدتها في امرك.

“Do not engage your self in invocation in the state of negligence and never forget God–Almighty. Remember Him with perfection so that your tongue and hearts become synchronized and your esoteric and exoteric affairs are in conformity with each other. One cannot engaged himself in real invocation but to forget his self completely and while performing deeds he should think of only God–Almighty and ‘should not notice his own existence.”

Imam al–Sadiq (a.s.) said:¹³

قال الصادق عليه السلام: من كان ذاكرة لله تعالى على الحقيقة فهو مطيع ومن كان غافلا عنه فهو عاص والطاعة علامة الهداية والمعصية علامة الضلالة واصلها الذكر والغفلة فاجعل قلبك قبله للسانك لا تحركه بإشارة القلب وموافقة العقل ورضى الايمان فإن تعالى عالم بسرك وجهرك وكن كالنازع روحه كالواقف في العرض الأكبر غير شاغل نفسك عما عناك بما كلفك به ربك في امره ونهيه ووعدده ووعيده ولا تشغلها بدون ما كلف به ربك واغسل قلبك بماء الحزن والخوف واجعل ذكر الله تعالى من اجل ذكره إياك فإنه ذكرك وهو غني عنك فذكره لك أجل وأشهى وأثنى وأتم من ذكرك وأسبق. ومعرفتك بذكره لك تورثك الخضوع والاستحياء والانكسار ويتولد من ذلك رؤية كرمه وفضله السابق وتصغر. عند ذلك طاعتك وان كثرت في جنب منته. وتخلص بوجهه

ورؤيتك ذكرك له تورثك الرياء والعجب والسفه والغلظة في خلقه وهو استكثار الطاعة ونسيان فضله وكرمه ولا تزداد بذلك بعدا ولا تستجلب به على معنى الأيام إلا وحشة. والذكر ذكران: ذكر خالص بموافقة القلب وذكر صادق لك بنفي غيره كما قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله: انى لا احصى ثناء عليك، أنت كما أثنيت على نفسك فرسول الله لم يجعل لذكر الله تعالى مقدارا عند علمه بحقيقة سابقة الله عز وجل من قبل ذكره له ومن دونه أولى. فمن أراد يذكر الله تعالى فليعلم انه ما لم يذكر الله العبد بالتوفيق لذكره لا يقدر العبد على ذكره

“Whoever remembers God–Almighty truly will become obedient; whoever is negligent of Him will certainly indulge into sins, His obedience means guidance and sinning indicates deviation. The invocation and negligence are the roots of obedience and transgression respectively.

Therefore, consider your heart as the worshipping point (Qibla), and keep your tongue still without motion except by permission of heart, by approval of wisdom, and with the consent of belief because, God–Almighty is aware of your apparent and hidden affairs.”

“Be like some one whose soul is being confiscated from his body or like some one who is standing before the Lord to be questioned about his deeds. Don't let the self-engaged into any other thing except discharging Divine obligations which are important for you. With the tears of shame, and grief cleanse and purify the contamination of your heart.”

“Know that God–Almighty has remembered you therefore, you should too engage yourself in invocation, because, He remembered you while being absolutely needless of you. Therefore, yours remembrance by God–Almighty will make you more perfect, exalted, acquainted, and delightful as compared to God's Remembrance by you.

Acquaintance with God's Remembrance will increase your humility, courtesy, and decency in front of Him, resulting in your being able to witness His past benevolence and blessings bestowed upon you. At this stage your obedience might appear to you as more but in front of God's favors to you, it will be something very small.”

“Therefore, do perform your deeds strictly for the sake of God–Almighty only. If you perceived your invocation as big it will result in hypocrisy, egotism, ignorance, harshness, and negligence in appreciation of Divine blessings and favors. Such invocation will not bear any fruits except innovator's becoming farther away from God–Almighty and with the passage of time will not produce any positive effect except fear and sorrow.”

“As the Holy Prophet (S) said: 'I am helpless to hymn your praise (the way you truly deserves). Your essence is such –the manner you praised yourself. Therefore, the Prophet (S) did not attach any worth to his invocations because, he was aware of the fact that remembrance of His servants by God–Almighty is far superior than the God's Remembrance by His servants.

Therefore, those whose rank is much lower than the Holy Prophet (S) better consider their invocation as insignificant. Because of these considerations some one who really wants to recite God's Invocation must understand that unless and until God–Almighty remembers him and bestow upon him His special grace –he would not be in a position to offer God's Invocation.”

As could be seen from these narrations that hearts attention and esoteric presence have been defined as the real meanings of invocation. Further simply heart's attention and esoteric presence but ineffective is not enough, rather what is required is effective esoteric presence whose indications have been identified as obedience of mandatory obligations and avoidance of forbidden things. But it does not mean that only oral recital of sentences like:

“There is no god but God”; “Glory to God”. And “all praises to God,” (la ilahi illallahu, subhan allahi, and al hamdu lillahi) is not the evidence of true invocation, because these sentences in themselves reflect degrees of God's invocation.

Apart from that even this invocation by tongue flows from the heart's fountainhead. Someone, who

recites these invocation by tongue certainly is having some attention by heart towards God–Almighty however small it may be, and because of this he is reciting these sentences by his tongue.

From the point of view of Islam, simply recital of these sentences and other invocations is desirable and carries spiritual reward subjected to it being performed with the intention of God's Nearness. Incidentally we may mention that in case of daily prayers we are strictly obliged to recite similar sentences by tongue and to perform other related rituals outwardly while we know that the heart's presence and esoteric attention is the real spirit behind the daily prayers.

B) The Degrees of Invocation (Dhikr)

Invocation consists of various degrees or ranks the first and lowest of them begins with the recital of invocation by tongue, and continues till the degree of absolute perfection, which terminates into attaining the stage of feeling being ceased to exist, witnessing the supreme reality and becoming annihilated into His Essence (*Shahood* and *fana*).

At the very first stage, since the invocator pays heart's attention towards God–Almighty, starts reciting special invocation by tongue with the intention of God's Nearness, without paying any attention to their meanings.

At the second stage, although he, recites invocation by tongue with the intention of God's Nearness, but at the same time also convey their meanings to his mind. At the third stage, the tongue follows the heart, since the heart pays attention towards God–Almighty and in his esoteric essence believes in the meanings and contents of invocations, therefore orders the tongue for their recital.

At the fourth stage, the wayfarer attains esoteric presence, and perfect heart's presence with respect to God–Almighty, considers Him as an overseer of his actions and witnesses his own existence under God's exalted presence. At this stage the experiences of wayfarers differs widely in accordance to the degree of perfection achieved by them.

As much as they become detached from other than God, in the same proportion they become attached to God–Almighty ultimately achieving the highest and most exalted positions of being ceased to exist (*inqata*), countenance (*laqa*), and annihilation (*fana*).

The wayfarer at this stage –which is the most exalted position has teared off all the veils of ignorance and falseness and has attached himself to the Supreme Source of all Blessings and Perfection.

He has removed himself from every thing including his self and has returned towards God–Almighty by cutting all his ties with other than God and reserving his pure love and affection for God–Almighty. He does not see any perfection except God–Almighty so that he could become attached to him, and does not find any companion to become intimate with him.

These purest servants of God have made their access into the supreme Infinite Source of Grandeur, Majesty, Perfection, Blessings and Illumination and are able to witness the Beauty and Illumination of God's Essence with their esoteric eyes. They are not ready to attach their heart and pay attention towards the metaphorical phenomenon of this world even for an instant.

Because they have reached to the Fountain Head of Absolute Beauty and Perfection and, therefore, metaphorical and fictitious perfection do not have any worth in their eyes. They burnt in the love, affection and countenance of their beloved and are not ready to exchange this pleasure even if they are offered both the worlds, and if they encounter world's phenomenon, regards them as reflections of Divine Illumination and signs of God's Perfect Existence.

The Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Ali (a.s.) was asked: [14](#)

سئل امير المؤمنين عليه السلام: هل رايت ربك حين عبدته؟ فقال: ويلك ما كنت اعبد ربا لم اره. قبل: وكيف رايت؟ قال: ويلك لا تدركه العيون في مشاهدة الابصار ولكن راته القلوب بحقائق الايمان

“Have you seen the God to whom you worship” ?

'Woe, be upon you! I do not worship a God who could not be seen '. Replied the Imam. ' How did you see Him' ? He was asked. 'Woe be upon you! God–Almighty could not be seen with physical eyes rather hearts witness His existence through the reality of their faith.’ Replied the Imam.’

Imam al–Husayn (a.s.) [15](#)said:

قال حسين بن علي عليه السلام: كيف يستدل عليك بما هو في وجوده مفتقر إليك ؟ أ يكون لغيرك من الظهور ما ليس لك حتي يكون هو المظهر لك ؟ متي غبت حتي تحتاج إلي دليل يدل عليك ؟ و متي بعدت حتي تكون الثار هي التي توصل إليك ؟ عميت عين لا تراك عليها رقبيا وخسرت صفقة عبد لم. تجعل له من حبلك نصيبا

“In order to prove Your Existence how can a thing could be referred as an argument which in itself is dependent upon You? Is there exist any manifestation for other than You which You lack, so that he would make You revealed? When were You absent so that an argument will be required? When were You away so that the indications and circumstances of Your reappearance would be needed? Blind is the eye which does not see You as an Overseer upon his deeds. And how unfortunate loser is your servant, who have been deprived of Your Love.” [16](#)

The Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Ali (a.s.) in his hymns for the Holy Month of Shaban said:

الهي هب لي كمال الانقطاع اليك وانر ابصار قلوبنا بضيا نظرها اليك حتى تخرق ابصار القلوب حجت النور فتصل الي معدن العظمة وتصير ارواحنا معلقة تعز قدسك

*“Oh God! Bestow upon me absolute separation from every thing except You, enlighten the esoteric eyes of our hearts with Your Beauty and Grandeur ,so that they could tear off the veils of light and become attached to the Supreme Source of Absolute–Perfection. May our souls become united with Your Holy–Essence.”*¹⁷

Imam al–Sajjad (a.s.) describes God's righteous servants as follows:

قال على بن الحسين عليه السلام: بسم الله الرمان الرحيم. إلهي قصرت الألسن عن بلوغ ثنائك كما يليق بجلالك ، وعجزت العقول عن إدراك كنه جمالك ، وانحسرت الأبصار دون النظر إلى سبحات وجهك ولم تجعل للخلق طريقاً إلى معرفتك إلا بالعجز عن معرفتك . إلهي فاجعلنا من الذين ترسخت أشجار الشوق إليك في حدائق صدورهم ، وأخذت لوعة محبتك بمجامع قلوبهم ، فهم إلى أوكار الأفكار يئوون ، وفي رياض القرب والمكاشفة يرتعون ، ومن حياض المحبة بكأس الملاطفة يكرعون، وشراب المصافات يردون.

قد كشف الغطاء عن أبصارهم وانجلت ظلمة الريب عن عقائدهم وضمائرهم وانتفتت مخالجة الشك عن قلوبهم وسرائرهم وانشرحت بتحقيق المعرفة صدورهم وعلت لسبق السعادة في الزهادة همهم وعذب في معين المعاملة شربهم وطاب في مجلس الأنس سرهم وأمن في موطن المخافة سربهم واطمأنت بالرجوع إلى رب الأرباب أنفسهم وتيقنت بالفوز والفلاح أرواحهم وقرت بالنظر إلى محبوبهم أعينهم وأستقر بإدراك السؤل ونيل المأمول قرارهم وربحت في بيع الدنيا بالآخرة تجارتهم. إلهي ما ألد خواطر الإلهام بذكرك على القلوب وما أحلى المسير إليك بالأوهام في مسالك الغيوب وما أطيب طعم حبك وما أعذب شرب قربك فأعذنا من طردك وإبعادك واجعلنا من أخص عارفيك وأصلح عبادك وأصدق طائعيك وأخلص عبادك يا عظيم يا جليل يا كريم يا منيل! برحمتك ومنك يا أرحم الراحمين.

“Oh Lord! The tongues are helpless to offer Your Praise and Adoration, worthy of Your Majesty and Splendor,” the faculties of wisdom cannot comprehend Your Beauty and Glory; the eyes are powerless to be able to witness the manifestation of Your Beauty. For your servants, in their search to attain the exalted position of Your Enlightenment, You have closed all the avenues except to admit their impotence and helplessness.”

“Oh Lord of the Majesty and Splendor! Please consider us among Your those servants in whose hearts the sapling of Your Countenance has been planted and whose hearts are saturated with the grief and sorrow of Your Love.

Thus, they are moving towards the nest of most tender and sublime thoughts with the hope of living in pleasure forever in the most magnanimous and splendid garden of manifestation and nearness of their God. They drink the cups of Your Grace from the Fountain Head of Your Love and entering the wide freeways of fraternity and pleasure.”

“The curtains have been rolled up from their esoteric eyes, the darkness of doubt has been removed from their beliefs and the palpitations of contradiction have been calmed down in their hearts. Certainly

of Your Knowledge have made them as large hearted,” strive to surpass others in the race of piety, in their trade with God–Almighty, have been rewarded with the most delicious and pleasurable drinks,”

In their union with their beloved possess a clean and pure inner self while encountering fearful situation are assured with the Divine guidance towards safety” In their return to God–Almighty have attained the most tranquil state; In their journeying towards eternal prosperity and salvation have attained the stage of certainty; In witnessing the glory of their beloved their eyes shine with joy, because of accomplishing the cherished goal, they now possess a peaceful inner self and have profited themselves in their bartering this world with the Hereafter.”

“Oh God! How pleasing are the memories of inspiration relevant to Your Invocation for the hearts! How sweet is the journeying towards you by means of pondering about the unseen! How much delicious is the taste of Your Love! And how much pleasurable and gratifying is the drinking of drinks of Your Nearness !”

“Therefore, oh God! we seek Your shelter again banishment or getting lost. And accept us among the most distinguished gnostics, most righteous servants, most veracious obedient, and most sincere worshippers. Oh Lord of Majesty and Splendor, and Oh God of Mercy and Compassion we swore you of your Blessing, oh Thou Who are the Best of Blessers.”[18](#)

In summary, the fourth position is a position which is most distinguished and exalted and in itself consists of various degrees and ranks which are infinite and continue till the very Holy Essence, Self-Existent (*Wajib al- Wajood*), the Source of Absolute Perfection and Infinite Beauty. In the language of Godly people these stages are called namely:

The position of invocation (*dhikr*) the position of love, (*uns*), the position of being, ceased to exist (*inqata*) the position of intense desire (*shouq*), the position of pleasure (*raza*) the position of fear (*khouf*), the position of witnessing, (*shahood*) the position of absolute certainty (*ain al-yaqin*) the position of assurance (*haq al-yaqin*) and the eventual position of becoming annihilated in God–Almighty (*fana wa baqa billah*). These interpretations most probably have been inferred from traditions and Qur’anic verses and each one of them requires a commenty e.g.:

When the worshipper pays attention towards the Glory, Splendor, Majesty and Infinite Perfection of the Holy Essence of Self Existent (*Wajib al- Wajood*), considers His Love, Favors, and Blessings and realizes his own helplessness and negligence, and looks at the distance between himself and that Holy Exalted Essence; it causes .a feeling of love, eagerness, and sorrow within his existence which is known as the position of strong desire (*shouq*).

When the wayfarer thinks in retrospective about his gnostic spiritual journey and discovers the spiritual stations and perfection attained by him –this revelation makes him happy and pleased, which is known as the position of affection or love (*uns*).

When the wayfarer pays attention towards the Splendor, Majesty, Glory, and Absolute Perfection of God's Essence and opposite to that realizes his own helplessness and shortness for attaining the Nearness of that Supreme–Reality –his hearts trembles with fear. The agony and grief overtakes his entire existence, whereby he cries bitterly and sheds tears. This stage is known as the position of fear (*khouf*), and similar is the case with other positions.

It would be better if this God's servant –the prisoner of self's passions, captive of darkness of materialism, deprived of attaining higher spiritual stations –does not put his feet inside this profound and infinite ocean, and let the explanation of these sublime spiritual stations be left for those who have reached there. Because, so far one has not tasted the deliciousness of God's Love, Affection, and Countenance, he is helpless and powerless to explain them.

أحب الصالحين ولست منهم, اللهم ارزقنا حلاوة ذكرك واجعلنا من أهله

“Oh God! I do like the righteous ones, although, I myself is not one of them, Oh God! Bless me with the sweetness of your invocation and please do include me among them! “

Let us hear the words of those who are qualified to speak in this field. The great philosopher and divine gnostic Sadrudin Shirazi writes:

“If a ray of Divine illumination falls upon a servant, makes him awakened from the sleep of ignorance and nature, thus, his becoming aware of the fact that apart from this perceptible world there also exists another world, and higher than the animalistic pleasures there also exist other satisfactions.

With this realization he refrains himself from indulging into false and worthless amusements and returns towards God–Almighty by offering repentance for his past omissions. Thus, he starts pondering about Qur’anic verses, listening Divine admonitions, deliberating upon the Prophet's (S) traditions and performing deeds in accordance with Divine commands.”

“In order to attain the eternal perfection he restrains himself from following the worldly allurements such as wealth, power, and positions. If he is lucky to receive further Divine Guidance and Blessings – decides seriously to disassociate himself from other than God, starts journeying towards Him and leaving the habitat of self, his whimsical attractions ascends towards God–Almighty.

At this stage, a ray of Divine illumination enlightens his horizons; a door from the unseen world opens for him and gradually the pages from the Holy Kingdom become apparent for him enabling him to witness the affairs of unseen.”

“When he tastes these special pleasures of the unseen affairs, starts liking seclusion and engages himself into invocation continuously. His hearts becomes detached from material involvement and pays absolute attention towards God–Almighty with his entire existence.

At this juncture mystical knowledge is gradually bestowed upon him and spiritual illuminations become occasionally manifested for him, until he attains absolute certainty in his search discovering the Supreme Reality whereby, all contradictions, doubts are vanished and a special tranquility engulfs his entire existence.”

“At this stage he enters into the Celestial Kingdom and after witnessing the existence of “Ten-wisdoms.” [19](#)(Uqool–Mufarqeh) becomes united with their Celestial Lights and, thus, become enlightened.

Eventually, the Glorious Illumination of the Lord of Majesty and Splendor becomes manifested upon him, thus, making his existence and egotism shattered and he surrenders in front of the Glory and Exaltedness of the Lord of the Heavenly Kingdom. This stage is known as the position of Monotheism (Tawhid) in which any thing other than God–Almighty becomes amortized in the wayfarer's eyes and he listen to the sound of:

لمن الملك اليوم, الله الواحد

“Whose is the sovereignty this Day? It is God's the One, the Al-mighty. (40: 16) [20](#)

The most famous and eminent gnostic late Faiz al–Kashani writes: “The way for acquiring God's Love and its further strengthening to be worthy of witnessing His Manifestation and Countenance is –to attain enlightenment, (marefah) and its further strengthening.

The way of acquiring enlightenment consists of purifying hearts from worldly occupations and being attached to its allurements through paying absolute attention towards God–Almighty by means of invocations and pondering, and cleansing of heart's dwellings from all sort of attachment towards other than God.

Because, the heart is like a pot, which if filled with water completely would not have any space left to be filled with vinegar. In order to fill this pot with vinegar first it must be emptied with water. God–Almighty has not created anyone with dual heart.”

“Perfection in love demands that one must love God–Almighty with the entire existence of his heart, because so for as the heart continues to pay attention towards other things at least a part of it shall remain occupied with other than God–Almighty.

Therefore, as much as one is attached to other than God –his love towards Him will be decreased in the same proportion, except where, this attention towards other than God is related to a situation, whereby “ an act of God and His created being “ are reflections of one of the manifestations of God's sacred names and Characteristics.”

God–Almighty in the following verse of Holy Qur'an, has pointed out about the same meanings:

“Say God: Then leave them (6:9)

A stage which is achieved as a result of strong desire where a human being strives that whatever have been revealed for him should become further clearly manifested. While he should remain anxious towards what have not yet been accomplished, because, the strong desire is related to a thing which partly have been perceived from some aspects. but from other dimensions it has not yet been comprehended, and in between these two, there exists the reality, which is beyond the limits and infinite.

“Because, the degree and ranks of comprehension of what have been achieved –is infinite. Similarly, whatever magnification has been left from God' s Splendor and Beauty is also infinite and having attained the real union with the sweetheart, one still desires strongly that pleasurable event which is free from all sort of pains. Therefore, desire never rests at any stage especially when he witnesses so many ranks and positions beyond the imagination of human intellect.”

نُورُهُمْ يَسْعَى بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَيَأَيَّمَانِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَتْمِمْ لَنَا نُورَنَا

“There light will run before them and on their right hands: They will say: our Lord! Perfect our light for us. (66:8)²¹

1. Wasail al-Shi'a, vol. 4. p-1182.
2. Wasail al-Shi'a, vol. 4. p-1183.
3. Wasail al-Shi'a vol. 4, p-1182.
4. Wasail al-Shi'a, vol. 4, p-181.
5. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 93, p-154.
6. Imam al-Hasan ibn 'Ali: The eldest son of Imam 'Ali and Hadhrat Fatimah was born on Tuesday, 15 Ramadhan 3 AH in Madina. When the Holy Prophet received the happy news of the birth of his grandson, he came to the house of his beloved daughter, took the newly born child in his arms, recited adhan and iqamah in his right and left ears respectively, and in compliance with Divine command named him al-Hasan.

The martyrdom of his father Imam 'Ali (a.s.) on the 21st Ramadhan marked the inception of Imam Hasan' s imamate. The majority of Muslims pledged their allegiance to him and finalized the formality of oath of allegiance (bayah). No sooner had he taken the reins of leadership into his hands then he had to meet the challenge of Mu'awiyah the Governor of Syria who declared war against him.

In compliance of Divine will and in order not to refrain from bloodshed of Muslims he entered into a piece treaty with Mu'awiyah whose terms were not respected and carried out by Mu'awiyah.

Mu'awiyah's malice against Imam Hasan led him to conspire with Imams wife Ja'dah the daughter of Ash'ath. She was made give the Imam some poison which affected his liver. Imam Hasan, thus, succumbed to Mu'awiyah's total mischief and attained his martyrdom on 28th (Safar) 50 A.H. His funeral was attended by Imam al-Husayn and the members of Hashimite family.

His bier while being taken for burial to the Holy Prophet's tomb was shot at with arrows by his enemies, (under the direct

supervision and consent of A'ishah), and it had to be diverted for burial to Jannatu'l-Baqi' at Madina.

[7.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 93, p-156.

[8.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 93, p-163.

[9.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 93, p-163.

[10.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 93, p-156.

[11.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 93, p-151.

[12.](#) Ghirar al-Hukm, p-817.

[13.](#) Bihar al-Anwar vol. 93, p-158.

[14.](#) Haqayaqe Faiz, p-179.

[15.](#) Imam al-Husayn: The younger son of 'Ali by Fatimah was born in Medina on Thursday 3rd Sha'ban 4 A.H; like his brother he lived most of his life quietly in Medina under the watchful eyes of the caliph's officials and spies. When Mu'awiyah's son Yazid became caliph, he demanded allegiance from al-Husayn, who refused to give it.

Finally al-Husayn felt it necessary to go into battle against Yazid to protest against the injustices which were being carried out in the name of Islam. He and a small group of followers including most of his immediate family were cruelly massacred at Karbala. The day of his martyrdom 10th Muharram ' A.H.(Ashura) has become the most solemn day of the Islamic calendar, marked by processions and universal mourning. He is buried in Karbala in Iraq [Tr].

[16.](#) Iqbal al-Amal, Prayer for the Day of Arafah.

[17.](#) Iqbal al-Amal, Monajat al-Shabaniyyah.

[18.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 93, p-163.

[19.](#) Ten-Wisdoms (Uqool Mufarqeh): Sardar al-Mutalihin and other Islamic philosophers, regarding the creation of universe, have confirmed the existence of Ten-Wisdoms (Uqool-Mufarqeh) before the creation of natural world. And the Divine blessings upon the material world are bestowed through their means [Author].

[20.](#) Mafateeh al-Ghaib, p-54.

[21.](#) Haqaiq, p-181.

Source URL:

[https://www.al-islam.org/self-building-ibrahim-amini/first-means-gods-remembrance-dikhr#comment-](https://www.al-islam.org/self-building-ibrahim-amini/first-means-gods-remembrance-dikhr#comment-0)