

Prelude

A general review of the books of traditions, supplications, and formulas of *ziyarah*, as well as the actual practices of the Ahl al-Bayt's followers, gives us a set of major rituals that the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) were concerned about and urged their partisans and followers to practice. These rituals rally around the Ahl al-Bayt's confirmations regarding practicing the general rituals of Islam and were also confirmations of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) themselves.

As true defenders of Islam and the natural extension of the Islamic Mission, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) emphasized the practice of the general rituals of Islam, considering them the most significant foundation in building a virtuous community. They ('a) expressly and widely maintained the practice of the general rituals of Islam (including prayers, Hajj Pilgrimage, *zakat*, and fasting) and commanded their followers to establish them under all circumstances, no matter how difficult it might be.

As for the second confirmation, it is founded on the Ahl al-Bayt's view of Islamic theory which is based on five pillars: prayer, *zakat*, fasting, Hajj Pilgrimage, and *wilayah*. The most important of these five pillars is the *wilayah*, according to the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) because no confirmation has been made on any of these five pillars that compares with the confirmation made on *wilayah*, which is the protector of the other four pillars and the *wali* (authority) is the guide towards the other pillars being conversant with them. Moreover, prayer, *zakat*, fasting, and the Hajj Pilgrimage depend upon *wilayah* to be accepted.

The Ahl al-Bayt ('a) are the pivot and purport of *wilayah*. Many verses of the Holy Qur'an confirm this—the Verse of *Mawaddah* (love),¹ the Verse of *Tathir* (purification),² the Verse of *Khums*,³ the Verse of *Wilayah*,⁴ and many others—in addition to many traditions of the Holy Prophet (S) that were reported without interruption, such as Hadith al-Ghadir,⁵ Hadith al-Thaqalayn,⁶ Hadith al-Safinah,⁷ and many other Hadith.

Hence, expressing love, affection, and loyalty to the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) becomes one of the devotional pillars of Islam and one of the Islamic rituals when and if it is practiced within the legal and reason-based formulas and methods prescribed by the Ahl al-Bayt ('a).

For this reason, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) have not left the virtuous community and the other Muslims without identifying and explaining a set of general formulas and methods to be used as rituals expressing this love as a sign of loyalty to them.

With respect to the two major kinds of rituals, we must discuss a set of topics including the rituals of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), the activities on general days and nights, etiquettes and manners, mosques and holy places. Independent chapters will discuss each of these topics.

1. – The Holy Qur'an reads:

23) (قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَى) Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it, but love for my near relatives. (42:23)

2. – The Holy Qur'an reads:

33) (إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا) Allah only desires to keep away impurity from you, O people of the House, and to purify you a thorough purifying. (33:33)

3. – The Holy Qur'an reads:

41) (وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَى) Know that whatever thing you gain, a fifth of it is for Allah, and for the Messenger and kinsmen of the Messenger... (8:41)

4. – The Holy Qur'an reads:

55) (إِنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ) Only Allah is your real leader and His Messenger and those who believe; those who keep up prayers and pay the poor-rate while they bow in prayer. (5:55)

5. – The Holy Prophet (S) is reported to have said:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَهَذَا عَلِيٌّ مَوْلَاهُ. أَللَّهُمَّ وَالِ مَنْ وَالَاهُ، وَعَادِ مَنْ عَادَاهُ، وَانصُرْ مَنْ نَصَرَهُ، وَاخْذُلْ مَنْ خَذَلَهُ، وَأَحِبْ 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. Al-Hakim al-Hasakani, Shawahid al-Tanzil 1: 191.

6. – The Holy Prophet (S) is reported to have said:

إِنِّي أَوْشَكُ أَنْ أُدْعَى فَأَجِيبُ، وَإِنِّي تَارِكٌ فِيكُمْ التَّقَلَيْنِ: كِتَابَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَعِترَتِي. كِتَابُ اللَّهِ حَبْلٌ مَمْدُودٌ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ، وَعِترَتِي أَهْلُ بَيْتِي. وَإِنَّ اللَّطِيفَ الْخَبِيرَ أَخْبَرَنِي أَنَّهُمَا لَنْ يَفْتَرَقَا حَتَّى يَرِدَا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضِ. فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ تَخْلُقُونِي فِيهِمَا. I am about to be called, and I shall certainly respond. I am thus leaving behind amongst you the two weighty things—the Book of the Exalted and Majestic Allah and my progeny. The Book of Allah is a rope extending from the heavens to the earth. My progeny are the members of my household. The All-subtle and All-aware Lord has informed me that these two shall never separate from each other until they join me on the Divine Pond. Now, consider how you shall regard me through these two things. Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Musnad 3: 17.

7. – The Holy Prophet (S) is reported to have said:

إِنَّمَا أَهْلُ بَيْتِي مِثْلُ سَفِينَةِ نُوحٍ: مَنْ رَكِبَهَا نَجَا وَمَنْ تَخَلَّفَ عَنْهَا غَرِقَ. Verily, the parable of my Household is like the parable of Noah's ark—whoever embarks on it shall be saved, but he who fails to join it shall be drowned. Al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, Kanz al-Ummal 6:216.

For further details, refer to al-Fayruzabadi's Fadha'il al-Khamsah fi'l-Sihah al-Sittah.

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