

## Twenty-Ninth Hadith: The Prophet's Counsel To 'Ali

بِالسَّنَدِ الْمُتَّصِلِ إِلَى أَفْضَلِ الْمُحَدِّثِينَ وَأَقْدَمِهِمْ مُحَمَّدَ بْنَ يَعْقُوبَ رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ يَحْيَى، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدَ بْنِ عَيْسَى، عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ النُّعْمَانَ، عَنْ مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ عَمَّارٍ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَقُولُ: كَانَ فِي وَصِيَّةِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ لِعَلِيِّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَنْ قَالَ: يَا عَلِيُّ، أُوصِيكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ بِخِصَالٍ فَاحْفَظْهَا عَنِّي. ثُمَّ قَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ أَعْنِهِ، أَمَّا الْأُولَى فَالصِّدْقُ، وَلَا تَخْرُجَنَّ مِنْ فِيكَ كَذِبَةٌ أَبَدًا. وَالثَّانِيَةُ الْوَرَعُ، وَلَا تَجْتَرِي عَلَى خِيَانَةٍ أَبَدًا. وَالثَّلَاثَةُ الْخَوْفُ مِنَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ ذِكْرُهُ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ. وَالرَّابِعَةُ كَثْرَةُ الْبُكَاءِ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ يُبْنَى لَكَ بِكُلِّ دَمْعَةٍ أَلْفُ بَيْتٍ فِي الْجَنَّةِ. وَالخَامِسَةُ بِذَلِكَ مَالِكَ وَدَمَكَ دُونَ دِينِكَ. وَالسَّادِسَةُ الْأَخْذُ بِسُنَّتِي فِي صَلَاتِي وَصَوْمِي وَصَدَقَتِي. أَمَّا الصَّلَاةُ فَالْخَمْسُونَ رَكْعَةً، وَأَمَّا الصِّيَامُ فَثَلَاثَةٌ أَيَّامٍ فِي الشَّهْرِ؛ الْخَمِيسُ فِي أَوَّلِهِ وَالْأَرْبَعَاءُ فِي وَسْطِهِ وَالْخَمِيسُ فِي آخِرِهِ، وَأَمَّا الصَّدَقَةُ فَجَهْدُكَ حَتَّى تَقُولَ: قَدْ أَسْرَفْتُ، وَلَمْ تُسْرِفْ. وَعَلَيْكَ بِصَلَاةِ اللَّيْلِ، وَعَلَيْكَ بِصَلَاةِ اللَّيْلِ، وَعَلَيْكَ بِصَلَاةِ اللَّيْلِ، وَعَلَيْكَ بِصَلَاةِ الزُّوَالِ، وَعَلَيْكَ بِصَلَاةِ الزُّوَالِ، وَعَلَيْكَ بِتِلَاوَةِ الْقُرْآنِ عَلَى كُلِّ حَالٍ، وَعَلَيْكَ بِرَفْعِ يَدَيْكَ فِي صَلَاتِكَ وَتَقْلِيلِهِمَا. وَعَلَيْكَ بِالسُّوَاكِ عِنْدَ كُلِّ وُضُوءٍ. وَعَلَيْكَ بِمَحَاسِنِ الْأَخْلَاقِ فَارْكَبْهَا، وَمَسَاوِي الْأَخْلَاقِ فَاجْتَنِبْهَا. فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَلَا تَلُومَنَّ إِلَّا نَفْسَكَ.

With my continuous chain of transmission reaching up to the best of the traditionists and the foremost of them, Muhammad ibn Ya'qub al-Kulayni (R) from Muhammad ibn Yahya, from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn 'Isa, from 'Ali ibn al-Nu'man, from Mu'awiyah ibn 'Ammar, who says, "I heard Abu 'Abd Allah (A) say: In a counsel that the Prophet (S) gave to 'Ali (A), he said, "O 'Ali, I exhort you concerning certain characteristics (khisal) which you must preserve in yourself (as a trust) from me."

Then he prayed, "O God, help him." (Then he continued) "As to the first of them, it is truthfulness: never should a falsehood come out of your mouth. The second is piety (wara'), and never venture upon a treachery. The third is to fear God—sublime is His remembrance—as if you see Him. The fourth is to weep a lot out of the fear of God, the Exalted, and a thousand mansions shall be built for you in the Garden for every tear. The fifth is to offer your property and your blood for the sake of your religion. The sixth is to follow my sunnah in respect of my salat, my fasting, and my charity (sadaqah). As to the salat, it consists of fifty rak'ahs. As to the fasts, they are to be kept on three days in a month: on the first Thursday, on

the Wednesday at its middle, and on the last Thursday. As to the charity, that consists of the utmost that you can give, so much so that you say to yourself, 'I have been immoderate,' whereas you will not have been immoderate.

“Commit yourself to the nightly prayer (salat al-layl)! Commit yourself to the nightly prayer! Commit yourself to the nightly prayer! Stick to the (supererogatory) noon prayer! Stick to the noon prayer! Stick to the noon prayer! Accustom yourself to reciting the Qur'an at all times. Make it your practice to raise your hands during prayer and to turn them. Take care to brush your teeth every time that you perform wudu.” Commit yourself to ethical virtues, practice them, and refrain from moral vices, and if you don't, don't blame anyone except yourself.”<sup>1</sup>

*Khisal* is the plural of *khaslah*, meaning *khui* (i.e. trait, characteristic, disposition) as mentioned in the *Surah*. Accordingly, its usage to denote the generality of dispositions as well as acts, as in this noble tradition and other places, is a figurative one. Or, perhaps, *khaslah* has a wider meaning than trait, in which case this kind of usage will be a literal one.

As to the word *al-wara'* (with *fathah* on the *ra'*), which occurs in the narration of the Imam (A) that and *ri'ah* are verbal nouns of *wari'a* and *yari'u* (with *kasrah* on *ra'* in both the cases) meaning God-fearing (*taqwa*) or intensity of God-fearing and piety. Probably it is derived from ورعته توريعاً meaning [I restrained it], for *wara'* is, in reality, restraining of the soul and making it refrain from transgressing the limits of the *Shari'ah* and reason.

Or, it might have been derived from *warra'a* in the sense of *radda* (meaning dissuasion). Thus, it is said ورعت الإبل عن الماء i.e. 'I turned back (*radadtuhu*) the camel from water. That is because, in *wara'*, one dissuades the soul from what it covets and seeks to indulge in.

As to his words (A) لا تجترئ it pertains to the verbal form إفتعال and means temerity, daring, and boldness of action in matters. *Al-Sihah*, quoting Abu Zayd, states الجرأة: الشجاعة. Also, it is mentioned in *al-Sihah* that: الجريء: المقدام.

As to the word فَجْهْدُكَ in the statement of the Imam (A) الجهد with *dammah* or *fathah* on the *jim*, it means strength and hardship (الطاقة والمشقة). It is said جهد دابته وأجهدها when one makes one's mount run with all its power. *Jahd* is also used in the sense of effort and exertion and this meaning seems [more] more appropriate for this tradition.

As to his statement (A): عَلَيْكَ بِصَلَاةِ اللَّيْلِ, here عَلَيْكَ is an *ism al-fi'l* (verbal noun) which is used in the sense of a transitive verb or as its substitute. أَلْزَمُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ means عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ (i.e. 'Look after your own souls')<sup>2</sup> Accordingly this *ba'* (in بِصَلَاةِ ) is for the sake of stress and emphasis and not for making the verb transitive.

In the *Majma' al-bahrayn* it is stated that if the *ba'* be transitive it gives the sense of استمسك (i.e. stick to). This kind of expression does not exist in Persian, and in Arabic it is used for intensive emphasis upon a

certain matter. Probably, a close Persian expression for it would be *بچسب به فلان کار*. However, its translation as something like *بر تو باد به فلان* does not accord with common usage. God willing, we will expound the relevant themes of the tradition in the course of a preface and several sections.

## Preface

In this noble tradition, there are several aspects which reveal that these exhortations made by the Noble Messenger (S) to the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (A), were very important in his blessed eyes. One of them is that these were addressed to the Commander of the Faithful (A) though that master stood above any possibility of negligence in regard to the laws of the *Shari’ah* and Divine commandments.

However, since the matter was itself of supreme significance in the blessed eyes of the Noble Messenger of Allah (S) he did not refrain from exhorting him, and it is quite usual to find him exhorting someone concerning a matter that he considers as important and is concerned about, though he may know that that person will carry it out without fail.

As to the possibility that this counsel given to that holy personage was really aimed at others, being of the kind referred to in the proverb *إياك أعني وأسمعي يا جارة* (i.e. ‘I tell you in order that the neighbor may hear’), such a possibility is remote. That is because the very context of the tradition bears witness that it was addressed to him and aimed independently at that holy personage, as indicated by the words *في نفسك* (in yourself) and the order to cherish and safeguard them, as well as the invocation for Divine assistance.

These kind of exhortations were customary amongst the Ahl al-Bayt and it was usual for the Infallible Imams (A) to make them to one another. The very context of every one of these exhortations clearly shows that they were addressed by those holy personages to one another. Hence, in one of these counsels the Commander of the Faithful (A) says to Imam al-Hasan and Imam al-Husayn (A): “This is my counsel to the two of you and the other members of my household, as well as anyone whom this letter of mine should reach...”<sup>3</sup>

It is clear that the Hasanayn (A) were included in this counsel and these exhortations reveal the supreme importance of the matter and the intensity of the love that those holy personages had for one another. In fine, the very fact that the Commander of the Faithful (A) should be the addressee of these exhortations reveals the great importance of the matter.

Another point is that although it was addressed to Hadrat Amir (i.e. Imam ‘Ali), who would never have done anything against the Messenger’s exhortations or treated them with laxity or negligence, the Prophet considered it essential to stress the matter with such a great force.

Another point is that after saying “I exhort you,” he added, “you must safeguard them as a trust from

me” in order to bring to his attention the importance of these exhortations. Thereafter, on account of his desire that Hadrat Amir should fulfill these important duties, he supplicated saying, “O God, help him.” In addition, there are other scattered points of stress in a number of the sentences, as indicated by the *nun* of emphasis (as in لا يخرجن), the use of repetition, and so on, which need not be mentioned. All this shows the importance of these matters.

Of course, it is obvious that the Prophet’s sacred personage had no imaginable self-interest in any of these matters and his sole concern was to benefit his addressee. And although Hadrat Amir (A), was the one to whom these exhortations were originally addressed, but since these duties are of a universal nature, we should do our utmost so that the exhortations of the Messenger of God (S) do not go unheeded. We should know that the greatness of the love that the Noble Messenger (S) had for Hadrat Amir (A) requires that there be a very great benefit in these matters and that they be so much important that he should have mentioned them in this manner. And God knows best.

## The Evils of Lying

One of the exhortations of the Noble Messenger (S) enjoins truthfulness and requires abstention from falsehood. The fact that it is mentioned foremost amongst his exhortations shows that its importance was greater in his venerable opinion than all the other things. We shall mention the evils of lying before the benefits and virtues of truthfulness. Hence, know that this vice is one about whose ugly and vicious character there is agreement between reason and revelation. In itself, it is one of the major sins and indecencies, as indicated by many traditions.

Moreover, at times it leads to other vices whose ugliness and viciousness is no lesser than this fatal sin. Sometimes it happens that due to the discovery of a single lie a man so loses his credibility in the eyes of the people that its loss cannot be compensated for until the end of his life. God forbid that one should ever become known for being a liar, for; perhaps, there is nothing that can do a greater injury to one’s reputation.

In addition to this, the religious harms and otherworldly punishments associated with it are also numerous. Here we will confine ourselves to mentioning some of the noble traditions relating to this topic and refrain from undue elaboration, for the matter is of a clear and well-known character.

رُويَ فِي الْوَسَائِلِ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ يَعْقُوبَ بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ جَعَلَ لِلشَّرِّ أَقْفَالَاً وَجَعَلَ مِفَاتِيحَ تِلْكَ الْأَقْفَالِ الشَّرَابَ. وَالْكَذِبُ شَرٌّ مِنَ الشَّرَابِ.

In al-Wasa’il, it is narrated from Muhammad ibn Ya’qub, who reports with his isnad from Abu Ja’far (Imam al-Baqir) (A) that he said, “Verily, God, Almighty and Glorious, has assigned certain locks for evil and made wine the key to these locks. Yet falsehood is more evil than wine.”<sup>4</sup>

Now reflect a little on this sacred tradition, whose source is the Learned One of the Prophet's Household (*'Alim Al Muhammad*) and which is recorded in a book which serves as a source book for all the *ulama* of the Ummah (R) and which is accepted by all of them, and see if there remains any room for any excuse. Can a lax attitude in regard to lying have any cause other than weakness of faith in the traditions of the infallible Ahl al-Bayt (A)?

We do not know the Hidden forms of our deeds and are unaware of the spiritual links between the realms of *mulk* and *malakut*. As a result, we regard this kind of traditions as far-fetched and consider those like them as overstatements. This is itself an erroneous approach arising from nescience and feeble faith. If, supposedly, we consider this noble tradition as an hyperbole, shouldn't there be some grounds for the exaggeration to be proper to the occasion? Can it be said of anything that it is worse than wine? Isn't it that the evil of that thing should be so great that one may hyperbolize it by stating that it is worse than wine?

وَيَأْسُنَادِهِ عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: الْكَذِبُ هُوَ خَرَابُ الْإِيمَانِ

Hadrat Baqir al-'Ulum, i.e. Imam al-Baqir (A), said, "Lying is the ruin of faith."<sup>5</sup>

Truly, such traditions as this make one's heart tremble and give one cold feet. I think lying is one of those behavioral vices, which are so prevalent that their ugliness has totally disappeared. We only become aware [of its evil character] at a time when we wake up to find our faith, which is the most vital asset of the life of the Hereafter, forfeited as a result of this fatal sin without our knowing it.

It has been narrated from the Eighth Imam (A) that he said, "The Seal of the Prophets was asked if a believer could possibly be cowardly and timid. 'Yes,' he replied. Then they asked him if he could be stingy. 'Yes,' he said. 'Can a man be a liar?' they asked him. 'No!' came the Prophet's reply."

It has been narrated from the Truthful of the Sect (*Saduq al-Ta'fah*, i.e. al-Shaykh al-Suduq) that he said, "Amongst the sayings of the Messenger of God is the statement:

أَرَبِّي الرَّيْبَا الْكَذِبُ

Lying exceeds usury [in its evil].<sup>6</sup>

Such is the matter, whereas the severity of the banality of usury has been so much emphasized as to make one amazed.

Of the things that one should note is that telling an untruth even in jest and for humor's sake has been considered lying and regarded with severity. The *ulama* have also prohibited it in their fatwas. Thus, the author of *al-Wasa'il* (M) has given the following title to a chapter [in his compilation] – a title that accords

with his *fatwa*:

“Chapter on the prohibition of lying, in small and big matters, in serious talk and in jest, to the exclusion of what has been excepted.”

In the noble *al-Kafi*, it is reported through a chain of transmission reaching up to Imam al-Baqir (A) that he said, “ ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn (A) used to tell his sons: ‘Refrain from falsehood in your speech, whether it is a small or big matter, whether it is said in serious talk or in jest. That is because lying in trivial matters produces the temerity to lie in big matters. Don’t you know that the Messenger of Allah (S) said, “There is a servant of God who so perseveres in truthfulness that God writes his name amongst the truthful ones, and there is a servant who makes lying his wont until God, the Exalted, styles him a liar?”<sup>7</sup>

Again *al-Kafi* reports with its *isnad* reaching up to the venerated Asbagh ibn Nubatah that he said:

قَالَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: لَا يَجِدُ عَبْدٌ طَعْمَ الْإِيمَانِ حَتَّى يَتْرُكَ الْكَذِبَ هَزْلَهُ وَجِدَهُ

The Commander of the Faithful (A) said, “One does not taste the flavor of faith until he refrains from lying, in serious speech and in jest.”<sup>8</sup>

In a counsel given by the Noble Messenger (S) to Hadrat Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, the Prophet is reported to have said:

يَا أَبَا ذَرٍّ، وَيْلٌ لِلَّذِي يُحَدِّثُ فَيَكْذِبُ لِيُضْحِكَ بِهِ الْقَوْمَ! وَيْلٌ لَهُ! وَيْلٌ لَهُ

O Abu Dharr, woe to the man who tells lies in order to make other people laugh. Woe to him! Woe to him!

Now, with all these traditions and severe warnings of the Messenger of God and the Imams of guidance (A), it needs great audacity and wretchedness for one to perpetrate this enormity and commit this serious vice.

In the same way as lying has been considered as one of the most serious vices, truthfulness of speech has been commended as one of the most significant of virtues. It has been highly praised in the traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt, and here we will confine ourselves to mentioning some of them:

مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَعْقُوبَ بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: كُونُوا دُعَاءَ لِلنَّاسِ بِالْخَيْرِ بغيرِ ألسنتكم ليروا منكم الإجتهد والصديق والورع.

Muhammad ibn Ya’qub reports with his *isnad* from Abu ‘Abd Allah (A) that he said, “Call people to

righteousness through means other than your tongues, that they may observe diligence, truthfulness and piety in you.’<sup>9</sup>

The venerated Saduq reports with his *isnad* from the Messenger of God (S) that he said, “The nearest of you to me on the Day of Resurrection and the worthiest of my intercession will be the one who is the most truthful amongst you, the most reliable amongst you in regard to his trusts, the most genial of you in disposition, and the closest amongst you to the common people.”

## The Meaning of Wara’ and its Levels

*Wara’* has been reckoned as one of the stages of the wayfarer’s journey. In accordance with the definition of it given by the well-known gnostic, the venerable Khwajah ‘Abd Allah Ansari, it is:

هُوَ تَوْقُّ مُسْتَقْصَى عَلَى حَذَرٍ أَوْ تَحَرُّجٍ عَلَى تَعْظِيمٍ

It means that *wara’* is the utmost of restraint and the ultimate of self-vigilance accompanied with the fear of stumbling; or it means subjecting the soul to a rigorous discipline for the sake of God’s glorification. And this includes all its levels, because there are many degrees of *wara*. Thus the *wara’* of the common people consists of abstaining from major sins, whereas the *wara’* of the elect (*khassah*) consists of refraining from suspect things for the fear of falling into what is unlawful (*muharramat*), as indicated by the noble *hadith al-tathlith*.<sup>10</sup>

The *wara’* of the *zahid* (ascetic) consists of abstaining from lawful things for the sake of avoiding the burden (of answerability) that they entail. The *wara’* of the wayfarers of the path of gnosis is abstaining from beholding the world for the sake of attaining to the stations (*maqamat*). The *wara’* of those captivated by the Divine Being (*majdhubun*) is to relinquish the stations for reaching the Threshold of Allah and witnessing His Beauty. The *wara’* of the *awliya’* is to refrain from paying attention to ends (*ghayat*). Each of these has an elaborate description, engaging wherein is not beneficial for our state.

However, that which we should know in this connection is that the exercising of *wara’* or piety in relation to what Allah has made unlawful (*haram*) is the root of all spiritual excellences and Hereafterly stations, and none can attain any station whatsoever except by abstaining from the *muharramat*.

A heart that does not possess this *wara’* becomes so covered with rust and obfuscations that there ceases to be any hope of its deliverance. The purity of the souls and their burnish comes through *wara’*. This is the most important of the stages for the common people, and reaching it is one of the most essential goals of the wayfarer of the path of the Hereafter. Its excellence, as described in the traditions of the infallible Ahl al-Bayt (A) is more than what can be mentioned in these pages. We will confine ourselves to mentioning some of these traditions, and anyone seeking further details should refer to the compilations of *hadith*.

الكَافِي بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: أُوصِيكَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَالْوَرَعِ وَالْإِجْتِهَادِ، وَاعْلَمْ إِنَّهُ لَا يَنْفَعُ اجْتِهَادٌ لَا وَرَعٌ فِيهِ.

In al-Kafi of, al-Kulayni reports with his isnad from Abu ‘Abd Allah (A) that he said, “I exhort you concerning God-fearing, *wara’*, and diligence in worship, and know that a diligence that is devoid of *wara’* is of no benefit.”<sup>11</sup>

There are still other traditions containing this theme. They indicate that a worship that is devoid of *wara’* is devoid of worth. It is obvious that the main purpose of the acts of worship is self-discipline and restraint, and its aim is the domination of *malakut* over the realm of *mulk* and physical nature, which cannot be perfectly realized without intense *wara’* and piety.

The souls, which are afflicted with sinfulness and disobedience to God are unreceptive to the spiritual forms. Any effort to impress these forms on the tablet of the soul is futile unless the tablet’s surface is first cleared from the obfuscations of rust. Thus worship, which is the form of the perfection of the soul, remains futile without purifying the soul from the rust of sinfulness. Without the soul’s burnish, it remains an empty form devoid of meaning, and a body without spirit.

بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ يَزِيدَ بْنِ خَلِيفَةَ قَالَ: وَعَظَنَا أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَأَمَرَ وَزَهَّدَ ثُمَّ قَالَ: عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْوَرَعِ فَإِنَّهُ لَا يُنَالُ مَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا بِالْوَرَعِ.

Yazid ibn Khalifah says: Abu ‘Abd Allah (A) sermoned us, exhorting and directing us to adopt zuhd. Then he said, “Commit yourselves to *wara’*, for, verily, that which is with God cannot be attained by anything except *wara’*.”<sup>12</sup>

Thus, in accordance with this sacred tradition a man who is devoid of *wara’* is deprived from the bounties that God, the Exalted, has promised His servants, and this is the height of wretchedness and failure.

The following tradition is reported with *isnad* from Imam al-Baqir (A):

The Imam said, “Our wilayah cannot be attained except with works (of righteousness) and piety.”

In another tradition, Imam al-Sadiq (A) says:

“One who lives in a city of a hundred thousand wherein there are other people more pious than him, such a one is not one of our followers (shi’ah).”<sup>13</sup>

The same assertion is made in a tradition recorded in the noble *al-Kafi*.<sup>14</sup>

It should be known that, in accordance with the noble traditions, the criterion of perfection in *wara’* is

abstention from that which has been forbidden by God, and anyone who refrains from what God has made unlawful is considered the most pious of men. So do not let Satan make this matter appear as greatly difficult in your eyes, and make you despairing and despondent. For it is the habit of that accursed one to lead man into everlasting wretchedness by the way of despair.

For instance, in this regard he will tell you: “How is it possible to the most pious person in a city of hundred thousand people or more?” This is one of the tricks of that damned creature and the insinuations of the carnal ego. The answer to this is that, in accordance with the traditions, everyone who refrains from what God has decreed as unlawful stands in the ranks of the most pious of men referred to in these traditions. Refraining from the Divine *muharramat* is not a very difficult task. Rather, with a measure of spiritual training and practical effort one can avoid all the *muharramat*.

Of course, if one desires to be one of the felicitous and one of those who attain salvation, and if one aspires for the protection of the *wilayah* of the Ahl al-Bayt and the mercy of God, the Exalted, without possessing at least this much of forbearance in regard to sin, that cannot be. Certainly, a measure of resistance, forbearance, and austerity is essential.

### [The Evils Of Treachery And The Meaning Of Trustworthiness](#)

There is a point here that needs some elucidation, which is that the Noble Messenger (S) refers to the avoidance of betrayal of trust as a matter subsidiary to his exhortation regarding *wara'*. That, despite the fact that *wara'* relates to the generality of *muharramat* or, as said, is something still more inclusive. Hence ‘treachery’ here must either be taken in a wider sense corresponding to *wara'*, than the customary sense of it, in which case it would include the generality of sins and perpetration of anything that is an obstacle in the Godward wayfaring and which amounts to a betrayal of trust. That is because the Divine duties are Divine trusts, as pointed out in this noble verse:

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا ﴿٧٢﴾

***We offered the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to carry it and were afraid of it; and man carried it. Surely, he is unjust, ignorant. (33:72)***

Some exegetes have interpreted [the ‘Trust’ in this verse] as the Divine duties. Rather, all the bodily members, organs, and faculties are God’s trusts and their use in a manner contrary to God’s good pleasure is a betrayal of trust. Similarly, turning the heart’s attention to anything other than God is a treachery:

این جان عاریت که به حافظ سپرده دوست

This soul that the Friend had lent to Hafiz as a trust,

*I'll restore to Him one day when I see His face.*

Or, what is meant by 'treachery' here is its usual sense, and that it has been singled out here for mention due to its great importance, as if the totality of *wara'* lay in refraining from betrayal of trust. If one were to make a study of the traditions of the Infallible Ones (A) concerning the delivery of trust and abstention from treachery, one would understand how important this matter is in the view of the Holy Lawgiver.

Moreover, its innate viciousness is not hidden from any sensible person. The perfidious person is to be reckoned as standing outside the fold of humanity and counted among the vilest of devils. It is obvious that if someone becomes notorious among the people for his treacherous and villainous character, his life will be greatly miserable in this world itself.

Mankind can lead a prosperous life in this world only through mutual help and cooperation. It is not feasible for anyone to lead an isolated existence, which is possible only if he leaves the society of men to join the fold of wild beasts. The great wheel of social life revolves on the axis of mutual confidence amongst the people. If, God forbid, mutual confidence were to depart from the life of mankind, it would not be possible for them to lead a satisfactory life. The great pillar of mutual confidence rests on trustworthiness and abstention from treachery.

Hence, the treacherous person does not enjoy the confidence of others and is an outcast from civil life and the membership of human society. His membership is not accepted in the walks of civic existence and such a person, obviously, lives a life of hardship and misery. In order that the benefit of this section be complete, we shall cite some traditions of the infallible Ahl al-Bayt concerning this theme, and these suffice wakeful hearts and open eyes.

مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَعْقُوبَ بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: لَا تَنْظُرُوا إِلَى طُولِ رُكُوعِ الرَّجُلِ وَسُجُودِهِ فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ شَيْءٌ  
اعْتَادَهُ وَلَوْ تَرَكَهُ اسْتَوْحَشَ لَذَلِكَ. وَلَكِنْ انظُرُوا إِلَى صِدْقِ حَدِيثِهِ وَأَدَاءِ أَمَانَتِهِ.

Muhammad ibn Ya'qub (al-Kulayni) narrates with his isnad from Abu 'Abd Allah (A) that he said, "Don't look at the protracted kneelings and prostrations of a man, for that is something which he does out of habit and would be upset if he were to neglect them. But look at the truthfulness of his speech and his fulfillment of trusts. [15](#)

وَبِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ أَبِي كَهْمَسَ قَالَ: قُلْتُ لِأَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ أَبِي يَعْفُورَ يُقْرَنُكَ السَّلَامَ. قَالَ: عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَيْهِ  
السَّلَامُ، إِذَا أَتَيْتَ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ فَأَقْرِبْهُ السَّلَامَ وَقُلْ لَهُ: إِنَّ جَعْفَرَ بْنَ مُحَمَّدٍ يَقُولُ لَكَ انظُرْ مَا بَلَغَ بِهِ عَلِيٌّ عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ فَالزَّمَهُ فَإِنَّ عَلِيًّا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ إِنَّمَا بَلَغَ مَا بَلَغَ بِهِ عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ بِصِدْقِ الْحَدِيثِ وَأَدَاءِ الْأَمَانَةِ.

(Al-Kulayni reports) with his isnad from Abu Kahmas that he said: I said to Abu ‘Abd Allah (A): “Abd Allah ibn Abi Ya’fur conveys his salam to you.” The Imam replied: “May peace be upon you and upon him. When you see ‘Abd Allah convey my greetings and tell him that Ja’far ibn Muhammad says to you: Consider what made ‘Ali attain the standing that he attained with the Messenger of God (S) and stick to it, for, verily, ‘Ali (A) attained the standing that he attained with the Messenger of Allah through truthfulness of speech and fulfillment of trust.”[16](#)

And you, my dear, reflect upon this sacred tradition and behold how sublime is the station of truthfulness and trustworthiness, which brought ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (A) to that lofty station of his! This tradition shows that the Messenger of God loved these two characteristics more than anything else, and amongst the attributes of perfection of *Mawla*– ‘Ali (A) it were these two which had brought him so close to the Prophet and raised him to that distinguished station.

Also Imam al-Sadiq (A) recommends these two, from among all kinds of deeds and characteristics, to Ibn Abi Ya’fur, who was a dedicated and self-effacing follower of the Imam, and sends him a message asking him to cling to them, because they were very important in his blessed eyes.

وَبِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: قَالَ أَبُو ذَرٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ يَقُولُ: حَافَتَا الصِّرَاطِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ الرَّحْمُ وَأَدَاءُ الْأَمَانَةِ. فَإِذَا مَرَّ الْوَصُولُ لِلرَّحِمِ الْمُؤَدِّي لِلْأَمَانَةِ نَفَذَ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ. وَإِذَا مَرَّ الْخَائِنُ لِلْأَمَانَةِ الْقَطُوعُ لِلرَّحِمِ لَمْ يَنْفَعَهُ مَعَهُمَا عَمَلٌ وَتَكَفَّرَ بِهِ الصِّرَاطُ فِي النَّارِ.

(Al-Kulayni reports) with his isnad from Abu Ja’far (A) that he said: Abu Dharr (R) said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (S) say: “On the Day of Resurrection the Womb and the Trust shall stand on the two sides of the Sirat. When one who has fulfilled the duties of kinship and discharged his trusts passes over (the Sirat), he will cross over to paradise. But when the betrayer of trust or the violator of the rights of kinship passes over it, no work of his will benefit him by the side of these (vices), and the Sirat will turn him over into hell.”[17](#)

This indicates that the [otherworldly] forms of the Womb and the Trust shall stand on the two sides of the *Sirat* in that world and they will assist one who has fulfilled the duties of blood relationship and discharged his trusts. No work will benefit him if he has violated these two, and they will cast him into hell.

وَبِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: قَالَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: أَدُوا الْأَمَانَةَ وَلَوْ إِلَى قَاتِلِ وَوَلَدِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ.

(Al-Kulayni reports) with his isnad from Abu ‘Abd Allah (A) that he said: Amir al-Mu’minin (A) said, “Discharge your trusts, even if they pertain to a murderer of the offspring of the Prophets.”[18](#)

وَبِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فِي وَصِيَّتِهِ لَهُ: إِعْلَمْ أَنَّ ضَارِبَ عَلِيٍّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ بِالسَّيْفِ وَقَاتَلَهُ لَوْ أُنْتَمَنِي وَاسْتَنْصَحَنِي وَاسْتَشَارَنِي ثُمَّ قَبِلْتُ ذَلِكَ مِنْهُ لَأَدَيْتُ إِلَيْهِ الْأَمَانَةَ.

(Al-Kulayni reports) with his isnad from Abu ‘Abd Allah (A) that he said in one of his exhortations, “Know that even if the assassin of ‘Ali (A) who struck him with the sword, were to entrust me with something and were he to seek my advice and counsel, and were I to accept his request, I would not betray his trust.”<sup>19</sup>

مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ الْحُسَيْنِ بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ أَبِي حَمَزَةَ الثُّمَالِيِّ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ سَيِّدَ الْعَابِدِينَ عَلِيَّ بْنَ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَقُولُ لِشِيعَتِهِ: عَلَيْكُمْ بِأَدَاءِ الْأَمَانَةِ، فَوَالَّذِي بَعَثَ مُحَمَّدًا صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ بِالْحَقِّ نَبِيًّا لَوْ أَنَّ قَاتِلَ أَبِي الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ أُنْتَمَنِي عَلَى السَّيْفِ الَّذِي قَتَلَهُ بِهِ لَأَدَيْتُهُ إِلَيْهِ.

Muhammad ibn ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn reports with his isnad from Abu Hamzah al-Thumali that he said: I heard the Master of the Devout, ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (A) say to his followers (shi’ah), “Commit yourself to trustworthiness; for, by Him Who sent Muhammad (S) with the Truth as a Prophet, even if the killer of my father, al-Husayn ibn ‘Ali (A) were to entrust me with the sword with which he had killed him, I would not betray his trust.”<sup>20</sup>

وَبِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنِ الصَّادِقِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ عَنْ آبَائِهِ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ فِي حَدِيثِ الْمَنَاهِي أَنَّهُ نَهَى عَنِ الْخِيَانَةِ وَقَالَ: مَنْ خَانَ أَمَانَةً فِي الدُّنْيَا وَلَمْ يَرُدَّهَا إِلَى أَهْلِهَا ثُمَّ أُدْرِكُهُ الْمَوْتُ مَاتَ عَلَى غَيْرِ مِلَّتِي وَيَلْقَى اللَّهَ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِ غَضَبَانٌ. وَمَنْ اشْتَرَى خِيَانَةً وَهُوَ يَعْلَمُ فَهُوَ كَالَّذِي خَانَهَا.

(Al-Sadiq reports) with his isnad from Imam al-Sadiq (A) that he narrated from his ancestors from the Prophet (S) that, in a tradition concerning certain proscribed acts, he forbade the betrayal of trust and said, “Whoever betrays a trust in the life of the world, not delivering it to those to whom it belongs, and then dies, such a person doesn’t die upon my creed and he shall meet God in a state wherein He will be wrathful with him. And whoever knowingly purchases the despoils of treachery is like the traitor.”<sup>21</sup>

There are other traditions of this kind, and it is obvious what consequences will result from the wrath of God’s Sacred Being upon a servant. Of course, the venerable intercessors, too, will not intercede on behalf of someone who is the object of God’s wrath, especially since the betrayer of trust is out of the pale of the creed of the Messenger of Allah (S). It is stated in a (prophetic) tradition that:

Whoever commits a breach of trust in regard to a believer does not belong to me.”<sup>22</sup>

It is mentioned in another tradition that such a man “is outside the faith of Islam and he will be cast into the abyss of hell for ever and ever.”<sup>23</sup> I seek refuge in God from the evil of this vice.

It is obvious that the breach of a believer’s trust includes dishonesty of a financial nature as well as other

breaches of trust that are of a more serious nature. Hence, one should be very vigilant of the carnal self, which may make one turn a blind eye to certain matters and make their vicious character appear as something trivial and simple, though they be the cause of everlasting wretchedness and perpetual ignominy. This is the state of those who commit treachery against God's creatures, and from this, we come to know the state of treachery in relation to the trust of God, the Exalted.

### Concerning Some Divine Trusts

It should be known that God, the Blessed and the Exalted, has bestowed upon us all our outward and inward faculties and bodily members and organs. He has spread out the table of bounties and beneficence throughout the inner and outer realms of our being, subjecting all of them to our power. He delivered them to us as trusts in a form wherein all of them were pure, immaculate, and free from formal and spiritual impurities. Everything that He sent down for us from the world of the Hidden, was pure and free from any kind of contamination.

Therefore, if while meeting that Sacred Being we return these trusts to Him in the condition of purity from the contaminations of the corporeal sphere and the impurities of the mundane world and mulk, we shall be reckoned as trustworthy; otherwise we shall be held guilty of betrayal of trust and cast outside the pale of genuine Islam and the creed of the Noble Messenger (S).

It is mentioned in a famous *hadith* that:

قَلْبُ الْمُؤْمِنِ عَرْشُ الرَّحْمَنِ.

The heart of the believer is the throne of the All-Beneficent.

And it is said in a well-known *hadith qudsi*

لَا تَسْعُنِي أَرْضِي وَلَا سَمَائِي، بَلْ يَسْعُنِي قَلْبُ عَبْدِي الْمُؤْمِنِ.

Neither [the vastness of] My earth, nor [that of] My heaven can contain Me. Indeed it is the heart of the man of faith which can contain Me.[24](#)

The believer's heart is the throne and seat of Godhead and the abode of that Sacred Being. That Sacred Being is the owner of the heart. Riveting the heart's attention on other than God, the Exalted, is a breach of His trust. The love of anything other than that of the Holy Being and His elect, loving whom is the same as loving Him, is considered a treachery in the creed of gnosis. The *wilayah* of the Household of Purity and Infallibility and the friendship of the Family of the Messenger (A) and the gnosis of their holy station is a Divine trust.

Accordingly, in many noble traditions the word 'Trust' (in verse 33:72) has been interpreted as the *wilayah* of the Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali (A). In the same way as the usurpation of the authority and office of that personage is a treason, so also the failure to follow that sacred personage is one of the degrees of treachery. And it is mentioned in the sacred traditions that "A *shi'ah* is one who follows [the Ahl-al-Bayt] in a complete manner. Otherwise, the mere claim of being a *shi'ah* will not be considered as *tashayyu'* (shi'i hood)."

Many of our fancies belong to the category of fake longings. At the mere feeling of love for Hadrat Amir (A) in our hearts, we become proud of this love and imagine that this love will survive even if we don't continue to follow him. But what surety is there that this attachment will survive if we fail to take care of it and if we neglect the attendant qualities of this love"

It is possible that during the pangs of death, which are experienced by all except the Faithful (*mu'minun*) and the Sincere (*mukhlusun*), one may forget 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (A) as a result of the panic and terror of the last agony. It is mentioned in a tradition that a group of sinners facing punishment in hell will forget the name of the Noble Messenger (S). When their term of punishment draws to its close and they are purged of and purified from the filth of sin, the blessed name of the Prophet shall come to their memory, or they will be reminded of it.

Thereupon, they will raise the cry of '*Wa Muhammada!*' O Muhammad! (S). Thereat, they will receive mercy and release. We imagine that the encounter with death and the last agony is something similar to the experiences of this world. My dear! A short attack of fever is sufficient to make you forget everything that you know. Think what will happen when those calamities, agonies, terrors, and panics hold you in their grip! If one loves and fulfills the requisites of that love, remembering the beloved and following him, of course, such a love of the absolute friend and the absolute beloved of God shall enjoy Divine favor.

But if one makes merely a claim unaccompanied by action, or, rather, accompanied by defiance, it is possible that before he departs from this world its diversions, vicissitudes, and shifting scenes may lead one to forsake the love of that Master, or, *na'udhubilldh*, turn one into his enemy. We have seen persons who claimed to befriend God and the Messenger (S) but who, after moving about in degenerate company and adopting evil conduct, became hostile to the Prophet and his Family (A).

And even if, supposedly, one were to depart from this world with that love, though he will ultimately attain salvation and felicity in accordance with certain noble traditions and sacred verses, yet he will still have to suffer the afflictions of Barzakh and the terrors of death and resurrection in accordance with this tradition: "We shall intercede in your favor on the Day of Resurrection. But it is up to yourselves to do something for the life of Barzakh."<sup>25</sup>

I seek God's refuge from the punishment and pressures of the grave and the hardships and tortures of Barzakh, which have no resemblance to anything in this world. That door of hell which opens into the grave, should it be opened upon this world, it will destroy all its creatures. God be our refuge from such

horrors.

## The Fear Of God Almighty

Know that the fear of God, the Exalted, is one of the stages that is hardly equaled by any other in respect of the common people. Aside from the fact that this fear is itself one of spiritual excellences, it is the source of many virtues of the spirit and one of the important reforming agents of the soul. Rather, it may be reckoned as the mainspring of all reform and the healing source of all spiritual ailments.

A human being with faith in God and a wayfarer and emigrant towards Allah should give utmost importance to this stage and pay great attention to everything that increases it in the heart and strengthens its roots, such as the remembrance of chastisement and punishment, recalling the severity of the perilous passes of death, and, after death, those of Barzakh and resurrection, the terrors of the *Sirat*, the Balance, the scrutinies of the Reckoning, and the various punishments of hell, as well, as the remembrance of the Might, Glory, Irresistibility, and Sovereignty of God and the remembrance of the gradualness of deviation (*istidraj*), the Divine stratagems, the possible evil of one's ultimate end and the like. Since we have in these pages described all these stages to some extent, we shall confine ourselves here to citing some traditions concerning the merits of the fear of God:

مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَعْقُوبَ بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنِ إِسْحَاقَ بْنِ عَمَّارٍ قَالَ: قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الصَّادِقِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: «خَفِ اللَّهَ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ لَا تَرَاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَرَى أَنَّهُ لَا يَرَاكَ فَقَدْ كَفَرْتَ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ يَرَاكَ ثُمَّ بَرَزْتَ لَهُ بِالْمَعْصِيَةِ، فَقَدْ جَعَلْتَهُ مِنْ أَهْوَنِ النَّاطِرِينَ إِلَيْكَ.»

Muhammad ibn Ya'qub reports with his isnad from Ishaq ibn 'Ammar that he said: Abu 'Abd Allah (A) said, "O Ishaq, fear God as if you see Him. For if you don't see Him, indeed He sees you. And if you imagine that He does not see you, you have disbelieved. And if you know that indeed He sees you and yet go forth to disobey Him, then you have made Him the least of onlookers who behold you."<sup>26</sup>

Know that if someone should understand the character of the manifestation of the Divine in mulk and malakut and the revelation of that Sacred Essence in the heavens and the earths, either through unmediated (*huduri*) experience, or epiphany, or through real faith, and should he apprehend the relation of God to creation and the relation of creation to God as it really is, and should he have the knowledge of the character of the manifestation of the Divine Will in determinate things and their dissolution *fana'in* it, as it really is, he would know that God, the Exalted, is present in all places and realms, and he would observe Him with unmediated knowledge (*ilm huduri*) in all existents, as stated by Imam al-Sadiq (A):

مَا رَأَيْتُ شَيْئًا إِلَّا وَرَأَيْتُ اللَّهَ مَعَهُ أَوْ فِيهِ.

I don't see a thing without seeing God with it or in it.

In the intimacy of the *nawafil* (supererogatory prayers) the true meaning of:

كُنْتُ سَمْعَهُ وَبَصَرَهُ وَيَدَهُ.

I will be his hearing, his sight and his hand,

and other than that will become disclosed to him. Then, he will see, in accordance with his own station, the Divine Presence in all the levels of being, knowledgewise or faithwise or through direct experience and epiphany.

Of course, at this stage, the wayfarer—whatever his rank—would observe the etiquette of the Divine Presence and refrain from the defiance of that Sacred Essence. That is because the observance of presence and its etiquette is something innate in human beings, and no matter how shameless a person might be, absence and presence [of someone] are not the same for him, especially when the presence is that of the All-mighty and the All-perfect Provider, which is independently impressed in the presence-observing nature of everyone.

### The Disparity of People in Observing The Divine Presence

It should be known that every believer, wayfarer, gnostic, and *wali* observes the etiquette of the Divine Presence in a manner that is special to him. Hence, the faithful and the God-fearing consider observance of the presence to lie in abstaining from unlawful things and in observing the precepts. The *majdhubun* consider it to lie in refraining from attending to other-than-God and in directing one's perfect and complete attention to God. The *awliya'* and the Perfect consider it to lie in the negation of otherness, as well as the negation of the ego.

In fine, one of the sublime stations of the gnostics and the people of the heart is the experience of Divine Presence and its observance. Hence, with the apprehension of the character of God's active knowledge and the dissolution of all things in His Sacred Essence and the presence of all beings before Him, and with the understanding that the realm of being is present before the Lord, each of them, whatever his station, observes the requisites of presence. Also, this is an innate characteristic of the human nature.

The Noble Messenger (S) has referred to the first station in the spiritual counsel that he gave to Hadrat Amir (A) and which we are now engaged in expounding. The same station is referred to in the noble tradition narrated by Ishaq ibn 'Ammar, wherein the Imam (A) says:

وَالثَّالِثَةُ الْخَوْفُ مِنَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ ذِكْرُهُ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ.

And the third thing is to fear God—sublime is His remembrance—as if you see Him.

And where he says:

خَفِيَ اللَّهُ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ.

Fear God as if you see Him.

Imam al-Sadiq (A) refers to the second station where he says:

وَإِنْ كُنْتَ لَا تَرَاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ.

For if you don't see Him, verily He sees you.

Imam al-Sadiq (A) refers to the natural proclivity to observe presence in his statement:

...وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ يَرَاكَ

And if you know that He indeed sees you

...

Further, there are various levels of the fear in accordance with the different levels of the faithful, the wayfarers, and the people of austerities and gnosis, and one of its higher levels is the fear of the Greatness of God and the manifestations of Divine Might and Glory. It is possible not to reckon this station as a level of 'fear', as stated by the famous 'arif in *Manazil al-sa'irin*:

وَلَيْسَ فِي مَقَامِ أَهْلِ الْخُصُوصِ وَحُشَّةٌ إِلَّا هَيْبَةُ الْإِجْلَالِ.

That is, there exists no fear for the people of the heart and the mysteries of *wilayah* except the awe of Divine Majesty, Magnificence, Greatness, and Glory.

## The Virtues Of Lamentation

There are many virtues in weeping and lamenting for the tear of God. As mentioned in this noble *hadith*, God shall build a thousand mansions in paradise for every tear that is shed in fear of Him. The venerable Shaykh Saduq (R) narrates with his unbroken chain of transmission from Imam al-Sadiq (A) from his forefathers, from the Noblest Messenger (S) that he said in a tradition relating to certain things that one should refrain from: "One whose eyes weep from the fear of God shall be bestowed for every tear that he sheds a palace ornamented with jewels and pearls every paradise the like of which no

eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard, and no heart has ever imagined.”

عَنْ تَوَابِ الْأَعْمَالِ: بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: لَيْسَ شَيْءٌ إِلَّا وَكَلَهُ شَيْءٌ  
يَعْدِلُهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَعْدِلُهُ شَيْءٌ، وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَا يَعْدِلُهُ شَيْءٌ، وَدَمْعَةٌ مِنْ خَوْفِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهَا مِثْقَالٌ، فَإِنْ سَأَلَتْ  
عَلَى وَجْهِهِ لَمْ يَرْهَقْهُ قَتْرٌ وَلَا ذَلَّةٌ بَعْدَهَا أَبَدًا.

In the *Thawab al-‘a‘mal* (al-Shaykh al-Saduq reports) with his isnad from Abu Ja‘far (A) that he said: The Messenger of Allah (S) said, “Except God, there is nothing that doesn’t have an equal, for, verily, nothing equals Him. And there is nothing, which equals [the statement], “There is no god except God.” And [the worth of] a tear shed in fear of God cannot be weighed by anything, for the face on which it flows shall never ever be covered with abasement and humiliation thereafter.”

In *al-Kafi*, it is narrated from Imam al-Sadiq (A) that “Everything has a weight and measure except tears, for a tear is sufficient to extinguish seas of fire.” And he said, “If there is a single person who weeps [out of fear of God] in a community (*ummah*), all of its members receive Divine mercy.” There is a large number of traditions containing this theme.[27](#)

## Doubts Regarding Disproportionate Award

That which is essential to point out here is that some feeble souls lacking conviction question the possibility of such great rewards for trivial matters. They are ignorant of the fact that if something appears small to us in this world that does not prove that its Hidden and *malakuti* form be trivial and insignificant as well. For it is often the case that a minute creature has an inward and *malakuti* being that is extremely great and magnificent.

Thus the holy frame and physical form of the last and the noblest of Messengers, the honored and the venerable Prophet (S) was one of the small existents of this world, whereas his holy spirit encompassed the realms of *mulk* and *malakut* and was the mediating means for the creation of the heavens and the earths.

Therefore, to judge the inward and *malakuti* form of something as trivial and small, presumes the knowledge of the world of *malakut* and the inward reality of things. Hence the like of us have no right to make such a Judgment. Rather, we should open our ears to the pronouncements of those who have the knowledge of the world of Hereafter, that is, the prophets and the *awliya’* (A).

Another point is that the basis of that world rests on the expansive bounteousness and the infinite mercy of God, Glorious and Exalted. There is no limit or bound to the munificence of God, the Exalted, and it is the height of ignorance and nescience to doubt the generosity of the Absolutely Generous and the infinite mercy of the All-merciful.

All these bounties that He has bestowed upon His creatures, which minds cannot encompass, or, rather, even the comprehension of whose general features confounds the intellects, have been awarded without asking and without any background of deservedness. So why should it appear incredible if He, out of His sheer generosity and without any prior deservedness, gives a manifold reward to His servants? A world whose very basis has been decreed in accordance with [the principle of] the influence of the human will, and regarding which He has said:

﴿وَفِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِيهِ الْأَنْفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ الْأَعْيُنُ﴾

Therein being whatever the souls desire, and the eyes delight in.

**(43:71)**

is it possible to regard it as far-fetched and improbable, although that which the human soul desires is without limit and boundless? God, Blessed and Exalted, has so determined that world and has so fashioned the human will that anything that it wills would come into existence by the sheer act of the will.

My dear! The number of the noble traditions and narrations relating to this kind of rewards is not one or two so that there should remain any room for denial. Rather, their number exceeds the limit of *tawatur*. All the reliable and trustworthy works of *hadith* are replete with this kind of traditions. They are such as if we have heard them directly from the Infallible Ones themselves (A).

Their character is not such as to allow one to take resort in interpretation (*ta'wil*). Therefore, to deny the truth of this matter without any grounds—a matter that is in accordance with *mutawatir* texts and is not contrary to any discursive proof, or rather agrees with a certain kind of proof—such a denial springs from weakness of faith and extreme ignorance. Man should submit to the statements of the prophets and the *awliya'* (A).

Nothing is better for human perfection than submission to the *awliya'* of God, especially in matters which human reason cannot fathom and there is no way to whose understanding except the way of revelation and prophethood. Should man try to butt in his inadequate intellect and his fancies and presumptions on matters of the Hidden and the Hereafter and those relating to worship and religious law, that would ultimately lead him, little by little and in gradual stages, to deny even the self-evident necessities of the faith.

Even if, supposedly, you should doubt the authenticity of the traditions and their chains of transmission—though there is no room for such a doubt—you cannot question the authority of the Noble Scripture of God, the Glorious and the Celestial Qur'an. The likes of such rewards are also mentioned there, as in the following statements of God, the Exalted:

﴿لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ﴾

***The Night of al-Qadr is better than a thousand months. (97:3)***

﴿مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنبُلَةٍ مِائَةٌ حَبَّةٌ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ﴾

***The likeness of those who expend their wealth in the way of God is as the likeness of a grain of corn that sprouts seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains. So God multiplies unto whom He will, God is All-embracing, All-Knowing. (2:261)***

My conjecture is that one of the factors responsible for the tendency to regard such rewards as far-fetched and unlikely and to deny their truth is the exaggerated sense of the worth of our works and pride in them. For instance, if someone fasts on a day and spends a whole night in prayer and later on hears that such acts have a very great reward, he does not regard such a thing as unlikely, although such a thing is far-fetched if one were to go by (the proportionality of) wages and work. But since he considers this act of his as something big and takes pride in it, he affirms the otherworldly reward of that act.

My dear! This entire duration of our lives, which is some fifty or sixty years. Even if, supposedly, we carry out therein all our religious duties and leave the world with a sound faith, with righteous deeds, and a valid repentance, what measure of reward, do you think, do this measure of works and this faith of ours deserve? Yet, in accordance with the Book and the *Sunnah* and the consensus of all religious creeds, such a person receives Divine mercy and goes to paradise, a paradise where he will enjoy everlasting gifts and comfort and dwell in eternal mercy, bliss and fragrance. Is there any room for denying the truth of this?

And if one were to go by the idea of compensation for work—that is, if we make the invalid assumption that our works deserve compensation—it could not be so disproportionate, quality- as well as quantity-wise, to be beyond the comprehension of human reason. This shows that the matter is based on another foundation and revolves around some other axis. If we understand this, there no longer remains any ground for denying this truth or considering it unlikely and far-fetched.

## **Concerning the Number of the Naw'afil**

In the statement of the Noblest Messenger—may God bless him and his Household—the fifty *rak'ahs* of prayer, which he says accord with his sunnah, consist of the obligatory (*wajib*) and supererogatory (*nafileh*, pl. *nawafil*) prayers. Excepted, here, are the *two rak'ahs* offered, while sitting, after the *'isha'* prayers and are counted as a single *rak'ah*, which if included with the *wajib* and *nafileh* prayers make up fifty-one *rak'ahs*. Perhaps, the Messenger of God—may God bless him and his Household—did not

mention this *rak'ah* because only the other fifty *rak'ahs* constituted his sunnah that has been emphasized upon (*sunnah mu'akkadah*), as indicated by the following narration of Ibn Abi 'Umayr:

قال: سألت أبا عبد الله عليه السلام عن أفضل ما جرت به السنة من الصلاة ، قال: تمام الخمسين

(Ibn Abi 'Umayr) says: "I asked Abu 'Abd Allah, may peace be upon him, concerning the best sunnah practised in relation to prayer. He replied, 'It is to offer all the fifty [*rak'ahs*]:[28](#)"

That which can be inferred from some traditions is that the practice of the Messenger of God—may God bless him and his Household—was to offer these fifty *rak'ahs*[29](#), although some other traditions indicate that he used to offer the *'atama*[30](#) as well. Perhaps, the absence of its mention and the confinement of the prevailing sunnah to the fifty *rak'ahs* is for the reason that the *'atamah* is, in fact, the *watr* prayer and has no independence of its own, as indicated by the narration of Fudayl ibn Yasar[31](#); and in a noble tradition it has been referred to as *Watr*[32](#). Some other traditions state that one who offers it before his death is like one who dies after having offered the *watr* prayer.[33](#)

Hence these two *rak'ahs* are actually the *watr* prayer that is offered before its time for the fear of imminent death. However, when the time of *watr* prayer arrives, these do not serve as its substitute. It is mentioned in some traditions that these two *rak'ahs* did not form part of the fivefold prayers and they were added to round up the number so that the *nawafil* make up twice the number of *wajib* prayers[34](#).

These traditions together do not conflict with one another in respect of their import. Possibly, the most meritorious sunnah in practice is the offering of the fifty *rak'ahs* and these two *rak'ahs* constitute a sunnah that has not been emphasized upon and they have been prescribed for the sake of precaution for the event of death and to round up the number.

In any case, there is a great merit in offering the daily *nawafil*, and in some traditions their omission has been considered a sin[35](#). In some others it has been stated in this context that God would mete out punishment for the neglect of the Sunnah[36](#), and in certain traditions they have been referred to as obligatory[37](#).

This is to stress their observance and to prevent their being neglected. What is proper is that one should not fail to offer them as far as possible, because, according to the noble traditions, the purpose of prescribing them is the completion of the obligatory prayers and their acceptance[38](#). It is stated in some traditions that "Our *Shi'ah* (followers) are the people of fifty—one *rak'ahs* of prayer[39](#). It is evident from this tradition that that which is meant is the offering of these *rak'ahs*, not mere belief in them, as against the Ahl al-Sunnah. The same is indicated by the tradition concerning of the sign of a person of faith[40](#).

## Concerning the Istihbab of Fasting on Three Days in Every Month

As to the second sunnah of the Noblest Messenger—may God bless him and his Household—which consists of fasting on three days of every month, there are many traditions, more than forty, about its merit<sup>41</sup>. There is a difference of opinion amongst the leading 'ulama' in this regard. The prevailing opinion among them, which is also in accord with many traditions and the practice of the Noblest Messenger—may God bless him and his Household—during the last part of his life as well as with the practice of the Imams of guidance, is that these three days consist of the first Thursday, which is a day of the presentation of works [of all the faithful before the Prophet and the Imams], the first Wednesday of the next ten days, which is an inauspicious day and a day of descent of Divine chastisement, and the last Thursday of the last ten days, which is also a day of presentation of works.<sup>42</sup>

It is stated in a tradition that whenever punishment befell one of the former communities, it was upon one of these days. Hence the Noblest Messenger—may God bless him and his Household—used to fast on these fearsome days<sup>43</sup>. In a tradition it is stated that the fasts on these three days are equivalent to perpetual fasting<sup>44</sup>, and in some traditions the following noble verse has been interpreted as referring to these fast

من جاء بالحسنة فله عشر أمثالها

### ***Whoever brings a good deed shall have ten the like of it . . . (6: 160)***

As to a different order mentioned in some other traditions that may be ascribed to the various ranks of merit, and if supposedly, there should be any conflict, there are many reasons for preferring these narrations. Rather, it may be said that the conflict between them is one between the *nass* and the *zahir* or one between the *azhar* and the *zahir*. As to the *mursal* tradition narrated by al-Saduq, wherein it is stated that "in case there be two Thursdays during the last ten days, fast on the first one, since you may not see the second one,<sup>45</sup>" it is not contrary to these traditions, since, apparently, that is for the sake of attaining to a nearer merit for the fear of absence of opportunity on account of death or some other cause.

A similar reason was mentioned for the prescription of the '*atamah*'. Hence, this tradition itself is one of those which support the greater merit of fasting on the last Thursday, and it does not support the traditions indicating a contrary meaning. The apparent meaning (*zahir*) is that if one fasts on the first Thursday, on reaching the last Thursday it is better to partake of the merit of fasting on it again and the first fast would not be a substitute for it. That which the august authority, Fayd<sup>46</sup>, and the majestic traditionist, the author of *al-Hada'iq*<sup>47</sup>, and particularly the latter<sup>48</sup>, may God have mercy upon them, have said in the way of a reconciliation between the traditions is farfetched.

## On the Merit of Sadaqah

As to the sunnah of the Noblest Messenger—may God bless him and his Household—relating to *sadaqah* (charity) and doing one's best in giving it, that is also one of *mustahabb* acts which is hardly equalled by any other *mustahabb* action in its merit. The traditions concerning the subject of *sadaqah*, regarding the giving of charity even to those who do not belong to one's creed, and about being charitable towards the animals of land and sea, are so numerous that it is not possible to cite them here. However, we shall confine ourselves to citing a few of them:

محمد بن يعقوب بإسناده عن عبد الله بن سنان في حديث قال: قال أبو عبد الله ، عليه السلام: ليس شيء أثقل على الشيطان من الصدقة على المؤمن ، وهو تقع في يد الرب تبارك وتعالى قبل أن تقع في يد العبد

In a tradition that Muhammad ibn Ya`qub (al-Kulayni) has reported with his *isnad* from `Adb Allah ibn Sinan, Abu `Abd Allah, may peace be upon him, said, "There is nothing harder upon Satan than the giving of *sadaqah* to a person of faith, and it falls into the hands of the Lord, Blessed and Exalted, before it falls into the hands of the servant (who receives the *sadaqah*)."[49](#)

وإسناده عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام في حديث قال: إن الله لم يخلق شيئاً إلا وله خازن يحزنه إلا الصدقة ، فإن الرب يليها بنفسه وكان أبي إذا تصدق بشيء وضعه في يد السائل ثم ارتده منه فقبله وشمه ثم رده في يد السائل

In a tradition (that al-Kulayni reports) with his *isnad*, Abu `Abd Allah, may peace be upon him, has said, "Verily, God never created anything without assigning a treasurer to store it, with the exception of *sadaqah*, for the Lord Himself is its caretaker. It was the practice of my father (i.e. al-Imam Muhammad al-Baqir) when giving anything as *sadaqah*, to put it in the hands of the needy person, then to take it back and embrace and smell it and then to put it back into the hands of the receiver."[50](#)

About the same theme occurs in several other traditions[51](#) and that indicates the exalted station and excellence of *sadaqah*, whose caretaking has not been assigned to anyone else by God, the Blessed and the Exalted, and He with His Might and His all-enveloping Sustention has taken up the preservation of its perfect Hidden form

Reflection on this sacred tradition, and others like it narrated in the various chapters of the books of our companions, may God be pleased with all of them, is revelatory of Divine activity (*tawhid fil'i*) and the manifestation of Divine sustention for the people of the heart and gnosis. There is an important point in its attention to which is very essential for anyone who carries out this important duty. That point is that one should realize to whom the *sadaqah* is being delivered For if, God be our refuge, should there be a sense of doing favour or some offensive conduct on one's behalf in relation to the poor person, that is misconduct first in relation to God, the Blessed and the Exalted, and after that in relation to the one

seeking help.

And should one act with humility, and give *sadaqah* with the utmost humility to a man of faith beseeching help and in a humble, unpretentious and condescending spirit, it is humility towards God, the Exalted, as was the wont of the Learned of the Household of Muhammad ( `Alim Al Muhammad, i.e. al-`Imam al-Baqir) may God bless him and his Household—and the lover of Divine Beauty, the Baqir al-Ulum, may peace be upon him, who would embrace and smell the *sadaqah* after passing into the hands of the receiver and scent its pure and pleasing fragrance. And God knows what tranquility of the soul and peace of mind would descend upon that sacred being immersed in the love of God, and how these gestures of love would appease the flames of his heart and the fervour of his inward passion

Alas! a thousand alas, that this writer, immersed in the seas of carnal desire, bound to the lowly ground of physical nature and in the bondage of lusts, a captive of the belly and underneath, unaware of the realm of being and drunk with egoism and self-lave! He came into this world and would leave it soon, without partaking anything of the love of the *awliya* and without understanding anything of their captivations, fervours, passions, stations and courtship. His stay in this world was a bestial stopover and his acts therein animalistic and devilish, and should he remain such, his death too would be the death of a beastly and satanic creature!

اللهم إليه المشتكى وعليه المعول

My God, I address my complaints to Thee and on Thee do I rely!

O God, do Yourself come to our help with the light of Your guidance! Awaken us from this heavy slumber and call us to the realm of *ghayb* and light and the abode of delight and ecstasy, to the privacy of love and exclusive company!

وبإسناده عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله: أرض القيامة نار ما خلا ظل المؤمن فإن صدقته تُظله

(Al-Kulayni reports) with his *isnad* from Abu `Abd Allah, may peace be upon him, that he said: "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and his Household, said: `The ground on the Day of Resurrection shall be all fire excepting [in] the shadow of the believer, for verily his *sadaqah* shall enshadow him' ".[52](#)

And it is stated in a tradition that "God, the Exalted, raises *sadaqah*, in the same way as you raise a camel's calf. If you give half a date in *sadaqah*, God, the Exalted, multiplies it and on the Day of Resurrection it shall be given to the servant in a form like or bigger than the mountain of Uhud<sup>53</sup>. There are many traditions like it, and it is mentioned in a large number of them that *sadaqah* saves one from

bad kinds of death<sup>54</sup>, brings livelihood<sup>55</sup>, eases the payment of debt<sup>56</sup>, prolongs one's life, averts seventy bad forms of death<sup>57</sup>, and God the Exalted, recompenses it to an extent of ten to a hundred-thousand-folds<sup>58</sup>.

Also, it causes increase in one's wealth<sup>59</sup>; anyone who gives *sadaqah* in the morning is secure from natural calamities during that day, and if one gives it at the beginning of night, he is safe from natural calamities during that night<sup>60</sup>. Through *sadaqah* the sick are cured<sup>61</sup>, and should one meet the needs of a Muslim household, saving them from hunger, clothing them, and protecting their honour, his work is better than a seventy hajj pilgrimages. This, despite the fact that one hajj is superior to freeing seventy slaves<sup>62</sup>, and this despite that which has been said regarding the setting free of a slave, that anyone who sets free a slave, God shall liberate every member of his body from the fire of hell for a member of the body of the manumitted slave<sup>63</sup>, and the Commander of the Faithful, may peace be upon him, set free a thousand slaves with the earnings of his toil<sup>64</sup>. There are yet other traditions whose citation will prolong this discussion.

## Another Point

We will conclude this topic with a point worth knowing. That point relates to what is mentioned in this sacred verse:

لن تنالوا البر حتى تنفقوا مما تحبون

***You will not attain virtue until you expend of what you love; .. (3: 92)***

It is mentioned in a tradition that at-Imam al-Sadiq, may peace be upon him, used to give sugar in *sadaqah*. Asked why he did that, he replied, "I like sugar more than anything else and I want to give in *sadaqah* that which I like most.<sup>65</sup>"

There is a tradition that Hadrat Amir, may peace be upon him, once bought a dress which pleased him. He gave it away in *sadaqah*, saying, "I heard the Messenger of God, may God bless him and his Household, say, `Whoever prefers another to himself, shall be preferred by God for paradise on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever loves something and then dedicates it to God, on the Day of Resurrection God, the Exalted, shall declare to him: "My servants were wont to recompense one another in an appropriate manner, and I shall give you paradise as your recompense."<sup>66</sup>

It is narrated that when the above noble verse was revealed, one of the Prophet's companions distributed an orchard that was the most cherished of all his possessions amongst his relatives. Thereupon, the Messenger of God, may God bless him and his Household, said to him: "Well done! Well done! This property has brought you much profit.<sup>67</sup>"

Once a guest came to visit Abu Dharr al-Ghaffari He said to the guest, "I have some work to do. There are some camels that belong to me; go and bring the best one of them:" The guest went and brought a lean camel. Abu Dharr said to him, "You have let me down" He replied, "The best of the camels was the camel stallion, but I thought of the day you would need it." Abu Dharr said, "The day when I shall need it is the day that I am laid in my grave. For God, the Exalted, has said, `You will not attain goodness until you expend of what you love'."

Then he added, "Every property is owned jointly by three; one of them is fate, to it which makes no difference whether a thing is valued or worthless: it takes it away and destroys it. The second is one's heir, who awaits your death. And you yourself are the third one. So if you are able to prove yourself more effectual than they, do so. God, the Exalted, says, `You will not attain virtue unless you expend of what you love.' This camel was the most cherished of my possessions and so I wished to send it forth as a provision for myself."[68](#)

## One of the Secrets of Sadaqah

One should know that man grows up and is brought up with a love and attachment for property, wealth and worldly adornment. This attachment becomes deeply seated in the depths of his heart and it is the source of most ethical vices and religious deviations, as mentioned in numerous traditions[69](#), and we have referred to this matter in the exposition of some of the traditions[70](#).

Hence, if one could eradicate or reduce this attachment by the means of *sadaqat* and self-denial, he would abolish this source of corruption and exterminate this vicious germ, thus opening the doors to the learning of the higher teaching and attention to the hidden realm of *malakut* and advancing towards higher morality and meritorious traits. And this is one of the great secrets of obligatory and supererogatory forms of charity, and it is evidently more true of supererogatory charity.

## A Complementary Note

One should know that the giving of supererogatory *sadaqat* in a secret and concealed manner is better than giving it openly and publicly. In the noble *al-Kafi*, it is narrated with *isnad* on the authority of 'Ammar al-Sabati that al-'Imam al-Sadiq, may peace be upon him, said

يا عمار ، الصدقة في السر والله أفضل من الصدقة في العلانية وكذلك والله العباداة في السر أفضل منها في العلانية

O `Ammar! By God, the *sadaqah* when given secretly is better than the *sadaqah* given openly. Similarly, by God, worship in secrecy is better than the one performed publicly[71](#).

It is mentioned in many traditions that *sadaqah* given secretly averts Divine wrath[72](#), and it is stated in a

tradition that "there are seven groups of people whom God, the Exalted, shall protect in His shelter on the day when there is no shelter except His. One of these consists of those who give *sadaqah* secretly so that their left hand does not know what their right hand gives." [73](#)

Perhaps the reason for the superiority of the one is that worship performed in secrecy is farther from ostentation and nearer to sincerity. Another reason might be that in the case of *sadaqah* the observance of secrecy preserves the dignity of the poor.

Also, the giving of *sadaqah* to one's relations is better than giving it to others, for it falls under the category of kindness to blood-relations, which is one of the best forms of worship, as mentioned is a tradition which states that "The best of *sadaqat* is one given to a relative. The reward of kindness to brethren is twenty-fold and to a blood-relative twenty-fourfold [74](#). Rather, it is stated in some traditions that the *sadaqah* given to non-relatives is not accepted when there are relatives in need. [75](#)

## Conclusion

From the words of this noble tradition, "Do your utmost in *sadaqah* until you imagine that you have been immoderate although it would not be immoderation ... ," it appears that that which is desirable in *sadaqah* is its being in plenty, and however great its quantity be it would not be a waste or extravagance. It is reported in tradition that al-'Imam al-Hasan alMujtaba, may peace be upon him, thrice in his lifetime, distributed half of his possessions amongst the poor, so that if he had two pairs of shoes or two pieces of clothing, he shared one of them with the poor [76](#).

It is mentioned in another tradition that al-'Imam al-Rida, may peace be upon him, once wrote to al-'Imam al-Jawad, may peace be upon him, "I have heard that when you take a ride, while go out, your slaves take you from the small door. They act out of niggardliness and they don't want you to give anything to anybody. By the right that I have aver you, your exit and entry should not be except through the main door. When you going out, take gold and silver with you and let there be no one who asks you for help without your giving it to him. If anyone of your paternal uncles requests anything of you, don't give him less than fifty dinars, and you may give more if you like. It is my wish that God raise your station. Therefore give, and don't be afraid that God would reprove you. [77](#)"

These traditions do not contradict with those which indicate that immoderation in giving *sadaqah*, to the extent of putting one's family in financial straits, amounts to extravagance and waste (*israf*), and that God does not answer the prayer of anyone who gives charity without leaving anything for his family's subsistence. [78](#) And it is mentioned in *hadith* that the best *sadaqah* is that which is given from the surplus over the minimum necessary to support one's life [79](#). The reason for not regarding them as contradictory is that fastidiousness and generosity in *sadaqah* does not have to be so extreme as to cause hardship to one's family, for there are people who can give a half as more of their wealth in *sadaqah* while providing for their family's maintenance so that they don't face any hardship.

## On the Merit of the Nightly Prayer

In this noble tradition there is a profound emphasis on the observance of the night and noon prayers. As to the night prayer, we have discussed it earlier in the exposition of certain foregoing traditions<sup>80</sup>. Here we will confine ourselves to giving a translation of some of the relevant sacred traditions for *tabarruk's* sake.

*Al-Wasail* cites from *al-Kafi* a tradition with *sanad* reaching at-'Imam al-Sadiq, may peace be upon him, wherein he said: "The distinction of a believer lies in his observance of the night prayer and his dignity lies in abstaining from doing anything that may compromise other people's honour."<sup>81</sup>

In another tradition a-'Imam al-Sadiq, may peace be upon him, is reported to have said, "The Noble Messenger, may God bless him and his Household, asked Gabrael to exhort him, whereupon he said: "O Muhammad, live as much as you want to, but remember that ultimately you will die; love anything that you want to, but remember that ultimately you will separate from it; and do whatever you wish, but remember that you will encounter it one day. Know that the distinction of a person with faith lies in his observance of the night prayer and his dignity lies in abstaining from compromising other people's honour."<sup>82</sup>

In another tradition with *sanad* reaching al-'Imam al-Sadiq, may peace be upon him, he is reported to have said, "Children and wealth are the adornments of the life of this world and eight *rak'ahs* of prayer towards the end of the night are an adornment of the life of the Hereafter, and, at times, God, the Exalted, grants both of them to some people."<sup>83</sup>

Al-Shaykh al-Mufid, may God's good pleasure be with him, reports that the Messenger of God, may God bless him and his Household, said, "When one of My servants arises from his bed and foregoes the pleasure of sleep to stand for the night prayer in order to please God, God, the Exalted, takes pride in him before the angels and says, 'Bear witness that I have forgiven him: "as There are many traditions of this kind, but we cannot cite them here for the brief scope of this discussion."<sup>84</sup>

## Concerning al-Salat al-Wusta

As to the noontime prayer mentioned in the counsel of the Noblest Messenger, may God bless him and his Household, it refers to the *nawafil* accompanying the noon prayer, as made explicit in some other traditions.<sup>85</sup> The emphasis on these *nawafil* is either for the reason of their own particular importance or for the reason of their association with the 'middle prayer' and for their being the cause of their completion and acceptance.

Or, perhaps, that which is meant is the (obligatory) noon prayer itself, being the middle prayer for its falling in middle of the daily prayers, and God, the Exalted, has ordered particular care in its observance in the sacred verse:

***Be you watchful over the prayers, and the middle prayer; and do you stand obedient to God.***  
**(2:238)**

The prevailing opinion among the fuqaha<sup>1</sup>, may God be pleased with them, which is also more probable, is that *al-salat al-wusta* refers to the noon prayer and has a particular significance among the daily prayers. It is the first prayer that God, the Exalted, prescribed for Adam, the father of the human race, may God's benedictions and blessings be upon our Prophet and his Household and upon him, through Gabriel, may peace be upon him.

Probably, the advice of the Noblest Messenger, may God bless him and his Household, stating, "Be watchful over the noon prayer," refers to the care to be exercised in the performance of the noon prayer and the observance of its time, not to its mere performance. The same can be inferred from the command (in the above-mentioned verse) concerning watchfulness over prayer and the noon prayer in particular. In the traditions of the Infallible Ahl al-Bayt, may peace be upon them, there is very frequent emphasis on the observance of the times of prayers and their performance in their preferred hours. Rather, to delay them beyond their preferred time without any excuse is considered equal to negligence and default, in particular if it becomes a habit. Obviously, if one gives importance to a task, one tries to perform it as soon as and as better as he can. On the contrary, if one considers it trivial and insignificant, he delays it and neglects its performance. And God forbid that one's conduct should lead to detraction in the station of prayer and neglect and negligence in regard to it.

The Messenger of God, may God bless him and his Household, has said concerning one who regards prayer as something trivial that "if he dies with this attitude towards his prayer, he would not be dying on my creed."<sup>86</sup> At times, absence of due respect for prayer and neglect and negligence in regard to it result in abandoning it altogether. It is natural that if something does not have sufficient worth in one's eyes, he comes to consider it unimportant and forgets about it. The reason that we rarely forget matters pertaining to our mundane affairs, especially those which are important, is that the soul constantly remembers them and attends to them on account of considering them important and because of its extreme love of the mundane. Of course, such a thing would never be forgotten. If someone promises, for instance, to give you a certain sum of money which is very significant in your opinion, and should you consider him to be true in his promises, you would not forget the promised day. You would impatiently wait for the appointed hour and arrive early at the appointed place with total care and attention. That is because the soul's love for that thing and the significance it has for the soul has made you enchanted with it and you will never regard it with neglect. The same is true of other mundane matters which preoccupy everyone in accordance with his circumstances. But if something were insignificant and worthless in your eyes, even if it were to pass your mind, that would be barely for a moment. Another moment you will forget all about it.

Now we can understand the reason behind our negligence in religious matters. That is because we do not have convinced belief in the Hidden world and the foundations of our faith and certitude are shaky. We have not believed the promise of God and the prophets with our heart and soul. That is why all the Divine prescriptions and religious laws are paltry and unimportant in our eyes. This underrating gradually brings on negligence. This negligence either overpowers us during our life in this world, expelling us totally even from this formal religiosity of ours, or seizes us in the labours and agonies of death.

These fivefold daily prayers, which are a pillar of religion and the firm foundation of faith, and there is nothing in Islam, after faith itself, that may equal them in importance, aside from their inward illumination and their Hidden *malakuti* forms, which are known to none except God, the Exalted, possess an important aspect: the repeated remembrance of God, with its prescribed rules of etiquette and Divine rites, strengthen man's bonds with God, the Exalted, and the Hidden realms. It creates the habit of submission to God in the heart and strengthens the roots of the sacred tree of Divine unity and monotheism within it so that nothing can ever destroy it. It enables one to succeed in the great Divine ordeal at the outset of the death agony and the terrors that set in on witnessing the first scenes of the Hidden world, so that he attains to a faith that is firmly established and abiding, not temporary and passing, not a faith which is swept off its feet by forgetfulness at the slightest pressure.

Therefore, my dear, beware! Beware! And may God be your helper in this world and the next. Don't be lax in regard to these fivefold daily prayers and don't consider them insignificant. God knows that the persuasions and warnings of the prophets, the *awliyd'* and the Imams of guidance, may peace be upon them, have been motivated by their love for God's creatures; otherwise they don't stand to gain anything from our faith, nor are our works of any benefit to them.

## On the Merits of Reciting the Qur'an

One of the exhortations of the Noblest Messenger, may God bless him and his Household, relates to the recitation of the Qur'an. The merits of reciting and memorizing it, bearing it and adhering to it, teaching it and constantly contemplating upon its meanings and mysteries, are more than can be apprehended by our inadequate understanding, and that which has been transmitted from the Infallible Ahl al-Bayt, may peace be upon them, cannot be contained within these pages. Therefore, we shall confine ourselves to citing some of their traditions in this regard:

الكافي: بإسناده عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام قال: القرآن عهد الله إلى خلقه فقد ينبغي للمرء المسلم أن ينظر في عهده وأن يقرأ منه كل خمسين آية.

In *al-Kafi* (al-Kulayni reports) with his *isnad* from Abu `Abd Allah, may peace be upon him, that he said: "The Qur'an is a covenant of God with His creatures (or, a directive of God addressed to His creatures). Hence it is the duty of a Muslim to contemplate upon His covenant and read fifty verses of it every

day."87

وإسناده عن الزُّهري قال: سمعت علي بن الحسين عليهما السلام يقول: آيات القرآن خزائن ، فكلما فُتحت خزينة ينبغي لك أن تنظر فيها.

In *al-Kafi* (*al-Kulayni* reports) with his *isnad* from al-Zuhri that he said, "I heard 'Ali ibn al-Husayn, may peace be upon them, say: `The verses of the Qur'an are treasure troves, and whenever a treasure trove were opened for you, you would want to see what is in it.'88

The apparent meaning of these two traditions is that it is desirable to contemplate upon Qur'anic verses and to reflect upon their meanings. Meditating and reflecting upon the unambiguous (*muhkam*) signs of God and understanding the teaching, wise sayings, and the monotheistic teachings contained in it, is different from interpreting the Qur'an according to one's subjective views (*tafsir bi al-ray*), which has been forbidden. It is opposed to the practice of the practitioners of *ra'y* and the followers of deviant creeds, which does not take recourse to the Household of Revelation, whose members are the special addresses of the Divine Scripture. This is something which stands proved in its proper place and any details would not be appropriate for this discussion. In this relation, the following statement of God, the Exalted, is quite sufficient.

أفلا يتدبرون القرآن أم على قلوب أقفالها

### ***What, do they not ponder the Qur'an? Or is it that there are locks upon their hearts? (47: 24)***

In traditions there are numerous instances where one is directed to contemplate upon its meanings. Rather, it has been narrated that the Commander of the Faithful, may peace be upon him, said: "There is no benefit in reciting (the Qur'an) without meditating upon it."89

وإسناده عن أبي جعفر عليه السلام ، قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله: من قرأ عشر آيات في ليلة لم يُكتب من الغافلين ، ومن قرأ خمسين آية كُتِب من الذاكرين ، ومن قرأ مائة آية كُتِب من القانتين ، ومن قرأ ثلاثمائة آية كتب من الفائزين ، ومن قرأ خمسمائة آية كُتِب من المُجتهدين ، ومن قرأ ألف آية كُتِب له قنطار من بر: القنطار خمسة عشر ألف (خمسون ألف) مثقال من ذهب ، والمثقال أربعة وعشرون قيراطاً: أصغرها مثل جبل أحد وأكبرها ما بين السماء والأرض.

(Al-Kulayni, in *al-Kafi*, reports) with his *isnad* from Abu Ja'far, may peace be upon him, that he said "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and his Household, said: 'One who reads ten verses (of the Qur'an) on a night is not written as one of the negligent (*ghafilun*), and one who reads fifty verses is written amongst those who remember God (*dadkirun*). One who reads a hundred is written amongst the obedient (*qanitun*), and who reads two hundred verses is written amongst the reverent (*khashi'un*). One

who reads three hundred verses is written amongst the successful (*fa'izun*), and one who reads five hundred is written amongst the diligent (*mujathidin*). And for one who reads a thousand verses, `quintals' of piety are written for him. A `quintal' consists of fifteen thousand (or fifty thousand) *mithqal* of gold, and a *mithqal* of 24 carats, the smallest of which is like the mountain of Uhud and the biggest equal to that which is between the earth and the heavens"[90](#).

Many traditions, which we cannot cite here, speak of the Qur'an assuming a beautiful form (on the Day of Judgement) and interceding on behalf of its people and reciters[91](#). And it is mentioned in a tradition that when a believer reads the Qur'an in his youth, the Qur'an enters his blood and flesh, and God shall place him in the ranks of the righteous and noble envoys while the Wan shall be his shield (from the terrors) on the Day of Resurrection. It will say, to God, "O Lord! Every worker has received the wages of his work except the one who worked for me. So deliver to him the best of Thy rewards." Thereupon God, Almighty and Glorious, will clothe him (i.e. one who worked in the service of the Qur'an) with two garments of paradise and put the crown of nobility on his head. Then the Qur'an would be asked, "Does that satisfy you?" The Qur'an will answer, "O Lord! I would like him to receive something better than that." Thereupon he would be given Security in his right hand and Eternity in his left, and on entering paradise he would be told: "Read and ascend a degree." Then the Qur'an would be asked: "Have We delivered to him what you wanted? Have We satisfied you." The Qur'an would say, "Yes."[92](#)

Al-Imam al-Sadiq, may peace be upon him, said: "One who reads the Qur'an a lot and renews the covenant with it while working hard to memorize it will receive a twofold reward for it [93](#)"<sup>9s</sup> From this tradition we come to know that the objective of recitation of the Noble Qur'an is its impact on the depths of the human heart, so that the inner being assumes the form of the Divine scripture and the influence of the Qur'an passes from the level of an acquired skill to that of being. The statement of the imam that the Qur'an enters the flesh and blood of a believer who reads the Qur'an in his youth, is a reference to the point that the form of the Qur'an gets established in the heart in such a way that one's inner being itself becomes the glorious scripture of God and the Praiseworthy Qur'an to an extent commensurate with one's ability and preparedness. Amongst the bearers of the Qur'an there are some whose inner being is the complete reality of the all-inclusive Divine scripture, and is itself an all inclusive Qur'an and a decisive criterion of truth and falsehood, such as 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, may peace be upon him, and the infallible ones of his pure progeny, who were total embodiments of the sacred Divine verses and the great signs of Allah, being Qur'an thoroughly and completely.

In fact, this is true of all acts of worship (*ibadat*), and one of the main secrets of worship and the repetitive character of its acts is becoming, to become the reality of worship itself, and the changing of the inner being and the heart into the sacred form of worship. And it is stated in a tradition that 'Ali, may peace be upon him, is the prayer and the fast of the faithful."[94](#)

## Concerning the Effect of Worship on Youth

This impact (of worship) on the heart and the associated inner becoming is better achieved during youth, for a youth's heart is gentle and simple and its purity is greater. Its preoccupations are fewer and he is encumbered with fewer conflicts and pressures. Therefore, it is strongly passive and receptive. Every fair and ugly trait enters the youth's heart with greater ease and receptivity and is affected by it more quickly and strongly. It happens very often that the youth accepts truth or falsehood or something good or evil by mere intercourse with people and without requiring any proof or reasoned argument. Hence it is essential for young people to be watchful of the character of those with whom they associate and keep company and to refrain from bad company, even if they should have a firm faith. Rather, the company of sinful and immoral persons and evildoers is harmful for all classes of people, and no one should be too confident of himself and proud of his faith, morals and conduct. Hence sacred traditions forbid everyone from associating with habitual sinners.<sup>95</sup>

## On the Etiquette of Qira'ah

On the whole, the objective of reciting (*qira'ah*) the Quran is that its form be imprinted on the hearts, its commands and prohibitions make an effect thereon, and its summons take roots therein. This objective cannot be achieved without observing the etiquette of reading. What we mean by etiquette here is not that which is the practice of some reciters (*qurra'*), whose total concern is vocalization and phonation of words, with the result that one is not only totally made oblivious of the Qur'anic meanings and the necessity of reflection thereupon, recitation itself becomes corrupted and many words are totally distorted out of shape.

This is one of the ruses of Satan, wherewith he keeps the devout person preoccupied throughout his life, making him totally unmindful of the purpose of the revelation of the Qur'an the meaning of its prescriptions and prohibitions, and its summons to true teaching and higher morality. After a fifty years of reciting, the outcome is that, due to affected and overdone phonation, what is read is distorted out of shape, assuming a strange form. Rather, that which is meant here is the etiquette prescribed by the sacred Shari'ah, which mainly and essentially, as mentioned earlier, requires thought and contemplation on the verses and taking lesson there from In the noble *al-Kafi* it is reported through a chain of transmission from al-'Imam al-Sadiq, may peace be upon him, that he said:

إن هذا القرآن فيه منار الهدى ومصابيح الدجى ، فليجُل جال بصره ويفتح للضياء نظره ، فإن التفكير حياة قلب البصير ، كما يمشي المُستنير في الظلمات بالنور

Verily, this Qur'an is a minaret of guidance and a lamp in the darkness of the night. Let the exploring eye explore it and open to it its vision for illumination, For, indeed, contemplation is the life of the seeing heart. In the same way as one walks in the darkness with the help of light, one should resort to the

من المجالس بإسناده عن أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام في كلام طويل في وصف المُتَّقِل: وإذا مرّوا بأية فيها تخويف ، أصغوا إليها مسامع قلوبهم وأبصارهم فاقشعرت منها جلودهم ، ووجلّت قلوبهم ، فظنوا أن سهيل جهنم وزفيرها وشهيقها في أصور أذانهم وإذا مرّوا بأية فيها تشويق ركنوا إليها طمعا وتطلعت أنفسهم إليها شوقاً ، وطنوا أنها .نصب أعينهم

In al-Majalis (al-Mufid reports) with his *isnad* from Amir al-Mu'minin, may peace be upon him, that he said in the course of a long sermon wherein he described the qualities of the Godfearing: " ... And when they (i.e. the God fearing) come across a verse inspiring fear, they attend to it with their hearts and minds and it makes their flesh creep and their hearts quiver, as if they were hearing the roars of the hell and its sighing and wailing. And when they come across a verse inspiring longing (for paradise), they contemplate it with craving and their souls advance towards it eagerly as if it were in front of their eyes"[97](#)

It is evident that if one were to reflect and meditate on the meanings of the Qur'an, they would make an impact upon the heart and he would gradually attain to the station of the God-fearing. And should Divine favour assist him, he would advance beyond that station and every one of his members, organs, and faculties would become one of the Divine signs. And perhaps the charm and attraction of the Divine pronouncements would put him beside himself and he would attain to the reality of "Read, and ascend" in this world itself, to the extent that he would hear the Divine Word from its Speaker without any intermediary and attain to that which transcends the imagination of the likes of you and me.

## On Sincerity in Reading

A necessary part of the etiquette associated with reading of the Qur'an is sincerity, which is essential from the viewpoint of impact upon the heart, and without which no work has any worth, or, rather, is something void and waste, and a cause of Divine wrath. It is the asset through which the otherworldly stations are attained and is the capital for the trade of the Hereafter. In this connection, too, there is a strong emphasis in the traditions of the Infallible Ahl al-Bayt, may peace be upon them. Of them is the following narrated by al-Kulayni, may God be pleased with him:

إسناده عن أبي جعفر عليه السلام قال: قُرء القرآن ثلاثة: رجل قرأ القرآن فاتخذة بضاعة واستدر به المُلوك واستطال به على الناس. ورجل قرأ القرآن فحفظ حروفه وضيع حدوده وأقامه إقامة القدح فر كثر الله هؤلاء من حملة القرآن. ورجل قرأ القرآن فوضع دواء القرآن على داء قلبه فأسهر به ليله وأظلماً به نهاره وقام بهبه في مساجده وتجاوى به عن قراشه ، فبأولئك يدفع الله العزيز الجبار البلاء ، وبأولئك يُدبّل من الأعداء ، وبأولئك يُنزل الله الغيث من السماء ، فوالله لهؤلاء في قُرء القرآن أعزّ من الكبريت الأحمر

He reports with his *isnad* from Abu Ja`far, may peace be upon him, that he said: "There are three types of readers of the Qur'an: one who recites the Qur'an making it a merchandize with which to attract kings and treat people in an overbearing manner, one who reads the Qur'an, memorizing its letters but neglecting its prescriptions and rejecting it behind his back. May God not allow such bearers of the Qur'an to increase in number! Then there is the man who recites the Qur'an using it as a remedy for the malady of his heart. In the company of the Qur'an he keeps awake at night (for worship), fasts through the day, visits mosques for prayer, and foregoes the pleasure of sleep. Thus, for their sake, God, the Almighty and the Omnipotent, averts (natural) calamities, deters the enemies, and sends rain from the sky. But, by God, these are more scarce amongst the reciters of the Qur'an than the philosopher's stone."[98](#)

عن عقال الأعمال بإسناده عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام ، عن أبيه عن آبائه عليه السلام ، قال: من قرأ القرآن يأكل به الناس جاء يوم القيامة ووجهه عظم ل لحم فيه.

In the *'Iqab al-'amal* (al-Shaykh al-Saduq reports) with his *isnad* from Abu 'Abd Allah, may peace be upon him, from his father, from his ancestors, may peace be upon them, that he (i.e. the Prophet, may God bless him and his Household) said: "One who recites the Qur'an to exploit people *will* arrive on the Day of Resurrection with a skeletal face on which there is no flesh."[99](#)

وإسناده عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وأله في حديث قال: من تعلم القرآن فلم يعمل به وأثر عليه حُب الدنيا وزينتها استوجب سخط الله وكان في الدرجة مع اليهود والنصارى الذين ينبذون كتاب الله وراء ظهورهم.

ومن قرأ القرآن يُريد به سمعة والتماس الدنيا لقي الله يوم القيامة ووجهه عظم ليس عليه لحم وزجّ القرآن في قلاه حتى يُدخله النار ويهوى فيها مع من هوى.

ومن قرأ القرآن ولم يعمل به حشره الله يوم القيامة أعمى فيقول: يا رب لم حشرتني أعمى وقد كنت بصيرا ، قال كذلك أنتك آياتنا فنسيتنا وكذلك اليوم تُنسى فيؤمن به إلى النار.

ومن قرأ القرآن ابتغاء وجه الله وقفها في الدين كان له من الثواب مثل جميع ما أعطي الملائكة والأنبياء والمرسلون.

ومن تعلم القرآن يُريد به رياء وسُمعة يُماري به السفهاء ويُباهي به العلماء ويطلب به الدنيا بدد الله عظامه يوم القيامة ولم يكن في النار أشد عذابا منه ، وليس نوع من أنواع العذاب إلا سيُعذب به من شدة غضب الله عليه وسخطه.

ومن تعلم القرآن وتواضع في العلم وعلم عباد الله وهو يريد ما عند الله لم يكن في الجنة أعظم ثوابا منه ولا أعظم منزلة منه ولم يكن في الجنة منزل ولا درجة رفيعة ولا نفيسة إلا وكان له فيها أوفر النصيب وأشرف المنازل.

(Al-Shaykh al-Saduq reports) with his *isnad* that the Messenger of God, may God bless him and his Household, said: "Whoever learns the Qur'an without acting according to it, preferring the love of the world and its adornments to it, deserves the wrath of God and stands in the category of the Jews and the Christians who cast the scripture of God behind their backs.

"And one who recites the Qur'an for the sake of fame and mundane benefits will meet God on the Day of Resurrection with a skeletal face without flesh and the Qur'an shall strike him on the back of his neck and cast him into hell together with those who are cast in it.

"And one who reads the Qur'an without acting upon it shall be raised blind on the Day of Resurrection. He will say, '**O my Lord, why hast Thou raised me blind, and I was wont to see?**' **God shall say, 'Even so it is. Our signs came unto thee, and thou didst forget them; and so today thou art forgotten.'**"<sup>100</sup> Then he will be directed towards hell. "And one who reads the Qur'an for the sake of God and to acquire understanding of religion, his reward shall be like the reward of all the angels, prophets and messengers.

"And one who learns the Qur'an for the sake of ostentation, fame, and in order to contend with fools and to humble the learned, seeking mundane benefits therewith, God shall shatter his bones on the Day of Resurrection and no one will face a more terrible punishment in hell than him, and there would be none of the various forms of torture that he will not receive due to severity of God's wrath upon him and His displeasure with him.

"And one who learns the Qur'an and is humble in learning, teaching it to the creatures of God and seeking that which is with God, no one will receive a greater award than him in paradise, nor anyone will have a higher station than him. There is no rank nor degree of highness and elegance which he will not attain to its fullest and sublimest extent."<sup>101</sup>

## Concerning the Meaning of Tartil

Of the etiquette of reciting the Qur'an, which causes it to be effective upon the soul and which is worthy of being observed by one who recites, *is tartil* in reading. *Tartil*, as mentioned in traditions, implies the observance of a moderate pace which is neither fast and hurried, nor slow and sluggish so that words are torn apart from one another.

عن محمد بن يعقوب بإسناده عن عبد الله بن سليمان ، قال: سألت أبا عبد الله عليه السلام عن قول الله تعالى: ورتّل القرآن ترتيلا ، قال: قال أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام: تبيّنه تبيانا (تبيينا ، خ) ولا تهذّه هذ الشعر (ولا تنثره) نثر الرمل ، ولكن أفرغوا قلوبكم القاسية ، ولا يكن هم أحدكم آخر السورة.

Muhammad ibn Ya`qab (al-Kulayni) reports with his *isnad* from 'Abd Allah ibn Sulayman that he said: "I asked Abu `Abd Allah, may peace be upon him, concerning the statement of God, the Exalted, **'And recite the Quran with tartil'**[102](#). He replied, `The Commander of the Faithful, may peace be upon him, has said, "(It means:) Recite it in a clear and distinct manner: neither with impetus like poetry is recited, nor in a slow-moving manner so that the words are scattered like sand. Read in such a manner as to arouse and startle your callous hearts, and your aim should not be to get to the end of the *surah*."[103](#)

That is, one's aim should not be to finish the reading of the Qur'an in certain days or to quickly finish a *surah* that one is reading at the moment. Hence one who wants to read the Word of God and remedy his callous heart and cure its diseases with the medicine of the all-inclusive Divine scripture, and find the way to the attainment of otherworldly stations and the high degrees of perfection with the guiding light of this shining lamp from the Hidden world and this celestial light of lights, he should prepare the necessary outward and inward means and observe the essential formal and spiritual etiquette—not like us who, if we read the Qur'an at times, are not only totally neglectful of its meanings and ends, its prescriptions and prohibitions, and its admonitions and exhortations—as if its verses describing the qualities of hell and its painful chastisements or the qualities of paradise and its bounties are of no concern to us—but are heedless of its outward etiquette, so much so that—may God be our refuge—our attention and presence of mind is greater when reading a story book than when studying the sublime Divine scripture.

It is recommended in a sacred tradition that one should recite the Qur'an in a good voice with a touch of sorrow[104](#). Al-'Imam 'Ali ibn al-Husayn, may peace be upon them, used to recite the Qur'an in such an attractive manner that those who passed by, like the water carriers, would stop and listen, and some were so much moved that they would swoon on listening to it.[105](#)

As for us, we use the Qur'an or the *adhan* as a means to show off our good voices. Our aim is not to recite the Qur'an and to fulfil this supererogatory duty. In any case, the artifices of the Devil and the carnal self are numerous and they often bring about confusion between the good and the evil and the ugly and the fair. One should seek refuge in God from their deceptions.

## **On Raising The Hands In Prayer And Turning Them**

Apparently, the statement of the noble tradition, "Make it your practice to raise your hands during prayer and to turn them," refers to lifting them at the time of *takbirat* [i.e. pronouncing "Allahu akbar"] By 'turning' them (*taqlib*) is probably meant the turning of the palms in the direction of the *kiblah*. Raising the hands at the time of saying the *takbirat* is one of the *mustahabbat*.

Or, perhaps, that which is meant in the *hadith* is the raising of hands at the time of *qunut*, and that which is meant by turning them is turning the palms upwards towards the sky, in accordance with the *fatwa* of the *fuqaha'* (*R*) who have considered it *mustahabb*, although they disagree concerning its basis in the sources (*dalil*), even though no other basis is needed after the definite practice of the devout who know no other manner of saying the *qunut*, and the mere raising of hands in whatever manner is not sufficient.

In any case, that which is more evident (*azhar*) is that that which is meant in this sacred tradition is the first probability mentioned.

One should know that the predominant (*mashhur*) opinion amongst the *fuqaha'* (R) is that it is *mustahabb* to raise one's hands while saying the *takbirat* and some of them have held it to be obligatory on the basis of the apparent import (*zahir*) of certain prescriptions and traditions that have been narrated in regard to the interpretation of the sacred verse,

﴿فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَأَنْحَرْ﴾

that the word *nahr* in the command of God, the Exalted, means the raising of the hands at the time of *takbirat*.<sup>106</sup> But there are many indications in the traditions, which imply its *istihbab*, such as the reasons that are mentioned therein, especially in the tradition narrated by al-Fadl ibn Shadhan from Imam al-Rida (A).

In addition to this, the sahih tradition of 'Ali ibn Ja'far<sup>107</sup> is explicit (nass) on its not being obligatory, and the apparent import (*zahir*) of these traditions, without taking into account the indications to the contrary, is that it is obligatory. The way to reconcile them is by considering them to imply *istihbab* by overruling the *zahir* in the favor of the *nass*.

And that riwayat, although it exempts others than the imam from raising the hands—and one may claim that apparently it applies to both the imam and the *ma'mumun* and that it is silent about the prayer offered singly by an individual (*furada*)—it does not preclude the possibility that the raising of hands be obligatory for all, and the imam's raising them exempts the *ma'mumun* from it, in the same way as the *qira'ah* of the imam exempts others from doing their own *qira'ah*. On the basis of this probability, which is the more evident of the probable meanings of the tradition, the objection of some later authorities, which requires taking of the general in a particular sense, is also avoided.

However, the absence of any opinion to this effect and the predominant opinion among early and latter day legists, as well as the inner and external indications leave no room for a debate, and even this much of detail was outside the scope of these pages. In any case, the raising of hands is supererogatory and it is not appropriate for one to omit it as far as possible, especially in a case such as this wherein there are some amongst the *ulama* who hold it to be obligatory. Accordingly, it is also required by caution in religious matters that one should not omit it.

## [The Secret Behind The Raising Of The Hands](#)

In any case, the raising of the hands during prayer at the time of every *takbirah* gives elegance to it, and this is the manner of the prayer of Gabriel (A) and the angels of the seven heavens, as reported in a narration by Asbagh ibn Nubatah from Amir al-Mu'minin,<sup>108</sup> (A). According to a certain citation from the

'*Ilal* and the '*Uyun akhbar al-Rida (A)*, Imam al-Rida (A) has said, "The reason for raising the hands at *takbirah* is that it carries a kind of absorption (*inqita'*), sincere dedication (*takhlis*), and humility (*tadarru'*).

Hence God, the Exalted, likes His servant to be totally attentive towards Him at the time of remembering Him and to be humble and sincere. And it is for the reason that one's attention be focused by the raising of the hands, thereby becoming alert in one's intent, with a receptive heart," [109](#)

This statement accords with that which some gnostics say, that the 'other' [than God] is rejected behind one's back by means of the raising of the hands and the thorns in the path of access to Him are removed, cutting one off from everything else and making one pure and sincere, without a trace of attention towards another, which is *shirk* in the creed of love, whereat one proceeds to the real spiritual ascent (*mi'raj*) and commences the voyage towards Allah. This voyage and ascent are not possible without the rejection of the 'other' and 'otherness' and without freedom from the ego and egoism. Hence, with the sevenfold opening *takbirat*, all the seven curtains (*hujub*) of *mulk* and *malakut* are removed.

Thus the prayer of the *awliya'* is such that they remove a curtain with every *takbirah*, abandoning the realms associated with these veils, leaving behind the inmates of these habitats, whereafter another curtain is removed for them and their hearts receive yet another conditioned epiphany (*tajalli taqyidi*). But that does not become an obstacle in their way and it does not engage their attention or preoccupy their hearts. They remove it with yet another *takbirah*, as if from the inner core of their hearts there arises the song:

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ أَنْ يَتَجَلَّى تَجَلِيًّا تَقْلِيدِيًّا.

Allah is greater than that He should manifest Himself with a conditioned manifestation (*tajjali*),

as declared by the mentor and shaykh of the *awliya'* and the *mukhlasun*, the dedicated friend of the All-Beneficent [the *Khalil al-Rahman*, i.e. the Prophet Abraham (A)] during that journey of gnosis, epiphany and conditioned *tajalliyat*. Thus the wayfarer towards Allah, the traveler of the path of love, and the dedicated traveler of the road of communion removes one veil after another until he reaches the last *takbirah* with which he removes the seventh veil and rejects every 'other' and 'otherness,' declaring,

﴿وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ﴾

***I have turned my face to Him who originated the heavens and the earth. (6:79)***

with Abraham, the *Khalil*. Thereafter, the door is opened for him and he experiences the majesties of Divine Glory. Thereat he seeks refuge with God and enters in the Name of God, the Exalted. To this refers the noble tradition of Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn al-Husayn (R) who reports with his *isnad* from Abu al-Hasan (A):

بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ أَبِي الْحَسَنِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَنَّهُ رَوَى لِذَلِكَ عِلَّةً أُخْرَى وَهِيَ: أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ لَمَّا أُسْرِيَ بِهِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ قَطَعَ سَبْعَ حُجُبٍ فَكَبَّرَ عِنْدَ كُلِّ حِجَابٍ تَكْبِيرَةً فَأَوْصَلَهُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ بِذَلِكَ إِلَى مُنْتَهَى الْكَرَامَةِ.

(Al-Shaykh al-Saduq reports) with his isnad from Abu al-Hasan (A) that he has narrated another reason for it and that is that when the Prophet (S) was carried on his celestial journey, he pierced seven veils (hijab), pronouncing the takbirah at every hi jab, whereby Allah, Almighty and Glorious, enabled him to attain to the ultimate nobility (muntaha al-karamah). [110](#)

In another *hadith* nearly the same thing has been narrated from Imam Musa ibn Ja'far [111](#) (A) except that it is mentioned there that the Messenger of God (S) pronounced the *takbirat* after the removal of every *hijab*. This is more in agreement from the viewpoint of gnostic teaching and the mystic way, for a *hijab* and curtain is removed at every raising of the hands, and a *takbirah* is pronounced on the manifestation of each of the lights of nobility. And since that is a conditioned light from among the *hijabs* of light, it is removed with the raising of the two hands and cast away until the *tajalli* becomes absolute and the ultimate nobility (*muntaha al-karamah*), which is the ultimate goal of the *awliya'*, is attained. Hence, the earlier tradition can be interpreted in the light of the second one.

Whatever the case may be, we are unable to understand these things, to say nothing of epiphany (*shuhud*) and communion (*wasul*). But what is worse and more unfortunate for us is that we also deny all spiritual stations and degrees and consider the celestial ascensions (*mi'raj*) of the *awliya'* and the prayers of the pure ones like those of our own, regarding their perfection as similar, though of a superior degree, to our own performances.

The limit of our imagination, beyond which we are unable to apprehend anything, is to imagine that their *salat* is good in its *qira'ah* and other points of etiquette and free from *shirk*, ostentation, and love of fame, or that their worship was not for the sake of the fear of hell or on account of the craving for paradise. These, of course, are one of their ordinary stations, and their *salat*, this spiritual ascension, has other stations that lie beyond our imagination.

## [A Warning Concerning One Of The Satanic Ruses](#)

A warning is essential at this point and that is that the worst obstacle in the path of perfection and attainment of spiritual stations, which is also one of the major masterpieces of Satan, the highwayman, is the negation of the Hidden spiritual stations and degrees. This negation and denial is the root cause of all kinds of misguidance and ignorance and the cause of spiritual stagnation and torpor. It kills the spirit of eagerness, which is the heavenly stead (*buraq*) for ascending to spiritual excellences. It extinguishes the fires of love, which represents the angelic wings for undertaking the heavenward spiritual journey towards perfection, stopping man from making his spiritual quest.

On the contrary, if one has sincere faith in spiritual stations and the lofty ascents of gnosis, perchance

this might help in rekindling the innate fire of love buried under the dust and ashes of carnal desires and illuminate the torch of yearning in the depths of the heart, thus gradually prompting one to seek and to undertake the labors of the quest so that one becomes worthy of Divine guidance and the assistance of that Sacred Essence. And all praise belongs to God.

## The Merit Of Brushing The Teeth

It should be known that brushing the teeth, which has been enjoined by the Noblest Messenger (S) in this noble tradition, is absolutely one of the recommended etiquettes of the *Shari'ah* and has been stressed for certain particular occasions, such as before *wudu'* and prayer, at the time of reciting the Qur'an, at daybreak, and on waking up from sleep. It has been highly recommended and greatly emphasized in the sacred traditions, and many a fruitful quality and profitable result is ascribed to it. Here, in these pages, we shall cite some of them for the sake of *tabarruk*

الكافي بإسناده عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام قال: في السواك اثنتا عشرة خصلة: هو من السنة ومطهرة للفم ومجلاة للبصر ويرضي الرب ويذهب البلغم ويزيد في الحفظ ويبيض الأسنان ويضعف الحسنة ويذهب بالحفر ويشد اللثة ويشهي الطعام ويفرح به الملائكة.

In al-Kafi (al-Kulayni reports) with his isnad from Abu 'Abd Allah (A) that he said, "There are twelve qualities associated with the brushing of teeth: it is part of the Prophet's sunnah (it is mentioned in many traditions that brushing the teeth is one of the sunnah of the prophets. [112](#) it purifies the mouth, strengthens eyesight, is pleasing to the Lord, takes away the phlegm, sharpens the memory, whitens the teeth, doubles the merit of good acts, stops tooth decay, strengthen the gums, increases appetite and is delightful to the angels." [113](#)

Nearly the same thing is mentioned in another tradition. The tooth decay mentioned in this noble tradition consists of cavities and pustules formed at the root of the teeth, which produce a white and bad-smelling pus and burst at the time of chewing the food. This pus gets mixed with the food and causes many ailments such as indigestion, etc. Present-day physicians call it pyorrhea and consider it a serious condition whose remedy may require even pulling out of the teeth.

Hence, aside from the inward Hidden aspects, the most significant of which is the good pleasure of God, it is good for one to make it a regular practice for the sake of physical health and cleanliness and to perform this perpetual *sunnah* of the prophets. It is mentioned in a tradition that the Noblest Messenger (S) said, "So much did Gabriel recommend the brushing of teeth to me that I became concerned for my teeth..." [114](#) And he said, "If it were not for the fear of hardship I would have made the brushing of the teeth obligatory on my ummah before every *wudu'* and every *salat*." [115](#)

The Noblest Messenger (S) used to keep the *miswak* [the stick used for brushing the teeth] and the water for *wudu'* at the head of his bed at night and he would cover up the vessel containing water. On

waking from his sweet sleep he would brush his teeth, perform *wudu'*, and then offer four rak'ahs of prayer and go to sleep again. Again he would wake up, brush his teeth, perform *wudu'* and offer prayer. After mentioning this practice of the Prophet in a *hadith*, Imam al-Sadiq (A) declares, "You have a good example to emulate in the Messenger of God (S)." [116](#)

It is stated in *hadith* that two rak'ahs of prayer performed after brushing the teeth is superior to seventy rak'ahs performed without it. It is stated that if one forgets to brush his teeth before *wudu'*, it is *mustahabb* to do so after it and to rinse the mouth thrice with water. [117](#) The number of traditions on this topic is quite large and anyone who wants to study them should refer to the works of our companions. [118](#)

## Moral Virtues And Vices

Although we have discussed a number of times—in detail and in several relevant places in these pages, to an extent that appeared appropriate and within easy reach—the soul's moral dispositions and the method of acquiring ethical virtues and avoiding vices, here we will give a concise and comprehensive explanation.

It should be known that 'disposition' (*khulq*) is a state of the soul that inclines it to action without the need of thought or reflection. For instance, someone who has the disposition of generosity is induced by it to give and expend generously without any preliminary thoughts and without reflecting on the preponderants on each side. He acts as if it were one of his natural acts, like seeing and hearing.

In the same way, a soul that is chaste, for which the attribute of chastity has become a disposition, preserves itself with such ease as if that were part of its natural behavior. Until the soul does not attain to this station through self-discipline, reflection, and repeated action, it cannot attain a disposition and the spiritual perfection associated with it. Otherwise, the danger always remains, if the trait be one of moral perfections, that it be eroded and overwhelmed by vicious dispositions.

However, if it were to become like one of the natural activities and should one's faculties and organs be brought under control and were the rule and sovereignty of God to manifest itself within the soul, its decline would be difficult, and such a thing happens only rarely.

The ethicists have stated that this state and disposition of the soul is at times innate in human beings. Whether good or evil, felicitous or wretched, it is based on the original nature and related to temperament. As is well known, some persons are disposed towards goodness from infancy and some are inclined towards evil. Some are enraged at the smallest annoyance or are alarmed by a trivial matter, or panic at the slightest cause. Others are quite the opposite.

At other times these psychic dispositions are acquired through habit, social intercourse, thought and reflection. Sometimes they are first acquired by means of thought and reflection until they become

habitual. In this regard there is a difference of opinion amongst them, to discuss which and to engage with whose details would take us beyond the scope of these pages and divert us from our main aim. We shall mention here only that which is appropriate and beneficial in this regard.

It should be known that when it is said that a disposition is natural or innate it does not mean that it is essential (*dhati*) and unchangeable. Rather, all habits (*malikat*) and psychic dispositions are capable of change. As long as the soul remains in this world of change and transition, it is subject to time and renewal; and as long as it is associated with matter (*hayula*) and potentiality (*quwwah*), the human being can change all its dispositions and transform them into their opposites. This claim is affirmed, besides metaphysical proof (*burhan*), by experience, as well as by the summons of the prophets and the true religions to noble dispositions and their restraining people from the opposite qualities.

It should be known that the experts of ethics have divided all virtues of the soul under four heads, which are: wisdom (*hikmah*), chastity (*'iffah*), courage (*shaja'ah*), and justice (*'adalah*). Wisdom is regarded as the virtue of the rational discerning soul (*nafs al-natiqah-ye mumayyizah*); courage as a virtue of the irascible soul (*nafs al-ghadabiyyah*); chastity as a virtue of the appetitive soul (*nafs al-shahwiyyah*), and justice as a state of moderation of these threefold virtues.

All other virtues are considered derived from these four. However, the definition and details of each one of them lie outside the scope of these pages and are not that useful for the likes of us. That which must be known is that in accordance with this tradition narrated from the Noblest Messenger (S):

بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ.

I have been sent to perfect noble dispositions, [119](#)

the purpose and result of the summons of the Seal of the Prophets (S) is the perfection of morality. In the noble traditions, both that are brief and those which are elaborate, moral excellences have been given more importance than anything else after doctrinal teachings (*ma'arif*). Hereafter, we will cite some of them, God willing.

Their importance is greater than what we are capable of explaining adequately, but that which we know for certain is that the asset of the everlasting life of the hereafter and the capital asset of the life of that abode is the acquisition of noble dispositions and the possession of moral excellences. The paradise which is given to man for the sake of moral excellence, is the paradise of Attributes, incomparable to the physical paradise of Act, wherein the greatest and the fairest of physical bounties and delights are present. Similarly, the darkness and the terrors that seize man due to evil deeds are more terrible than any torture.

As long as man is in this world, he can liberate himself from this darkness and attain those lights. Yes, he can do that, but not with this half-heartedness, slackness, torpor, feebleness, and negligence of

ours, who, as we see ourselves, retain every ugly disposition and undesirable trait with which we have grown up since our childhood days or have acquired in improper company and friendship. Rather, we keep on adding to this burden every day, as if we didn't believe that there is another world and another phase of lasting existence:

وای اگر از پس امروز بود فردایی

Woe, if there be a tomorrow after this! [120](#)

As if the summons of the prophets and the *awliya'* (A) have nothing to do with us. Who knows, where these dispositions and conduct of us will take us and in what form we shall be resurrected? We would wake up at a time when we could do nothing and regret and shame would be our lot, and we shall have none to reproach except ourselves.

The prophets (A) have shown the path of felicity and the learned and the wise have expounded their statements for us and described the method of curing inner diseases, translating these teachings into every language and disseminating them in various forms. But these things did not enter our ears, and we closed our eyes, ears, and our hearts to them. Therefore, all blame rests on our own shoulders, as stated by the Messenger of God (S) in the present tradition in whose exposition we are engaged. So replete with exhortation for acquisition of moral virtues and abstention from vices are the traditions and reports that its extent is incalculable, yet we neglect even to refer to their books.

And you, my dear! If you are used to traditions and narrations, refer to the sacred works of tradition, especially the noble *al-Kafi*. If you are used to scientific discourse and the jargon of scholars, refer to such ethical texts as the *Taharat al-a'raq*, [121](#) and the books of marhum al-Fayd al-Kashani, al-Majlisi and the two Naraqis. [122](#) And if you do not consider yourself to be in need of acquiring [the knowledge of ethical principles] or do not consider the acquisition of noble dispositions and abstention from vicious dispositions as essential, then find a remedy for your ignorance which is the mother of all diseases.

We conclude this topic with the mention of some noble traditions related to this theme for *tabarruk's* sake:

الْفَقِيه: بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَصَّ رَسُولَهُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ بِمَكَارِمِ الْأَخْلَاقِ فَأَمْتَحِنُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ، فَإِنْ كَانَتْ فِيكُمْ فَأَحْمِدُوا اللَّهَ وَارْغَبُوا إِلَيْهِ فِي الزِّيَادَةِ مِنْهَا؛ فَذَكَرَهَا عَشْرَةَ: الْيَقِينُ وَالْقَنَاعَةُ وَالصَّبْرُ وَالشُّكْرُ وَالْجِلْمُ وَحُسْنُ الْخَلْقِ وَالسَّخَاءُ وَالْغَيْرَةُ وَالشَّجَاعَةُ وَالْمُرُوءَةُ.

In Man La yahduruh al-faqih, (al-Shaykh al-Saduq reports) with his isnad from Abu 'Abd Allah (A) that he said, "Verily, God favored His Messenger (S) with noble dispositions. So test yourselves and if you find them in yourselves, thank God and turn to Him that He may increase you therein." Then he

mentioned ten of them: conviction (yaqin), contentment (qina'ah), patience (sabr), gratitude (shukr), mildness (hilm), geniality (husn al-khulq), generosity (sakha'), sense of honor (ghayrah), courage (shajaah), magnanimity (muru'ah). [123](#)

This tradition has been transmitted through several chains (*turuq*), except that *rida* (satisfaction), instead of *hilm*, [124](#) occurs in the citation from the Ma'ani al-'akhbar. In al-Wafi, this tradition has been cited with a slightly different wording from *al-Kafi*. [125](#)

عَنِ الْمَجَالِسِ بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنِ الصَّادِقِ جَعْفَرِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: عَلَيْكُمْ بِمَكَارِمِ الْأَخْلَاقِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يُحِبُّهُمَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَمَذَامَ الْأَفْعَالِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْغُضُهَا إِلَى أَنْ قَالَ: وَعَلَيْكُمْ بِحُسْنِ الْخُلُقِ فَإِنَّهُ يَبْلُغُ بِصَاحِبِهِ دَرَجَةَ الصَّائِمِ الْقَائِمِ... الْحَدِيثِ.

In al-Majalis (al-Shaykh al-Saduq reports) with his isnad from Ja'far ibn Muhammad (A) that he said, "Acquire moral virtues, for, verily, God loves them, and beware of blameworthy conduct for God hates it" "Accustom yourselves to fairness of disposition, for it raises one who possesses it to the rank of those who fast (perpetually) and stand in prayer (through the night, constantly)" [126](#)

الكَافِي بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنِ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: إِنَّ أَكْمَلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَيْمَانًا أَحْسَنُهُمْ أَخْلَاقًا.

In al-Kafi (al-Kulayni reports) with his isnad from Abu Ja'far (A) that he said, "Among believers the most perfect in faith is the one who is the most fairly disposed amongst them." [127](#)

وَبِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنِ عَلِيِّ بْنِ الْحُسَيْنِ عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ: مَا يُوضَعُ فِي مِيزَانِ أَمْرٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ حُسْنِ الْخُلُقِ.

(Al-Kulayni reports) with his isnad from 'Ali ibn al-Husayn (A) that he said: The Messenger of Allah (S) said, "There will be nothing superior to fairness of disposition in the balance of a person's works on the Day of Resurrection." [128](#)

Also, the Prophet (S) has said:

(Of all qualities) that which will take most of my ummah to paradise is God-fearing (taqwa) and a fair disposition. [129](#)

And Imam al-Sadiq (A) said:

Verily, virtuousness and fairness of disposition make homes flourish and extend the spans of lives. [130](#)

He also said:

Verily, God, the Exalted and the Blessed, rewards a servant for his fair disposition in a measure equal to what He grants to someone who fights day and night in the way of God. [131](#)

There are many traditions on this subject. In the same way as good nature and fairness of disposition lead to the perfection of faith, add to the weight of one's deeds in the Balance, and take one into paradise, so also ill-naturedness, on the contrary, corrupts one's faith and subjects one to Divine chastisement, as pointed out in the sacred traditions:

الكَافِي بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: إِنَّ سُوءَ الْخُلُقِ لَيُفْسِدُ الْإِيمَانَ كَمَا يُفْسِدُ الْخَلُّ الْعَسَلَ.

In al-Kafi (al-Kulayni reports) with his isnad from Abu 'Abd Allah (A) that he said, "Verily, ill-naturedness destroys one's faith in the same way as vinegar destroys honey (on being mixed with it)." [132](#)

It is mentioned in another tradition that ill-naturedness destroys one's works in the way vinegar destroys honey. [133](#) It is narrated from the Messenger of God (S) that God does not accept the repentance of an ill-natured person. When asked about its reason, he replied, "That is because as soon as he repents for a sin, he falls into a sin worse than the earlier one." [134](#)

It is stated in a tradition that one who becomes ill-natured subjects himself thereby to Divine chastisement. [135](#) It is evident that ill-nature continually torments one who possesses it and is the cause of hardship, darkness, and adversity in the next phases of life, as mentioned in some of the traditions cited. And all praise is God's, at every beginning and end.

- [1.](#) Al-Kulayni, Rawdat al-Kafi, p. 79, hadith no. 33.
- [2.](#) Al-Qur'an, Surat al-Ma'idah: 105.
- [3.](#) Nahj al-balaghah, ed. Fayd al-Islam, Kutub, no. 47.
- [4.](#) Al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, "kitab al iman wa al-kufr", "bab al-kidhb" hadith no. 3.
- [5.](#) Al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, "kitab al iman wa al-kufr", "bab al-kidhb" hadith no. 4.
- [6.](#) Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, vol. viii, p. 574.
- [7.](#) Usul al-Kafi, "kitab al-'iman wa al-kufr", "bab al-kidhb", hadith no. 2.
- [8.](#) Usul al-Kafi, "kitab al-'iman wa al-kufr", "bab al-kidhb", hadith no. 11.
- [9.](#) None given.
- [10.](#) See the exposition of the twenty-fifth hadith on waswas, note no. 6.
- [11.](#) Usul al-Kafi "kitab al-'iman wa al-kufr", "bab al-wara", hadith no. 11.
- [12.](#) Usul al-Kafi "kitab al-'iman wa al-kufr", "bab al-wara", hadith no. 3.
- [13.](#) Wasa'il al-Shi'ah., vol. xi, p. 196
- [14.](#) Wasa'il al-Shi'ah., vol. xi, p. 194.
- [15.](#) Usul al-Kafi, "kitab al-'iman wa al-kufr", "bab al-sidq wa ada' l-'amanah", hadith no. 12.
- [16.](#) Usul al-Kafi, "kitab al-'iman wa al-kufr", "bab al-sidq wa ada' l-'amanah", hadith no. 5.
- [17.](#) Usul al-Kafi, "kitab al-'iman wa al-kufr", "bab silat al-rahm", hadith no. 11.
- [18.](#) Al-Kulayni, Furu' al-Kafi vol. v, p. 133.
- [19.](#) Al-Kulayni, Furu' al-Kafi vol. v, p. 133.
- [20.](#) Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, vol. xiii, p. 225, cited from al-Saduq, al-Majalis, majlis" no. 43.
- [21.](#) Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, vol. xiii, p. 225, cited from al-Saduq, al-Majalis, majlis" no. 43., cited from al-Saduq, Man la

yuhduru al-faqih vol. ii, p. 198.

- [22.](#) Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, vol. xiii, p. 225, cited from al-Saduq, al-Majalis, majlis" no. 43. p. 226.
- [23.](#) Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, vol. xiii, p. 225, cited from al-Saduq, al-Majalis, majlis" no. 43.
- [24.](#) Ithaf al-sadat al-muttaqin, vol. vii, p. 234.
- [25.](#) Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, vol. iv, p. 688.
- [26.](#) Usul al-Kafi, "kitab al-'iman wa al-kufr", "bab al-khawf wa al-raja'," hadith no. 2.
- [27.](#) For the traditions cited in this section, see Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, vol. xi, pp. 175-179.
- [28.](#) Furu al-Kafi, vat Vi, p. 443, "kitab al-salat," "bab salat al-nawafil," hadith 4.
- [29.](#) Wasail al-Shi'ah, vol iii, pp. 31-32, hadith 1; Ibid, "abwab a'dad al-fara'id wa nawafiluha," bab 13, hadith 4.
- [30.](#) That by 'atamah is meant the nafilah associated with the 'isha' prayer is indicated by the tradition narrated by Hammed ibn 'Uthman from al-Imam al Sadiq ('a) in Wasa'il al Shi'ah, vol iii, p. 35, "abwab a'dad al fara'id wa nawafiluha," hadith 15.
- [31.](#) Ibid. p. 31, hadith 2.
- [32.](#) Zurarah's riwayat from al-Imam al-Baqir ('a); see Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, vol. iii, p. 70, "kitab al-salat," "abwab adad al-fara'id wa nawafiluha, bab 29, hadith nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 7.
- [33.](#) Abu Basir's riwayat from al-Imam al-Sadiq ('a), see Ibid., vol iii, p. 71, hadith 8.
- [34.](#) Ibid, vol iii, p. 70, hadith 3.
- [35.](#) Tahdhib al-ahkam, vol ii, p.11, "kitab al-salat," bab 1, hadith 23.
- [36.](#) Hannan's riwayat from al-Imam al-Sadiq (a); see Wasail al-Shi'ah, vol iii, p. 33, hadith 6.
- [37.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vo1 iii, p. 50, "kitab al-salat," bab 12, hadith 4 and 5.
- [38.](#) Such as the riwayat of Mohammed ibn Muslim from al 'Imam al Baqir (a) and that of Hisham ibn Salim from al 'Imam al Sidiq (or see Wasa'il al Shi'ah, vol iii, bab 17, p. 52, hadith 2 4.
- [39.](#) Sifat al-Shi'ah, hadith 1; Wasail al-Shi'ah, vol iii, bab 13, hadith 26.
- [40.](#) Ibid. p. 42, hadith 29.
- [41.](#) Ibid, vo1 vii, bab 7 12, pp. 3113 321.
- [42.](#) Ibid, vol vii, bab 7, pp. 304-306, hadith 2, 5, 6, 8.
- [43.](#) Ibid. p. 303, hadith 1.
- [44.](#) Ibid" p. 309, hadith 15.
- [45.](#) Ibid, p. 305, hadith 4.
- [46.](#) Ibid, hadith 28, footnote x. 16.
- [47.](#) Al-Shaykh Yusuf ibn Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-Bahrani (1107-1186/1695-1772), the author of al-Hadaiq al nadirah fi ahkam alitrat al-tahirah.
- [48.](#) Al-Wafi, "kitab al-siyam", bab 4, p. 9; al-Hada'iq al-nadirah f i ahkam al-'itrat al-dhirah, vo1 vi, "kitab al-sawm", "fi al-sawm al-mandub," p. 188.
- [49.](#) Furu al-Kafi, voi iv, "kitab al-zakat," "bab fadl al-sadaqah," p. 3, hadith 5.
- [50.](#) Ibid, "bab sadaqat al-layl," hadith 3.
- [51.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. vii, "kitab al-zakat," bab 4, pp.164-166, hadith 1-6.
- [52.](#) Furu al-Kafi, vol. iv, "kitab al-zakat," bab fadl al-sadaqah," p. 3, hadith 6.
- [53.](#) Bihar al-'anwar, vol. xcii, "kitab al-zakat," bab 14, pp.122-123, hadith 30.
- [54.](#) Furu' al Kafi, vol iv, p. 2, "kitab al zakat," "bab fadl al sadaqah," hadith 1; p. 5, "bab anna al sadaqah tadfa'u al bala'," hadith 3.
- [55.](#) See Furu al-Kafi, vol iv, pp. 9-10, "kitab al-zakat," "bab fi anna al-sadaqah tuzidu fi al-mal," With 3, 4.
- [56.](#) Ibid, hadith 1.
- [57.](#) Ibid, hadith 2.
- [58.](#) Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, vol. vi, p. 256, "kitab al-zakat," "abwab al-sadaqah," bab 1, hadith 5.
- [59.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. iv, p.9, "kitab al-zakat," "bab fi anna al-sadaqah tuzidu fi al-mal," hadith 2.
- [60.](#) Ibid., vol. iv, p. 70, "bab anna al-sadaqah tudfa'u al-bala'," hadith 9.
- [61.](#) Ibid, vol iv, p. 3, "kitab al-zakat," "bab fadl al-sadaqah," hadith 5.

62. Ibid. vo1 iv, p. 2, hadith 3.
63. Wasail al-Shi'ah, vol. xvi, p. 2, "kitab al-'itq," "bab 1, hadith 1.
64. Ibid, p. 3, hadith 3.
65. Tahdhib al-'ahkam, vol. iv, p. 231, "kitab al-siyam bab al-ziyarat," hadith 104.
66. Majma al-bayan, under verse 3: 92.
67. Ibid.
68. Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, pp. 315-320, "kitab al-iman wa al-kufr," "bab hubb al-dunya wa al-hirs 'alayha, hadith 1 to 17, and elsewhere.
69. Ibid, p.122.
70. See the exposition of the sixth hadith on "the Love of the World."
71. Furu al-Kafi, vol. iv, p. 8, "kitab al-zakat," "bab fadl sadaqat al-sirr", hadith 2.
72. Ibid., p.7, hadith 1-3; Wasail al-Shiah, vol. vi, pp. 275-278, "kitab al-zakat," bab 12, hadith 1, 2, 4-7.
73. Wasail al-Shi'ah, vol. vi, p. 277, "kitab al-zakat~" bab 12, hadith 11.
74. Furu al-Kafi, vol. iv, p.10, "kitab al-zakat," "bab al-sadaqah' ala al-qarabah," hadith 2-3.
75. Wasail al-Shi'ah, vol. vi, p. 276, "kitab al-zakat," bab 20, hadith 4, 7.
76. Ibid, p. 336, bab 52, hadith 1.
77. Bihar al-'anwar, vol. 50, p.102, "ta'rikh al-'lmam al-Jawad," bab 5, hadith 16.
78. Wasa il al-Shi'ah, vol iv, pp. 322-323, "kitab al-zakat," bab 42, hadith 1, 3.
79. Ibid, p. 323, hadith 4.
80. See the exposition of the twelfth hadith, the section on "the Virtues of the Midnight Prayer."
81. Ibid. vol. v, p. 268, "kitab al-salat," bab 39, hadith 2.
82. Al-Khisal, vol 1, p. 7, bab 1, hadith 19.
83. Wasail al-Shi'ah, vol. v, p. 276, "kitab al-salat," bab 39, hadith 34.
84. Ibid, p. 277, hadith 36.
85. Ibid., vol iii, pp. 42-44, bab 14, hadith 1-3, 6.
86. Furu' al-Kafi, vol. ill, p. 268, "kitab al-salat," "bab man hafaza' ala salatihi aw dayya'aha".
87. Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, p. 609, "kitab fadl al-Qur'an," "bab fi qiri'atih," hadith 1.
88. Ibid., p. 609, hadith 2.
89. Al-Mahajjat al-bayda', vol. ii, p. 237, "kitab adab tiliwat al-Qur'an, bab 3.
90. Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, p. 612, hadith 5.
91. Ibid, vol. ii, pp. 596-602, hadith 1,11,12,14.
92. Ibid, p.603, "bab hamil al-Qur'an," hadith 4; Thawab al-'a'mal wa'iqab al-'a'mal, p. 126, "thawab man qara'a al-Qur'an wa huwa shabbun mu'min"
93. Bihar al-'anwar, vol 90, p.187, "kitab al-Qur'an," bab 20, hadith 7.
94. Ibid., vol. 24, p. 303, "kitab al-Imamah," "bab annahum al-salat wa al-zakat," hadith 14.
95. Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, pp. 639-642, "kitab al-Shi'ah," "bab man tukrahu mujilasatuhu wa murafaqatuh," hadith 1-3.
96. Ibid., vol. ii, p. 600, "kitab fadl al-Qur'an," hadith 5.
97. Al-Shaykh al-Saduq, al-'Amali, p. 458, majlis 84, hadith 2; Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, vol. iv, p. 829, "kitab al-salat," bab 3, hadith 6.
98. Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, p. 627, "kitab fadl al-Qur'an," "bab al-nawadir," hadith 1.
99. Wasail al-Shi'ah, vol. iv, p. 837, "kitab al-salat," "abwab qira'at al-Qur'an," "bab 8, hadith 7; Thawab al-'a'mal wa 'iqab al-'a'mal, p. 329, "iqab al-musta'kil bi al-Qur'an," hadith 1.
100. Al-Qur'an, 20:125.
101. Thawab al-'a'mal wa 'iqab al-'a'mal, pp. 332, 346, 337; Wasail al-Shi'ah, vol. iv, p. 837, "kitab al-salat," "abwab qiri'at al-Qur'an," bab 8, hadith 8.
102. Al-Qur'an, 73:4.
103. Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, p. 614, "kitab fadl al-Qur'an," "bab tartil al-Qur'an bi al-sawt al-hasan," hadith 1.
104. Ibid., vol. ii, p. 614; Majma' al-bayan, vol x, p. 378.

- [105.](#) Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, p. 615, hadith 4.
- [106.](#) Tafsir Nur al-Thaqalayn, vol. v, pp. 683–684, the exegesis of Surat al-Kawthar, hadith 17–19.
- [107.](#) Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, vol. iv, p. 726, "kitab al-salat" bab 9.
- [108.](#) Majma' al-bayan, the exegesis of Surat al-Kawthar.
- [109.](#) Wasail al-Shi'ah, vol. iv, p. 727, "kitab al-salat," "abwab takbirat al-ihram," bab 9, hadith 11.
- [110.](#) Wasail al-Shi'ah, vol. iv, p. 727, "kitab al-salat," "abwab takbirat al-ihram," bab 7, hadith 5.
- [111.](#) Wasail al-Shi'ah, vol. iv, p. 727, "kitab al-salat," "abwab takbirat al-ihram," bab 7, pp. 722–723, hadith 7.
- [112.](#) Al-Khisal, vol. ii, p. 449, bab 10, hadith 51.
- [113.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. vi, pp. 495–496, "kitab al-zayy wa al-tajammul," "bab al-siwak," hadith 6.
- [114.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. vi, p. 496, hadith 8.
- [115.](#) Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, vol. i, p. 355, "kitab al-taharah," "abwab al-siwak," bab 5, hadith 3.
- [116.](#) Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, vol. i, p. 355, "kitab al-taharah," "abwab al-siwak," p. 356, bab 6, hadith 1.
- [117.](#) Bihar al-'anwar, vol. 73, pp. 132–133, "kitab al-adab wa al-sunan," "bab al-siwak wa al-hathth 'alayh," hadith 32–34.
- [118.](#) Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, vol. i, pp. 353, 355–356, "kitab al-taharah," bab 3, 5–6.
- [119.](#) Majma' al-bayan, exegesis of verse 4 of Surat al-Qalam.
- [120.](#) Adapted from the following couplet of Hafiz:

گر مسلماني از اين است که حافظ دارد آه اگر از بي امروز بود فردايي

- [121.](#) By Miskawayh, ethical philosopher and historian of the 5th/11th century.
- [122.](#) Among these works are Muhajjat al-bayda', al-Kalimat al-maknunah, and al-Ilal al-jawid by al-Fayd al-Kashani, Haqq al-yaqin by al-Allamah al-Majlisi, Jami' al-sa'adat by Mulla Mahdi al-Naraq and Mi'raj al-sa'adah by Mulla Ahmad al-Naraq.
- [123.](#) Al-Khisal, vol. ii, p. 431, bab 10, hadith 12.
- [124.](#) Ma'ani al-akhbar, p. 191, "bab fi makarim al-akhlaq," hadith 3.
- [125.](#) Al-Wafi, vol. iv, p. 264, "kitab al-iman wa al-kufr," "bab jawami' al-makarim," hadith 2.
- [126.](#) Al-Shaykh al-Saduq, al-Amali, majlis 57; Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, vol. xi, p. 156, "kitab al-jihad," "abwab jihad al-nafs," bab 6, hadith 8.
- [127.](#) Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, p. 99, "kitab al-iman wa al-kufr," "bab husn al-khulq," hadith 1.
- [128.](#) Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, p. 99, "kitab al-iman wa al-kufr," "bab husn al-khulq," hadith 2.
- [129.](#) Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, p. 99, "kitab al-iman wa al-kufr," "bab husn al-khulq," hadith 6.
- [130.](#) Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, p. 99, "kitab al-iman wa al-kufr," "bab husn al-khulq," hadith 8.
- [131.](#) Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, p. 99, "kitab al-iman wa al-kufr," "bab husn al-khulq," hadith 12.
- [132.](#) Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, p. 99, "kitab al-iman wa al-kufr," "bab husn al-khulq," hadith 3.
- [133.](#) Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, p. 99, "kitab al-iman wa al-kufr," "bab husn al-khulq," hadith 1.
- [134.](#) Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, p. 99, "kitab al-iman wa al-kufr," "bab husn al-khulq," hadith 2.
- [135.](#) Usul al-Kafi, vol. ii, p. 99, "kitab al-iman wa al-kufr," "bab husn al-khulq," hadith 4.

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