

Section 1: The Necessity of Performing an Istikhara for all Affairs

1) Istikhara: Success for a Muslim

قال رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ

مِنْ سَعَادَةِ ابْنِ آدَمَ اسْتِخَارَتُهُ اللَّهَ وَرِضَاهُ بِمَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَ مِنْ شَقَوَةِ ابْنِ آدَمَ تَرْكُهُ اسْتِخَارَةَ اللَّهَ وَ سَخَطُهُ بِمَا قَضَى اللَّهُ.

The Prophet of Allah said: 'Among the felicities of the children of Adam is that he asks the best from Allah and His pleasure in that which Allah has decreed for him. And among the misfortunes of the children of Adam is abandoning the asking of what is best from Allah and not being pleased with what Allah has decreed. " [15](#)

The actual meaning of the word *Istikhara* is to seek the best from Allah in one's affairs, which is not only commendable, but is also highly recommended (*mustahab*) in Islam. This type of *Istikhara* which has been continuously mentioned in the ahadith is in actuality, one form or type of supplication (Dua) which Allah Himself has given great importance to in the Holy Book:

(...قُلْ مَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْكُمْ رَبِّي لَوْ لَا دُعَائِكُمْ)

"Say: My Lord would not care for you were it not for your prayer (supplication)... " (al-Qur'an 25:77)

In this, the first hadith, before starting any job or action, a supplication, which is a form of *Istikhara* has

been recommended to be performed. We have been told that this is one of the roads that lead to a person's happiness.

هر گنج سعادت كه خدا داد به حافظ

از یمن دعای شب و ورد سحری بود

Whatever treasures of happiness that God gave to Hafiz

Was from the way of the night supplication and prayers in the morning. (Hafiz)

2) Istikhara: A Recommendation from the Ahl al-Bait

: { الْإِمَامُ عَلِيٌّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ } فِي وَصِيَّتِهِ إِلَى ابْنِهِ { عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ }

وَأَكْثَرَ الْإِسْتِخَارَةِ، إِذَا أَمْضَيْتَ فَاسْتَخِرْ...

al-Imam 'Ali ('as) in the will to his son recommended that, "... (In all your actions) continuously ask (Allah) for the best. "2

He also said, 'Any time you have decided to perform an act, then ask (Allah) for what is best. "37

The method of asking for what is best that has been most often mentioned in the ahadith, including the hadith mentioned above and has been emphasized, is that one in which one asks for the best from Allah in the form of a Dua' (supplication).

This type of seeking what is best is not associated with the instance in which a person has a doubt or can not make a decision. Rather, from the traditions of the *Ahl al-Bait* ('as), it is clear that before we carry out any action – no matter how small or insignificant it may be – we are recommended and encouraged to seek help, and constantly remember Allah in all of our affairs. 48

3) Istikhara: As Taught by the Ahl al-Bait

: { الْإِمَامُ الْبَاقِرُّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ }

كُنَّا نَتَعَلَّمُ الْإِسْتِخَارَةَ كَمَا نَتَعَلَّمُ السُّورَةَ مِنَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ

al-Imam al-Baqir ('as), said: "We (the Ahl al-Bait) teach the method of Istikhara (asking Allah for what is best) just as we teach the Surahs of the Book of Allah, the Glorious and the High. " [59](#)

In reality, the *Istikhara* or asking the best from Allah is a type of spiritual link or connection and request of one's needs from the humble servant to the Needless and Self-Existing Creator.

The supplications and requesting what is best – both before and during all acts, establishes a deep and continuous relationship between the servant of Allah – who is always in need of help, and his needless Master.

This is the type of *Istikhara* that has been emphasized by the *A'imma*h of the Ahl al-Bait , and was part of their natural disposition (*fitrah*).

The *Istikhara* with the Tasbeih beads and the Qur'an is the final step after one still entertains doubts and uncertainty in his mind and should only be done **after** seeking the best from Allah , thinking, weighing out the pros and cons, and requesting advice from others.

[1.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 77, Page 159, Hadith 153

[2.](#) Nahj al-Balaagha, Saying 31

[3.](#) Ghurur al-Hikm, Saying 3988

[4.](#) The various types of Istikhara by Dua' have been mentioned in Ahadith 16 to 22, which will follow.

[5.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shia, Volume 7, Page 66, Hadith 10101

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