



Supplications of Imam Sajjād عليه السلام at the Beginning of the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān

(The 44th supplication of al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah)

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In the Name of Allah, the All Merciful, the All Compassionate

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Dedication

This humble effort is dedicated to the Imam ﷺ, who revived and protected Islam with his words and supplications,

And to all those martyrs, who revived and protected it with their blood,

And lastly to that awaited Imam ﷺ who will revive and perfect it with his presence.

May these insignificant words be a means for our salvation in the court Allah ﷻ on a day when nothing else will be of benefit except the loving glance of His closest friends.

Gratitude

أَشْكُرُكُمْ بِاللَّهِ أَشْكُرُكُمْ لِلنَّاسِ¹

All Praise and thanks are due to Allah ﷻ for providing me with this blessed opportunity, in this blessed city, to make an effort to try and serve the cause of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Pure Progeny ﷺ. It was thorough his *fadl* and *karam* that his humble piece was started and with those same blessings it came to a conclusion.

Thanks are also preserved for my family members, especially my better half, for their patience during a time when my best friend was my laptop.

I would also like to thank to the administrative staff at *Majmā 'Ālī Fiqh* for their patience and good nature.

Indeed this study and product would have not reached its fruit without the guidance and active input of my respected teachers and mentors. I would like to sincerely thank my 'supervising scholar' Hujjatul Islām 'Asadullah

¹ Muhammad bin Ya'qūb, Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, Qum, Dār al-Hadīth, 1429 AH, 1st ed., vol. 3, pg 255.

(The most thankful person in the sight of Allah ﷻ is he who is the most thankful towards people, Imam Sajjād (ع)).

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Abstract

The purpose of this brief study was to provide a practical program for the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān, using the enlightened words of the 4th Pure Imam, Imam Alī ibn Ḥusayn, Zayn al-‘Ābidīn as mentioned in al-Şaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyah. This study was mainly focused on the 44th supplication of this pristine book i.e. the supplication recited at the beginning of the blessed month.

The first section deals with the generalities concerned with this study, the key concepts such as du’ā and outlines what the al-Şaḥīfah is and what it contains. In addition, introductory discussions concerning the life of Imam Sajjād ؑ, the status of al-Şaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyah and the importance of supplication were had.

The second section deals with the greatness of this blessed month in the words of Imam Sajjād ؑ by discussing the names that he used for this and the specific qualities and events that are present in this month.

The third and fourth sections concern itself with the personal and social duties, respectively, of a person during the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān. Personal

duties such as controlling ones bodily functions and using them to gain the pleasure of Allah ﷻ were discussed in the third section, whereas the implementation of this new found spirituality within a society and community environment were discussed in the fourth section.

The main sources used to complete this brief study were the Holy Qur'ān and, more specifically, the narrations and traditions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Pure Progeny ﷺ recorded in both primary and secondary sources; where appropriate historical anecdotes were also used to further emphasis the point.

Keywords:

English: Blessed Month of Ramaḍān, Imam Sajjād, al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah, Ethics and Behavior, Social Duties

Arabic: شهر رمضان، الامام السجاد، الصحيفة السجادية، الاخلاق و السلوك الاسلامي، الوظائف الاجتماعية

Persian: ماه رمضان، امام سجاد، صحيفه سجديه، اخلاق و رفتار، وظيفه های اجتماعي

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Preface

Throughout his life, a human being is presented by Allah ﷻ, out of His infinite mercy and compassion, with opportunities to achieve that innate perfection that he so dearly strives for. These opportunities or what are sometimes called ‘*Nafahāt*’ or ‘gentle breezes’ have been mentioned in traditions and taking full advantage of them before they vanish has also been emphasized and stressed upon.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said:

أَنَّ لِرَبِّكُمْ فِي أَيَّامِ دَهْرِكُمْ نَفَحَاتٍ أَلَا فَتَعَرَّضُوا لَهَا

*‘Surely, during the days of your lives, you will be granted opportunities from Allah ﷻ; make sure that you take full advantage of them.’*¹

Similarly, in another tradition narrated from Imam Ali ؑ it is reported that he said:

الْفُرْصَةُ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ فَاذْتَهَرُوا فُرْصَةَ الْخَيْرِ

¹ Muhammad Bāqir, Majlisī, Bihār al-Anwār, Beirut, Dār Ihyā’ at-Turath al-‘Arabīyy, 1403 AH, 2nd ed., vol. 80, pg 352.

*'Opportunities, like clouds, are passing; so ensure that you make use of good opportunities.'*¹

The Blessed Month of Ramaḍān is one of these opportunities, rather it is the best of these opportunities for its days are the best of days, its nights are the best of nights and its hours are the best of hours; a month in which a person becomes the guest of Allah ﷻ and the doors of His mercy are wide open.² However, in order to take full advantage of this opportunity that Allah ﷻ, out of His infinite grace and kindness, grants mankind once every year, a spiritual roadmap and guide is required. In this regard, one of those guides is the supplications that have reached us from the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the Imams ؑ, and non-more so than the 44th supplication that is found in the mystical masterpiece of the fourth imam, Imam Sajjād, Ali ibn Husayn, Zain al-Abidin ؑ, known as al-Şahīfah al-Sajjādiyyah.

¹ Nahj al-Balagha, Wisdom 21, Şubḥ al-Şāliḥ, Qum, Hijrat, 1414 AH, 1st ed.

² Muhammad ibn Ali, ibn Bābawayh (Şadūq), 'Uyūn al-Akhbār al-Riḍā, Tehran, Jahān, 1378 AH, 1st ed., vol.1, pg 295. (This is extracted from the famous sermon of the Holy Prophet ﷺ known as the Sermon of Sh'abānīyyah, the English translation of this sermon can be viewed at the following URL: <https://www.al-islam.org/uyun-akhbar-ar-ridha-volume-1-shaykh-saduq/chapter-28-various-traditions-imam-ali-ibn-musa-al-ridha> ((tradition number 48.))).

Primary Question

The Blessed Month of Ramaḍān is an open banquet, so a positive start to this blessed month might hopefully enable a person to take the maximum benefit from it. It is also a month in which the desires and supplications of the intimate friends of Allah ﷺ are guaranteed acceptance.

Imam Sajjād عليه السلام, is not only one of the *Awliya al-Allah* (intimate friends of Allah), but is also a divine proof of the Majesty of Allah ﷻ; hence it is not only fair, but rather necessary for us to learn the art of supplication and asking at the feet of this divine proof. The Imam عليه السلام not only teaches us the methodology of supplication, but also, as he in reality is the essential guide of the human being, alludes to and shows us what to supplicate for. By taking these points into consideration, the primary question of this research is:

“How is the greatness of the Blessed Month of Ramadhan, and the effects of a person's bodily functions and behaviors on fasting understood from the 44th supplication of *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah*?”

Secondary Questions

In trying to exposit and expand on the supplications of Imam Sajjād عليه السلام within the 44th supplication of al-Şahīfah al-Sajjādiyyah, the following questions will form the framework of this discussion:

1. What are the generalities pertaining to this research?
2. How does Imam Sajjād عليه السلام define and describe the greatness of the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān in this supplication?
3. What are the supplications that Imam Sajjād عليه السلام made in relation to personal and individual responsibilities in this supplication?
4. What are the supplications that Imam Sajjād عليه السلام made in relation to social and societal responsibilities in this supplication?

Section 1:

Generalities, Terminologies

and Introductory

Discussions

I. Generalities

1. Necessity and importance of the topic (discourse)

Man has primarily been created to try and achieve that lofty status of becoming a ‘servant of Allah’,

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

‘I did not create the jinn and the humans except that they may worship Me.’¹

The Blessed Month of Ramaḍān is one, if not the most important opportunity for man to achieve this esteemed station. However, in order for man to achieve this, he is in need of a specific program. In this regard, Imam Sajjād عليه السلام in this supplication i.e. forty-four, presents to us a complete program on how to utilize the blessed month. It is, therefore, the intention of the author to briefly exposit this supplication so that believers and even non-believers in the English-speaking world can take advantage of this profound supplication. In this way, this research was viewed to be necessary.

¹ Dhariyat\56

2. Goals

This research aims primarily to achieve the following goals:

1- As *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah* is a book that has largely, assumingly unintentionally, been left on the bookshelves of academia. Therefore, it was deemed necessary for this ambiguity to be removed and for the brightness of this book to shine into the hearts of all truth seekers and travellers towards Allah ﷻ.

2- As the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān is an opportunity for people to gain that proximity to Allah ﷻ, but in order to make better use of this opportunity a specific program is required. Therefore, the second goal of this research is to try and produce a basic program for believers in order for them to try and make better use of this blessed opportunity.

3- Transferring the enlightened concepts of the supplication to the World.

3. History of Discourse

3.1. Commentaries

Agha Bozorg Tehranī counts over sixty commentaries that have been written on al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Kāmilah al-Sajjādiyah in both Arabic and Persian.¹

The most famous and expansive of these commentaries was written in Arabic by Sayyid Ali Khān Madanī Shīrāzī titled *Riyāḍ al-Sālikīn*. Other Arabic commentaries that are worth mentioning are *Lawāmi' al-Anwār al-'Arshīyah* written by Sayyid Muhammad Bāqir Husaynī Shīrāzī; *Nūr al-Anwār* by Sayyid Ni'amah al-Allah al-Jazāirī and *Fi Ḍalāl al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyah* by the contemporary scholar Muhammad Jawād Mughnīyah.

In Persian the following commentaries are worthy of note, *Shuhūd va Shanākht* by Hasan Mamdūḥī; *Diyār 'Āshiqān* by Husayn Ansāriyān and *Sharh va Tarjumah al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyah* by Sayyid Aḥmad Fehrī.

It must be noted that the above commentaries are complete commentaries on al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyah and therefore the 44th supplication has been discussed

¹ Muhammad Muḥsin, Tehranī (Agha Bozorg), *Al-Zarī'ah ilā Taṣānīf al-Shī'a*, Qum, Ismā'īlīyān, vol. 13, pgs 345-359 (Viewed via Noorsoft, title: Seerah Masoumeen).

within them. However, two books whose main subject matter is the 44th supplication have also been compiled; they are *Ṣahbā ye Ḥuḍūr* by Muhammad Taqī Miṣbāḥ Yazdī and *Sīmā ye Ramaḍān* by Karīmī Jahrumī. Both these books are in Persian.

3.2. Translations

In English, two translations of al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah exist. One was done by Sayyid Ahmad Muhani¹ and the other by William C. Chittick².

4. Research Distinctions

al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah is an ocean whose depths can never be understood, never mind reached. The distinctive quality of this humble research is in its attempt to introduce a mere droplet of this ocean to an English-speaking audience, who are largely unaware of this mystical masterpiece gifted to us by

¹ This translation was printed in 1984 by the Islamic Propagation Organization, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran. A digital copy of this translation is available on the software *Danishname al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah* produced by Hozeh Isfahān (www.hozeh.org –In Persian-).

² This translation is easily accessible and has been printed many times firstly by the Muhammadi Trust of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, U.K., and then by Ansariyan Publications, Qum, Islamic Republic of Iran. The full translation is available at the following URL: <https://www.al-islam.org/sahifa-al-kamilah-sajjadiyya-imam-zain-ul-abideen>

the Doyen of the Worshippers, the fourth divinely appointed Imam, Ali ibn Husayn al-Sajjād ؑ.

5. Research Methodology

The primary method of research for this endeavor is a ‘library and literature-based’ study on the subject including access to physical books and online resources, meanwhile the style of the composition is primarily descriptive in nature and at times will embark on analysis of the said theory being described.

For the purpose of this research ethical and Qur’ānic exegetical sources will be referred to, in addition to the commentaries that have been written on al-Şahīfah al-Sajjādiyyah.

6. Research Parameters

The subject of this research (The supplications of Imam Sajjād ؑ in the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān, based upon the 44th supplication of al-Şahīfah al-Sajjādiyyah) in terms of its parameters are as follows:

Time: This subject, even though the teachings that it contains can be applied in a more general sense, is specific to the 9th Lunar Month, the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān.

Place: This discussion is not restricted in terms of where these teachings can be applied, for seeking closeness to Allah ﷻ is the duty of all mankind, no matter where they are in the World.

Subject: The subject matter of this discussion is primarily ethical and developmental in nature and based around the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān and the traditions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Pure Progeny ﷺ.

II. Terminologies (explanation of key words and concepts)

In this section, the lexicological and applied meanings of key concepts that are related with the present research will be discussed and elaborated on.

1. *Du'ā* (دعا)

Literally, the word *du'ā* means to call out to someone and to attract that persons attention towards something; another meaning is to invite someone;¹ this meaning is used by Allah ﷻ in the following verse, ‘Allah invites to the abode of peace.’² It is in this way that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was known as *dā'ī* i.e. inviter to the path of *tawhīd*.^{3 4}

However, *du'ā* in this context is the asking and calling of a servant from his master, as it has been said that the supplicator must have a lower rank or station to the supplicated.⁵

‘When my servants ask you about Me, [tell them that] I am indeed nearest. I answer the supplicants call when he calls me. So let them respond to Me, and let them have faith in Me, so that they may fare rightly.’¹

¹ Muhammad ibn Mukarram, Ibn Manẓūr, Lisān al-'Arab, Beirut, Dar al-Şādir, 1375 AH, 3rd ed., vol.14, pg 258.

² Yunus/25

³ Ahzab/46

⁴ Ahmad ibn Muhammad, Fayyūmī, al-Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr, Qum, Dar al-Hijrat, 2nd ed., vol. 2, pg 194.

⁵ Hasan ibn 'Abdullah, al-'Askarī, M'ujam al-Furuq al-Lughawiyah, Qum, Nashar Islami, 1431 AH, 5th ed., pg 231.

*'Your Lord has said, Call Me, and I will hear you!'*²

In English, *du'ā* is usually translated as supplication or prayer.³ These words have a general connotation of requesting or asking humbly, but are more specifically intended for that asking or requesting to be done from God.^{4 5}

2. *Nidā* (نداء)

The lexicon meaning of *nidā* is to shout or scream and it can even indicate any loud, meaningless sound.⁶

Contextually, it has the same meaning as *du'ā* except that it must be accompanied by a vocative particle.^{7 8}

¹ Baqarah\186 (وَ إِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَ لِيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ)

² Ghafir\60

³ Rohi, Baalbaki, al-Mawrid, Beirut, Dar el Ilm, 1995, 7th ed., pg 543.

⁴ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/supplication>

⁵ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/prayer>

⁶ Husayn ibn Muhammad, Rāghib Isfahānī, Mufradāt Alfāḍ al-Qur'ān, Beirut, Dar al-Qalam, 1412 AH, 1st ed., pg 796.

⁷ حرف ندا

⁸ Mufradāt Alfāḍ al-Qur'ān, pg 315.

Another difference between *du'ā* and *nidā* is that it is not necessary for *du'ā* to be vocalized, in contrast to *nidā* which must be done in a loud and clear voice.¹

So *nidā* is asking from Allah ﷻ in a loud voice. A beautiful example of this meaning is apparent in the famous supplication of Imam Ali ؑ known as *Munājāt al-Sh'abāniyah*², where at the very beginning, after asking Allah ﷻ to listen to his *du'ā*, the Imam says,

وَأَسْمَعُ نِدَائِي إِذَا نَادَيْتُكَ

*'[O my Lord!] Listen to my call when I call out to You!'*³

3. *Najwā* (نجوا)

The Arabic lexicographers have stated that *najwā* is a type of secret and hidden conversation that takes place between two people only.⁴ *'Do they not*

¹ M'ujam al-Furuq al-Lughawiyah, pg 535.

² English available at URL: <http://english.almaaref.org/essaydetails.php?eid=2531&cid=391>

³ Bihār al-Anwār, vol.91, pg 97.

⁴ Khalil ibn Ahmad, al-Farāhīdī, al-'Ayn, Qum, Dar al-Hijrat, 2nd ed., vol. 6, pg 187.

*know that Allah knows their secret [thoughts] and [hears] their secret talks, and that Allah is knower of all that is Unseen?'*¹

In this way, a *munājāt* is a secret and intimate conversation between Allah ﷻ and his servant, and it can occur both ways i.e. sometimes it is the servant who is the speaker whilst Allah ﷻ is the listener and at other times it is vice versa. Again in *Munājāt al-Sh'abāniyah* we see an example of the first type. Imam ﷺ, after asking Allah ﷻ to listen to his *du'ā* and *nidā*, says,

وَاقْبِلْ عَلَيَّ إِذَا تَجَيْتُكَ

*'and turn towards me when I seek intimate conversation with you.'*²

What is interesting about this phrase, is that Imam ﷺ does not ask Allah ﷻ to listen to his *najwā*, as he did with his *du'ā* and *nidā*, but rather asks Him to turn towards him and give him His undivided attention, as an intimate

¹ Tawbah\78

² Bihār al-Anwār, vol.91, pg 97.

conversation can only take place when the listener is completely absorbed by the words of the speaker.¹

An example of the second type can be seen in the following verse, ‘*and We drew him near for confidential discourse.*’² This verse concerns the secret and intimate conversation that Allah ﷻ had with Mūsā ﷺ at Mount Sinai. Allah ﷻ also has intimate and confidential discourses with selected servants who have earned the right and station to be able to ‘hear’ these words of Allah ﷻ.³

In conclusion, *du'ā* can sometimes be in the form of a *nidā* or *najwā* and at other times it can be neither, but a *najwā* is can never be a *nidā* and vice versa.

4. Ramaḍān

There is a difference of opinion amongst lexicographers on the root and origin of the word *ramaḍān*. Some believe that it comes from the root *ramad* (رمض), which means the extreme heat of the ground caused by the rays of the sun,

¹ Muhammad Taqī, Miṣbāḥ Yazdī, *Shakūh ye Najwā*, Qum, Imam Khomeini Institute for Education and Research, 1388 SH, 4th ed., pg 19-20

² Maryam\52 (وَ قَرَّبْنَا نَحْيًا)

³ Muhammad Muḥsin, *Fayḍ Kāshānī, al-Wāfī*, Isfahaan, Amīr al-M’uminīn Library, 1406 AH, 1st ed., vol. 26, pg 147

whilst others say it comes from the root *ramīd* (رميض) which means that rain which falls at the end of Summer and at the beginning of Autumn.¹

In contextual terms, ramaḍān is the ninth month of the Lunar Calendar, which consists of 29 or 30 days and it is the month in which fasting for Muslims is compulsory, *'The month of Ramaḍān is one in which the Qur'ān was sent down as guidance to mankind, with manifest proofs of guidance and the Criterion. So let those who witness it fast [in] it.'*²

Inshā Allah, the reason for the naming of this month as Ramaḍān will be discussed at a later, more appropriate place.

5. al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Kāmilah al-Sajjādiyyah

5.1. Compilation

al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Kāmilah al-Sajjādiyyah is a book whose authenticity in unquestionable and whose narrative chain, which reaches Imam Sajjād عليه السلام, is *mutawātir* i.e. widely transmitted and whose chain is successive and

¹ Muhyī al-Dīn, al-Nawawī, Tahzīb al-Asmā wa al-Lughāt, Beirut, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, vol.3, pg 126

² Baqarah\185 (شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَ بَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَ الْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ)

unbroken.¹ It has also been said that al-Şahīfah al-Kāmilah al-Sajjādiyyah was the sixth book to be written in Islam.²

It is reported that Imam Sajjād عليه السلام dictated these supplications to his two sons, Imam Bāqir عليه السلام and Zayd al-Shahīd عليه السلام, as such the two oldest manuscripts of these supplications belong to them. It has also been reported that the manuscript of Imam Bāqir عليه السلام is part of the bequests of the Ahl al-Bayt عليهم السلام and is currently in the possession of the final light of this pure family, Imam Mahdī عجل الله فرجه; whereas the manuscript that is attributed to Zayd has reportedly been seen in a restricted area of the Vatican Library. The oldest manuscript that is currently in our possession is one that was found in the Mausoleum of Imam Ali ibn Musā al-Riḍā عليه السلام and dates back to 416 AH.³

¹ al-Zarī'ah ilā Taşānīf al-Shī'a, vol. 15, pg 18.

² Muhammad ibn Ali, Ibn Shahr Āshūb, Ma'ālim al-Ulamā, Najaf, Al-Ĥaydariyah, 1380 AH, 1st ed., pg 2.

³ Aĥmad, Fehrī, Sharĥ va Tarjumah al-Şahīfah al-Sajjādiyyah, Qum, Osweh, 1388 SH, 2nd ed., vol. 1, pgs 19-21.

5.2. Chain of Narration (*Isnād*)

Like most other primary religious texts, *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyah* has warranted the attention of many a great scholar. The first discussion that scholars have concerned themselves with regarding *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyah*, revolves around its chain of narration. In this regard, scholars differ on who the actual narrator of the chain was, as the manuscripts fail to clearly mention the narrator's name¹. Due to this, numerous probable chains have been mentioned by the scholars². Of these probable chains, two are very prominent. One mentions that the narrator was Ali ibn al-Sakkūn, who was one of the trustworthy and esteemed Shia scholars; this opinion was advanced by Shaykh Bahāī.³ The second prominent chain states that the narrator was 'Amīd al-Ruasā Hibah al-Allah ibn Ḥāmid, who himself was a great Shia personality and scholar; this

¹ The tradition that mentions the chain of narrators begins with the verb, "حدثنا" (*he told us*); the difference arises as it is not clear to who the "us" refers to. The complete English translation of this chain is mentioned and annotated on in the translation of William C. Chittick.

² Muhammad Taqī, Majlisī, *Sharḥ al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyah*, Tehran, Pajuhishkhadah Baqir al-Uloom, 1388 SH., 1st ed., pgs 37-43.

³ *al-Zarī'ah ilā Taṣānīf al-Shī'a*, vol. 15, pg 18.

view was chosen by Sayyid Mīr Dāmād¹ and said to be the correct view by Sayyid Ali Khān Madanī.²

5.3. Names

Over the course of history this book has been identified by names which emphasize the importance and high status that this book enjoys. Some of them are:

1. al- Ṣaḥīfah

It is reported that this collection of supplications was called by this very name by Imam Sādiq عليه السلام within the *isnād* and hence this name was attached to it.³

2. Zubūr Āle Muhammad عليه السلام (The Psalms of the Prophet's Family)

3. Injīl Ahl al-Bayt عليه السلام (The Bible of the Ahl al-Bayt عليه السلام)

4. Ukht al-Qur'ān (The Sister of the Holy Qur'ān)⁴

5. Qur'ān al-Ṣā'id (The Ascending Qur'ān)¹

¹ Muhammad Bāqir, Husaynī (Mīr Dāmād), Sharḥ al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Kāmilah al-Sajjādiyah, Isfahān, Mahdiyeh Mīr Dāmād, 1406 AH., 1st ed., pg 45.

² Ali Khān, Madanī Shīrāzī, Riyāḍ al-Sālikīn, Qum, Nashar Islami, 1432 AH., 7th ed., vol.1, pg 53.

³ Ali Asghar, Rizwānī, Payāmhā va Hidāyathā, Qum, Dalilema, 1390 SH, 1st ed., vol.1, pg 102.

⁴ al-Zarī'ah ilā Taṣānīf al-Shī'a, vol. 15, pg 18.

Some scholars have even tried to explain the reasons for why some of these names were attached to al-Şahīfah al-Kāmilah al-Sajjādiyyah. One reason that has been mentioned is that just as Allah ﷻ revealed the Bible and Psalms and flowed them via the tongues of 'Īsā ﷺ and Dawūd ﷺ, He similarly did so with al-Şahīfah al-Kāmilah al-Sajjādiyyah via the tongue of Imam Sajjād ﷺ.²

6. al Kāmilah (The Complete)

Some have mentioned that this name was given to show a distinction between the copy that is found amongst the Shia and that which is found amongst the Zaydis, as it is said that the one the Zaydis possess is half the size of the one which is in the possession of the Shia, and therefore the one that the Shia possess is more complete.³

¹ Ruhullah, Khomeinī, Sahifeh Imam, Tehran, The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imām Khomeinī's Works, vol. 21, pg 210.

² Majlisi, Sharḥ al-Şahīfah al-Sajjādiyyah, pg 35-36.

³ Abū al-Hasan, Sh'arānī, Sharḥ va Tarjumah al- Şahīfah al-Sajjādiyyah, Tehran, Ishkezar, 1388 SH, 1st ed., pg 11.

5.4. Number of Supplications

At the end of the *isnād* of al- Ṣaḥīfah al-Kāmilah al-Sajjādiyyah, the narrator mentions that originally the Ṣaḥīfah contained seventy five supplications, but the narrator had forgotten ten of them and that during the transmissions of these supplications a further eleven were lost; therefore, the Ṣaḥīfah that is presently accepted and well-known amongst the masses contains fifty four supplications. However, recently a manuscript written and annotated by Shaykh Ibrāhīm Kaf'amī has been published by the Museum and Document Center of Iran's Parliament which contains fifty eight supplications and is said to be the most complete manuscript of Ṣaḥīfah that is currently available.¹

5.5. Supplements to al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Kāmilah al-Sajjādiyyah

As Ṣaḥīfah does not contain all the supplications of Imam Sajjād عليه السلام, scholars over the years have tried to gather as many supplications of his as possible and supplement them to those that are contained within the Ṣaḥīfah. In al- Zarī'ah it is mentioned that seven supplements were written on Ṣaḥīfah², however

¹ <http://manuscripts.ir/fa/component/content/article/88-news/علوم-مختلف-منبع-کامل-گفتگو/3074-حاشیه‌های-صحیفه-سجادیه-کفعمی؛-منبع-کامل-علوم-مختلف>

² al-Zarī'ah ilā Taṣānīf al-Shī'a, vol. 13, pg 345.

only five of these were later mentioned in detail. Those that were mentioned are:

1. al-Şaḥīfah al-Thānīyah compiled by Ḥur al-'Āmulī
2. al-Şaḥīfah al-Thālithah compiled by Mīrza 'Abdullah Afandī Isfahānī
3. al-Şaḥīfah al-Rābi'ah compiled by Mīrza Husayn Nūrī
4. al-Şaḥīfah al-Khāmisah compiled by Sayyid Muḥsin Amīn al-'Āmulī
5. al-Şaḥīfah al-Sādisah compiled by Muhammad Şāliḥ Māzandarānī ¹

In the year 1411 AH/1990 a book entitled al-Şaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyah al-Jāmi'ah, which was compiled by Sayyid Muhammad Bāqir al-Muwaḥid al-Abṭaḥī was published. In this book, the author gathered all the supplications that were compiled until al-Şaḥīfah al-Sādisah and added to them. He also explained and added glosses to the difficult words that are found within the supplications.

He has also annotated the *isnād* in a very thorough manner.²

¹ al-Zarī'ah ilā Taşānīf al-Shī'a, vol. 15, pgs 19-21.

² Muhammad Ali, Majd Faqīhī, Āshnāyī bā Şaḥīfah Sajjādiyah, Qum, Markaz Jahānī 'Ulūm Islāmī, 1385 SH, 1st ed., pg 52.

This book contains 270 supplications.¹

III. Introductory Discussions

In this section those discussions which are deemed necessary in gaining a better understanding of the peripherals of the main subject matter will be examined and this is hoped will assist the reader in gaining a better grasp of the concepts and principles which are aimed to be elaborated on.

1. Brief Biography of Imam Sajjād ؑ

1.1. His Parents

His father was the Master of Martyrs, Imam Husayn ؑ and it has been reported by most historians that his mother was the daughter of Yazdigard, the last emperor of Persia during the caliphate of 'Umar², whose name was Shahzanān or Shahrbanawayh³ or Salāmah¹.

¹ Muhammad Bāqir, al-Muwaḥid al-Abṭaḥī, al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah al-Jāmi'ah, Qum, Muassasah Imām Mahdī ؑ, 1423 AH, 5th ed., pg 637.

² Bāqir Sharīf, Qarashī, Hayāt al-Imām Zayn al-'Ābidīn ؑ, Beirut, Dār al-Aḍwā, 1409 AH, 1st ed., vol. 1, pg 21.

³ Muhammad bin Muhammad, Mufīd, al-Irshād, I.K.A. Howard, Qum, Ansariyan, 2004, 4th ed., pg 380.

1.2. His Birth

Historians differ greatly on the details of the birth of Imam Sajjād عليه السلام. This difference includes both the place and date of his birth.

With regards to the place of his birth, some believe that he عليه السلام was born in Medina², whereas others believe that he was born in Kufa³.

Concerning the date of his birth even more discrepancies can be found. It is reported that he عليه السلام was born between the years 36-38 AH, with 38 AH being the most common; the day of his birth is reported as being one of following;

- The middle of Jamādi al-Thānī
- The 9th of Sha'bān⁴
- The middle of Jamādī al-Ūlā⁵
- The 7th of Sh'abān

¹ Muhammad bin Ya'qūb, Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, Qum, Dār al-Hadīth, 1429 AH, 1st ed., vol. 2, pg 512.

² Al-Irshād, pg 380

³ Hayāt al-Imām Zayn al-'Ābidīn, vol. 1, pg 36.

⁴ Muhammad ibn Ali, Ibn Shahr Āshūb, al-Manāqib, Qum, 'Allāmah, 1379 AH, 1st ed., vol. 4, pg 175

⁵ 'Abbās, Qummī, Muntahī al-Āmāl, Qum, Dalīl Mā, 1379 SH, 1st ed., vol. 2, pg 1091

- The 5th of Sh'abān¹

1.3. His Death

The historians are in agreement that he ﷺ passed away in Medina, but, as with his birth, the date has been recorded varyingly. It is said that he either passed away in the year 94 or 95 AH, on the 12, 18, 19, 22 or 25 of Muharram.²

1.4. The Prevalent Conditions of his Period

After the tragedy and massacre that occurred on the plains of Karbala and the subsequent events that followed, the conditions that ruled over Medina was that of extreme fear, uncertainty and tension. It was a time where religious values and Islamic principles had digressed to such an alarming state, and tyranny and ignorance was the predominate order.³

¹ Muḥsin, Amīn al-'Āmulī, A'yān al-Shia, Beirut, Dār al-Ta'āruf, 1404 AH, 1st ed., vol. 1, pg 629

² Ibid.

³ Rasūl, Ja'fariyān, Ḥayāt Fikrī wa Sīyāsī A'immah ﷺ, Qum, Ansariyan, 1381 SH, 6th ed., pg 260.

At the same time, the Imam ؑ was under severe surveillance from the ruling regime, but nonetheless, he had a divine duty of guiding mankind towards their primary goal of becoming servants of Allah ﷻ.

The report that the Imam ؑ performed his duties with the utmost secrecy, by acting with extreme dissimulation and was appointed over an extremely difficult period¹ is sufficient to indicate the difficulties that the Imam ؑ faced during his era.

1.5. His Methods of Propagation

As was stated previously, the environment at the time of Imam ؑ was not a very favorable one. In these harsh conditions, however, the Imam ؑ still performed his divine duties admirably and guided the Shia through one of the severest and darkest periods of Islamic history. In order to fulfill his duty, the Imam had to use methods which would not have attracted much attention to himself, but which would yield the best results. In this section three of the methods used by Imam Sajjād ؑ will be mentioned.

1- Crying for Imam Husayn ؑ at every opportunity.

¹ Ali ibn Husayn, Mas'ūdī, Ithbāt al-Wasīyah, Qum, Ansariyan, 1426 AH, 3rd ed., pg 168

This was done to remind people and for them never to forget the sacrifice that his illustrious father performed for their salvation i.e. the ability to differentiate between truth and falsehood. He cried so much that one of his epithets became *al-Bukā* (The one who continuously and profusely cries.)¹ Imam Sadiq عليه السلام in a narration names Imam Sajjād عليه السلام amongst the five individuals who cried profusely and said that Imam Sajjād عليه السلام cried for twenty years over the martyrdom of his family and friends, and would do so whenever something reminded him about the tragedy of Karbala.²

2. Buying, training and releasing slaves as teachers into the society.

During the Umayyad reign, slavery again became common practice amongst the elite. This presented an ideal opportunity to Imam عليه السلام; he would buy slaves, even though he had no need for them, keep them in his house so that they could become acquainted with his teachings, morals and piety, i.e. become his students, and then take those teachings into society and spread them amongst the masses.

¹ al-Manāqib, vol. 4, pg 175

² Muhammad ibn Ali, ibn Bābawayh (Ṣadūq), al-Khiṣāl, Qum, Nashr Islamī, 1326 SH, 1st ed, vol. 1, pgs 272-273.

The Imam ﷺ would never keep a slave for more than a year and would continue to be in contact and support them even after he freed them. It is reported that the amount of released slaves, both male and female, in Madina reached about a hundred thousand, which formed an army of trained individuals who were able to influence the moral fiber of society and spread the pure, forgotten teachings of Islam through their deeds and words.¹

3. Teaching through Supplication.

As was mentioned earlier, Imam ﷺ lived in an era where basic Islamic tenets and principles were forgotten, a time when the best companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was openly cursed from the pulpits throughout the Islamic lands and even having his name was seen as a crime.² It was in this scenario where the Prophetic tradition, “*Du'ā is the weapon of a believer,*”³ displayed its greatest referent. Imam ﷺ, in the form of eloquent and powerful supplications, presented to society the pristine teachings of Islam. He

¹ Mahdī, Pīshvāyī, Sīrah Pīshvāyān, Qum, Muassasah Imām Sādiq G, 1389 SH, 22nd ed., pgs 300-302; Ḥayāt Fikrī wa Sīyāsī A'immah ﷺ, pgs 280-282.

² Ḥayāt Fikrī wa Sīyāsī A'immah ﷺ, pg 274.

³ al-Kāfī, vol. 4, pg 301.

reminded them of the roots and principles of Islam and, more importantly, about the status of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Pure Family ﷺ. It is of no coincidence that the most repeated phrase in al-Şahīfah al-Kāmilah al-Sajjādiyyah is the “*salutations upon Muhammad ﷺ and his family ﷺ.*”

What follows is a small example of the phrases associated with the roots of religion or the *Usūl* i.e. *tawhīd*, prophethood and resurrection, will be mentioned from al-Şahīfah al-Kāmilah al-Sajjādiyyah.

- *Tawhīd*

أَنْتَ اللهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، الْأَحَدُ الْمُتَوَحَّدُ الْفَرْدُ الْمُتَفَرِّدُ

“*You are Allah, there is no Lord other than you, the Unique, the Unaccompanied, the Only, The Incomparable.*”¹

- Prophethood

اللَّهُمَّ فَصِّلْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ أَمِينِكَ عَلَى وَحْيِكَ، وَ نَجِيبِكَ مِنْ خَلْقِكَ، وَ صَفِيكَ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ، إِمَامِ الرَّحْمَةِ، وَ قَائِدِ الْخَيْرِ، وَ مِفْتَاحِ الْبَرَكَةِ

¹ al-Şahīfah al-Kāmilah al-Sajjādiyyah, supplication 47

“O Allah! Send your blessings and salutations upon Muhammad, the one who was entrusted with your [final] revelation, the most distinguished amongst your creation, the Imām of mercy, the leader of goodness and the key towards your blessings.”¹

- Resurrection

ثُمَّ ضَرَبَ لَهُ فِي الْحَيَاةِ أَجَلًا مَوْقُوتًا، وَ نَصَبَ لَهُ أَمَدًا مَحْدُودًا

“He then ordains for each soul a fixed lifespan and has placed for it a determined end.”²

1.6. Opinion of Sunni Personalities Concerning Imam Sajjād عليه السلام

Concerning Imam Sajjād عليه السلام, many wonderful and amazing things have been written and not just from Shia scholars, what follows is the mere tip of the iceberg of writings and quotes from Sunni scholars and academic personalities concerning the status and position of Imam Sajjād عليه السلام.

The famous historian Ya'qūbī writes:

¹ al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Kāmilah al-Sajjādiyyah, supplication 2

² Ibid, supplication 1

“He was the best of people and the greatest in worship amongst them. He was called Zayn al-'Ābidīn (the pride and beauty of the worshippers) and was also known as *Za al-Thafanāt* (the possessor of calluses) as they would appear on his forehead as a result of his prostrations. He would pray a thousand units of prayer during the day.”¹

The biographical writer and historian, Zahhabī writes:

“He [Imam Sajjad عليه السلام] possessed a grand and amazing magnificence, and by Allah he was deserving of such magnificence. Because of his grandeur and honorableness, knowledge and complete intellect was worthy of being a great leader.”²

And finally Prof. 'Aqqād writes:

“This ill youth [at the time of Karbala] lived his life in such a way that he became the master and ruler of the hearts of the people, at the time when

¹ Aḥmad, Ibn Abī Yaqūb, al-Tārikh, Beirut, Dār al-Şādir, vol. 2, pg 303

² Shams al-Dīn, Zahhabī, Sayr A'lām al-Nablā, Beirut, Al-Risālah, 11th ed., vol. 4, pg 398.

Hishām ibn 'Abd al-Mālīk was the ruler over the physical bodies of the people.”¹

2. The Status of al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Kāmilah al-Sajjādiyah

Al-Ṣaḥīfah has always intrigued and attracted the attention of the scholars of Islam. In this section some of the statements made about al-Ṣaḥīfah from both Shia and Sunni scholars will be mentioned.

2.1. Al-Ṣaḥīfah; a gift from Imam Mahdī عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

In a lengthy story, Muhammad Taqī al-Majlīsī narrates that as a youth he strived to attain a position in which he would earn the pleasure of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ, but was unable to do so. Until one day, in the Grand Masjid of Isfahān, whilst being in a state between sleep and wakefulness, he saw Imam Mahdī عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. After greeting and asking his questions, he said to the Imam, “O my master! It is not possible to always be in your service, so grant me a book that I can always act upon.” The Imam then told me to go and see a person by the name of Muhammad al-Tāj, when I arrived at his residence, he gave me a book of

¹ 'Abbas Maḥmūd, 'Aqqād, al-Husayn Abū al-Shuhadā, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-Libnānī, 1st ed., pg 284.

supplications, which I took and started to make my way back to Imam Mahdī عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. However, when I awoke I found that that book was not with me, so I become upset and began to cry. So I waited till the morning.’

In the end, Muhammad Taqī al-Majlīsī says that the next day, he finally went to the same place that he went to while asleep, there he found a pious man who invited him into his library to take any book he wished, and the first book that he was given looked just like the book he was given in his dream, and it turned out to be al-Şahīfah al-Kāmilah al-Sajjādiyah. He goes on to say that Allah ﷻ opened many doors of knowledge to him because of the gift granted to him by Imam Mahdī عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, al-Şahīfah.¹

2.2. The Ascending Qur’ān

Imām Khomeini said the following about al-Şahīfah when granting it as a gift to one of his grandchildren, ‘Al-Şahīfah is the complete and perfect referent of an ascending Qur’ān and the greatest intimate mystical discourse that one can have with his Lord, but unfortunately our ability to reach its goodness is

¹ Muhammad Taqī, al-Majlīsī, Rawḍah al-Muttaqīn, Muassasah Farhangī Islamī Kūshānpūr, Qum, (no date) 2nd ed., vol. 14, pgs 419-422.

limited. This divine book, whose source is the very Light of Allah ﷺ and which teaches the mystical path of the special friends and saints of Allah ﷺ to those who wish to seek intimacy with His Majesty.’¹

2.3. Higher than Creation but lower than the Creator

In order to keep this discussion brief, as many other statements about al-Şahīfah have been made by great scholars such as Shahīd Muhammad Bāqir al-Şadr² and Sayyid Ali Khamenei³, we will end with quotes from Sunni scholar, Shaykh Muhammad Sayyīd Ṭanţāwī, the author of a famous Qur’ānic exegesis, who after receiving al-Şahīfah as a gift from Sayyīd Mar’ashī Najafī, wrote back to him the following, ‘It is indeed an extreme misfortune that up until now we have failed to become acquainted with this eternal and priceless book that is from the bequests of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Pure Family ﷺ. Whenever I glance into it, I realize that these words are higher than that of the creation and lower than that of the Creator.’⁴

¹ Sahifeh Imam, vol. 21, pg 210.

² Ali, Riḍāī, Sibk ye Zindagī, Bīrjund, Chehār Darakht, 1393 SH, 5th ed., pg 2

³ Ali Riḍā, Barāzish, Du’ā, Tehran, Inqalāb Islamī, 1390 SH, 2nd ed., pg 136.

⁴ Sibk ye Zindagī, pg 2.

3. The Effect of Supplication

Supplication affects the life of a human being in many different ways and forms. As a brief introduction to this discussion, some of these will be discussed in this section briefly.

3.1. Peace of Heart and Mind

One of the major effects that supplication has on an individual is that it gives him a sense of peace and ease, because he knows that someone is always there for him and that he is not alone in this difficult and ephemeral World.

Allah ﷻ says in the Holy Qur'ān, *'When my servants ask you about Me, [tell them that] I am indeed nearest. I answer the supplicants call when he calls me,'*¹ and He also says, *'and We are nearer to him than his jugular vein.'*² He ﷻ also confirms this by saying, *'The hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah.'*³

¹ Baqarah\186

² Qāf\16

³ Ra'd\28

3.2. Hope

Another effect of supplication is that it provides man with a tool and means at a time when he has nothing else and nowhere else to turn to, this provides man with hope that *inshā Allah* better days are just around the corner, be they physical needs or spiritual. However, what is unfortunate today is that we turn to all other means first and then turn to supplication at a time when all those other means fail. In this regard Allah ﷻ says, ‘*Call Me, and I will hear you!*’¹ So begin with calling upon Him first and by doing so, know that He has heard your plight and have hope in your needs being granted. Imam Sādiq ؑ says in a tradition that the granting of ones needs and the hope of opening even the toughest of doors lies in supplicating to Allah ﷻ abundantly.²

What has been mentioned above is just a few of the many effects that supplication has on the life of a human being, the reader is advised to further investigate this discussion in the relevant books.³

¹ Ghafir\60

² al-Kāfi, vol. 4, pg 305-306

³ One such book can be found at URL: <https://www.al-islam.org/dua-supplication-sayyid-zafar-hasan-amrohi>

4. General outline of the 44th supplication

This supplication begins, as most of the supplications do, with the praise of Allah ﷻ and the reasons why Allah ﷻ is deserving of this praise, this segment is formed of three sections, each beginning with the phrase “*Alḥamdulillāh*”

The second segment of this supplication consists of eight sections each beginning with salutations upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Pure Family ﷺ.

This segment consists of the requests and supplications that Imam Sajjād ؑ asked of Allah ﷻ.¹

5. Time of Recitation

It has been said that this supplication can be recited on the first night or on the first day of the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān, or it can be recited at a time which would commonly be accepted as being the beginning of the Blessed Month in a lexicological sense.²

¹ Ali Karīm, Jahrumī, *Sīmā ye Ramaḍān*, Qum, Bustān Kitāb, 1394 SH, 1st ed., pg 17.

² Ni'mat al-Allah, Jazāirī, *Nūr al-Anwār*, Tehran, Pajuhishkhadah Baqir al-Uloom, 1394 SH, 1st ed., vol. 2, pg 891.

Section 2:

The Greatness of the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān in the words of Imam

Sajjād ﷺ

At the beginning of this *du'ā*, Imam Sajjād عليه السلام introduces the greatness and splendor of the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān to us, he عليه السلام first calls it by various names, then goes on in identifying it as the month in which the Holy Qur'ān was revealed and a month which possesses a night like no other night. In this section, these merits of the Blessed Month mentioned in the words of Imam Sajjād عليه السلام will briefly be elucidated on.

1. The Names of the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān

Imam Sajjād عليه السلام in this *du'ā* calls this Blessed Month by seven names.

1.1. The Month of Allah ﷻ (شَهْرَهُ)

The Blessed Month of Ramaḍān is the Month of Allah ﷻ. This attribution of the month to Allah ﷻ was also mentioned by the Holy Prophet ﷺ in his famous Sha'bāniyyah Sermon,

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّهُ قَدْ أَقْبَلَ إِلَيْكُمْ شَهْرُ اللَّهِ بِالْبَرَكَةِ وَالرَّحْمَةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ

*"O people! Surely the Month of Allah, with all its blessings, mercy and opportunities of attaining forgiveness, has approached you."*¹

¹ Uyūn al-Akhhbār al-Riḍā, vol.1, pg 295.

This association of Allah ﷻ with this month shows that this month is no ordinary month, for Allah ﷻ is the owner and associated with everything that is other than him, so this specific association indicates that this month contains certain virtues and merits that the other months do not have in terms of their blessings etc. just like He ﷻ has associated Himself with the Ka'bah in order to elevate over all other places and masjids; hence this association is intended to show the greatness of this month.¹

It might also mean that this month and the action that is performed within it is specific for Allah ﷻ. In this regard the commentators of al-Şahīfah have mentioned the following tradition from Imam Sādiq ﷺ to support this view.²

إِنَّ اللَّهَ - تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى - يَقُولُ: الصَّوْمُ لِي، وَ أَنَا أُجْزِي عَلَيْهِ

‘Allah ﷻ says, “Fasting is purely for me and I, myself, will grant the reward for it.”’³

¹ Muhammad Taqī, Mişbāh Yazdī, Şahbā ye Huḍūr, Qum, Imam Khomeini Institute for Education and Research, 1391 SH, 1st ed., pg 68.

² Riyāḍ al-Sālikīn, vol. 6, pg 20.

³ al-Kāfī, vol. 2, pg 371.

So, Allah ﷻ has specifically associated this blessed month with himself and has even named it after himself, as will be seen in the next section, in order for us to understand and realize that this month contains his special blessings, mercy and favours and the doors by which man can gain extreme proximity to Him ﷻ are wide open.

1.2. The Month of Ramaḍān (شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ)

Many possibilities have been mentioned as to why this blessed month has been named “Ramaḍān”. Some quote the following tradition from the Holy Prophet ﷺ concerning the naming of this blessed month as “Ramaḍān”,

إِنَّمَا سُمِّيَ رَمَضَانُ رَمَضَانَ لِأَنَّهُ تُرْمَضُ فِيهِ الذُّنُوبُ

“Surely, Allah ﷻ has named this month Ramaḍān because sins get cleansed within it.”¹

However, the method of “cleansing” is debated upon depending on which meaning a person accepts to be the true meaning of the word *turmaḍu* (تُرْمَضُ) in the above hadith. Some mention that it is a cleansing by the sins being burnt

¹ Husayn bin Muhammad Taqī, Nūrī, Mustadrak al-Wasāil wa Mustanbit al-Masāil, Qum, Āl al-Bayt ﷻ Institute, 1408 AH, 1st ed, vol. 7, pg 484.

off the body by the heat of fasting¹, whereas others have mentioned that the body is cleansed by the sins being washed away off the body the way rain washes dirt off a building.²

1.2.1. One of His ﷺ Beautiful Names

One of the highly recommended practices for us to do, in order to show respect and honour this blessed month is to not mention it without prefixing it with the word “month.” As it has been narrated that the word “Ramaḍān” is actually one of the names of Allah ﷻ and because of this, it is believed that it is Allah ﷻ who named this month as “Ramaḍān.”³

Imam Bāqir ؑ, in respect to the above, is reported to have said,

كُنَّا عِنْدَهُ ثَمَانِيَةَ رِجَالٍ، فَذَكَرْنَا رَمَضَانَ، فَقَالَ: «لَا تَقُولُوا: هَذَا رَمَضَانُ، وَ لَا ذَهَبَ رَمَضَانُ، وَ لَا جَاءَ رَمَضَانُ؛ فَإِنَّ رَمَضَانَ اسْمٌ مِنْ أَسْمَاءِ اللَّهِ- عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ- لَا يَجِيءُ وَ لَا يَذْهَبُ. وَ إِنَّمَا يَجِيءُ وَ يَذْهَبُ الزَّائِلُ، وَ لَكِنْ قُولُوا: شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ.

¹ Sayyid Muhammad Bāqir, Husaynī Shīrāzī, Lawāmi' al-Anwār al-'Arshīyah, Isfahān, Computer Research Centre of the Isfahān Seminary, 1391 SH, 3rd ed., vol. 5, pg 6.

² Riyāḍ al-Sālikīn, vol. 6, pgs 10-11.

³ Şahbā ye Huḍūr, pgs 69-70; Lawāmi' al-Anwār al-'Arshīyah, vol. 5, pg 10.

‘We were eight men sitting with Imam Bāqir عليه السلام and we were mentioning Ramaḍān. Imam, after hearing this, said, “Do not just say this Ramaḍān, or that Ramaḍān has come or it has left, for Ramaḍān is from amongst the Names of Allah ﷻ, it neither goes nor comes. Surely, that which comes and goes is perishable [whereas the Names of Allah ﷻ are eternal]. Rather you should say, the Month of Ramaḍān.’”¹

This becomes clearer when we delve into the Holy Qur’ān, for when Allah ﷻ mentions Ramaḍān, it is prefixed with the word month (شهر).²

This further shows the greatness of this blessed month as Allah ﷻ has not only attributed this month to His essence, but has also named it after one of his Beautiful Names.

1.3. The Month of Fasting (شَهْرَ الصِّيَامِ)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

¹ al-Kāfī, vol. 7, pgs 390-391.

² See: Baqarah\185

“O you who have faith! Prescribed for you is fasting as it was prescribed for those who were before you, so that you may be Godwary.”¹

The most salient characteristic of this blessed month is that is known as the Month of Fasting and has gained such precedence that even those who are not Muslim associate this blessed month with fasting; so much so that even heads of states and world leaders congratulate the Muslim Ummah and wish them well doing this month². However, we as Muslims should know that Allah ﷻ has selected this month, out of his infinite mercy, for one of his most beloved of worships so that we may gain the blessings and favours that He has made available in this month and earn that proximity to Him and the earn the honour of being known as *“Abd al-Allah”*.

يَا أَحْمَدُ لَيْسَ شَيْءٌ مِنَ الْعِبَادَةِ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ مِنَ الصَّوْمِ وَالصَّمْتِ

“O Ahmad! No worship is more beloved to me than fasting and silence.”³

¹ Baqarah\183

² See, for example, URL: <http://www.dailysabah.com/world/2016/06/07/world-leaders-celebs-extend-ramadan-greetings>

³ al-Wāfi, vol. 26, pg 150

1.4. The Month of Islam (شَهْرُ الْإِسْلَامِ)

According to commentators, this name used by Imam Sajjād عليه السلام in describing the Blessed Month could have various possible meanings.

Some have taken Islam here as its lexicological meaning i.e. submission, and have said that this month is called the Month of Submission as people are more inclined to be pious and godwary in this month than in the other months and it is in this month because of the extra or even necessary submission, that hearts become soft.¹

Others have said that Islam here means the religion of Islam, as this month and the order of fasting within it, is specific to the Islamic Ummah, and even thou other religions and nations have fasting as one of their compulsory rituals, they do not compare to the blessing and virtues that Allah ﷻ has prescribed for the Islamic Ummah.²

¹ Muhammad Salīm, al-Rāzī, Sharḥ al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah, Tehran, Pajuhishkhadah Baqir al-Uloom, 1431 AH, 1st ed., vol. 2, pg 91.

² Riyāḍ al-Sālikīn, vol.6, pg 21.

Another possible meaning, which in the current political climate is one that needs to be stressed upon, is that this blessed month shows the unity and strength of Islam; that every Muslim, regardless of denomination, in this blessed month is trying to gain proximity to Allah ﷻ by obeying His commands. It is for this very reason that Imam Khomeini called on all Muslims, Sunni and Shia, to come out in droves on the last Friday of the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān to show support and solidarity with the oppressed people of the World and especially al-Quds and Palestine.

1.5. The Month of Purification (شَهْرَ الطَّهُّورِ)

This is a very refined, yet beautiful title that Imam Sajjād ؑ calls the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān and ties in with one of the lexicological meaning of ramaḍān discussed above.

Allah ﷻ says in the Holy Qur’ān, “*and We send down from the skies purifying water,*”¹ and He ﷻ also says, “*and He sent down water from the*

¹ Furqān\ 48 (وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ الرِّيحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً طَهُورًا)

sky to purify you with it, and to repel from you the defilement of Satan, and to fortify your hearts, and to make [your] feet steady with it.”¹

Just as objects require a clean every once in a while, the soul of a human being requires the same, as it becomes ‘darkened’ by the effects of sins; just as water is not only pure but also a purifier and cleans dirt off objects, this month is not only pure and blessed but also purifies the human soul and heart from sins and their effects.

Another possible meaning of this title is that because a person in this blessed month tries to pay more attention to Allah ﷻ and his commands, and by doing so, attempts sincerely to refrain from performing forbidden and *harām* actions. So in reality, he is purifying himself from sins and from committing them during the other months.²

¹ Anfāl\11 (وَ يُنَزِّلُ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ بِهِ وَ يُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمْ رِجْزَ الشَّيْطَانِ وَ لِيَرْبِطَ عَلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَ يُنَبِّئَ بِهِ الْآفَاقِمَ)

² Ḥasan, Mamdūhī, Shuhūd va Shanākt, Qum, Bustān Kitāb, 1385 SH, 2nd ed., vol. 3, pgs 394-395.

1.6. The Month of Examination (شَهْرُ التَّمْحِيسِ)

The word *tamhīṣ* has two possible meanings¹ and both of them are appropriate and applicable in this context. One of these meanings is said to be general purification² or more specifically, purification from sins.³

The other is said to be examination and test⁴; so the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān is the month in which Allah ﷻ tests His servants to see whether or not they are worthy of receiving his Grace and Mercy; the test of refraining from what is allowed during the day and performing more worship and supplication during the night.

In this instance, however, the second meaning might be more appropriate, as the previous title given to the Blessed Month by Imam Sajjād ؑ was that of “Purification”, thus if this title also meant purification it would merely be a repetition of the previous title, but if what was meant was “Examination”, it

¹ Both of these meanings also appear in the Holy Qur’ān. See Ale Imran\ 141 for the second meaning and 154 for the first.

² Mufradāt Alfāḍ al-Qur’ān, pg 761

³ al-'Ayn, vol.3, pg 127.

⁴ Ismā’īl ibn Ḥamād, Jawharī, al-Ṣiḥāḥ, Beirut, Dār al-'Ilm li Malāyīn, 1st ed., vol. 3, pg 1056.

would be a new meaning and add greater content and depth to the supplication.¹

1.7. The Month of Standing in Worship (شَهْرَ الْقِيَامِ)

Prayer (salat) is the most obvious referent of worship; hence during this blessed month a person should strive to firstly perfect his compulsory prayers and secondly try to increase his recommended prayers. The Holy Prophet concerning prayers during the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān is reported to have said,

مَنْ تَطَوَّعَ فِيهِ بِصَلَاةٍ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَهُ بَرَاءَةً مِنَ النَّارِ وَ مَنْ أَدَّى فِيهِ فَرَضًا كَانَ لَهُ ثَوَابٌ مِثْلُ مَنْ أَدَّى سَبْعِينَ
فَرِيضَةً فِيمَا سِوَاهُ مِنَ الشُّهُورِ

“Whoever, in this blessed month, performs a recommended prayer, Allah ﷻ will surely save him from the Fire; and whoever performs his compulsory prayers in this blessed month will earn the reward of seventy compulsory prayers prayed in other months.”²

¹ Sīmā ye Ramaḍān, pg 29; Riyāḍ al-Sālikīn, vol. 6, pg 22.

² Uyūn al-Akhhbār al-Riḍā vol.1, pg 296.

It has also been reported from Imam Bāqir عليه السلام that during the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān Imam Sajjād عليه السلام would recite during the day and night a thousand units of prayer.¹ It has also been recommended for us to perform a thousand units of prayer during the entire Blessed Month of Ramaḍān,² and some commentators have mentioned this action as the possible reason for this blessed month being called the Month of Standing in Worship.³

The Blessed Month of Ramaḍān is also that pristine opportunity for us to increase our efforts towards reaching our goal of becoming a true servant of Allah ﷻ, and of the best ways of doing that is to partake in night vigils, perform specific supplications and prayers that have been recommended to be recited in this month such as *Du'ā Abū Hamza al-Thumālī*, and most of all to perform the night prayer known as *Tahajjud* or *Salat al-Layl*.⁴ “*O you wrapped up in your mantle! Stand vigil through the night...*”⁵

¹ Biḥār al-Anwār, vol 46, pg 74.

² al-Kāfi, vol. 7, pgs 614-615

³ Riyāḍ al-Sālikīn, vol 6, pg 23.

⁴ Ṣahbā ye Ḥuḍūr, pg 76.

⁵ Muzzammil\1-2

2. The Revelation of the Holy Qur’ān in the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān

After mentioning a number of titles and names associated with the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān, Imam Sajjād عليه السلام then goes on to mention probably the most important characteristic and merit of this blessed month, that being the revelation of the Holy Qur’ān in it. Imam عليه السلام in continuation of the supplication, quotes the following Qur’ānic verse,

الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنَ هُدًى لِلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ

“[The Month of Ramaḍān] is one in which the Holy Qur’ān was sent down, as guidance to mankind, with manifest proofs of guidance and the Criterion.”¹

What can be understood from the above verse is that the Holy Qur’ān can be used by all people in order to find guidance but it is up to them to approach it and find it, and it not only guides but also provides proof for that guidance for those who wish to know; lastly it is also the criterion i.e. it is the differentiator between truth and falsehood, right and wrong, the Godly from the satanic.²

¹ Baqarah\185

² Sīmā ye Ramaḍān, pg 34

2.1 The Reality of Revelation

One of the major issues that has concerned many a scholar and many differing views have been produced on it is the issue on the reality of how and when the Holy Qur'ān was revealed.

If it is to be believed that the Holy Qur'ān was revealed over a period of 23 years to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, which began on the 27th of Rajab¹ and known as the day of Divine Commission (*Bi'thah*), as commonly accepted,² what does it being completely revealed in the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān or more specifically the Night of Ordainment mean?³

As mentioned before, many different attempts have been made by scholars to try and collate these two principles, but for the sake brevity, the one which is generally accepted by both Sunni and Shia scholars will only be mentioned.

A group of scholars believe that the Holy Qur'ān had two revelations; one instantaneous and the other gradual. The Holy Qur'ān was revealed to the

¹ Muhammad ibn Hasan, Ḥur al-Āmulī, Wasāil al-Shia, Qum, Muassasah Ahl ul-Bayt ﷺ, 1409 AH, 1st ed., vol. 10, pg 448.

² Abbas and Masuma, Jaffer, Qur'ānic Sciences, London, ICAS Press, 2009, 1st ed., pg 45

³ Dukhān\3 and Qadr\1

Holy Prophet ﷺ all at once, in a spiritual form, on the Night of Ordainment; and then it was revealed gradually, in the form of verses and phrases, throughout the period of his prophethood.¹

Hence, the gradual revelation was that which occurred over the period of 23 years at specific times or after specific occurrences, depending on the Will of Allah ﷻ; however, differences occur over the instantaneous revelation.

Some scholars believe that on the Night of Ordainment the Holy Qur'ān was sent down to the lowest heaven in its entity²; whereas others believe that in the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān, on the Night of Ordainment, the reality and esoteric nature of the Holy Qur'ān was revealed into the heart of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.³

2.2. Reciting the Holy Qur'ān in the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān

Imam Bāqir ؑ is reported to have said,

¹ Quranic Sciences, pg 51.

² Jalāl al-Dīn, al-Suyūfī, The Perfect Guide to the Sciences of the Qur'ān, Hamid Algar; Micheal Schub and Ayman Abdel Haleem, Reading, Garnet Publishing, 2011, 1st ed., pg 91.

³ Muhammad Husayn, Tabātabāī, al-Mīzān fi Tafsīr al-Qur'ān. Beirut, Muassasah al-A'lamī li al-Maṭbū'āt, 1390 AH, 2nd ed., vol. 2 pg 18.

لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ رَّبِيعٌ، وَرَبِيعُ الْقُرْآنِ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ

“Everything has a spring and the spring of the Holy Qur’ān is the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān.”¹

It has also been reported that when Imam Ali عليه السلام saw the new moon that signaled the arrival of the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān, he recited the following supplication,

اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنَا تِلَاوَةَ الْقُرْآنِ فِيهِ

“O Allah! Grant me the ability in it [Blessed Month of Ramaḍān] to recite the Holy Qur’ān.”²

From these traditions we can see that the recitation of the Holy Qur’ān during the blessed month is a highly recommended action. More so, this action has yields great rewards for the person who performs it. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, in describing the rewards of reciting the Holy Qur’ān in the Month of Ramaḍān said,

¹ al-Kāfī, vol. 4, pg 664.

² Ṣaḥīfah al-'Alawīyyah, pg 156

وَمَنْ تَلَا فِيهِ آيَةً مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ كَانَ لَهُ مِثْلُ أَجْرِ مَنْ خَتَمَ الْقُرْآنَ فِي غَيْرِهِ مِنَ الشُّهُورِ

“and whoever recites, in this blessed month, a verse from the Holy Qur’ān, he will be rewarded the same as one who recites the entire Holy Qur’ān in another month.”¹

However, this reciting must not be done parrot style i.e. just merely reciting and repeating without paying attention to the words that are being recited and then putting them into action. In this regard Imam Sādiq عليه السلام in his supplication before reciting the Holy Qur’ān says,

وَلَا تَجْعَلْ قِرَاءَتِي قِرَاءَةً لَا تَدُبُّرَ فِيهَا بَلْ اجْعَلْنِي أَتَدَبَّرُ آيَاتِهِ وَأَحْكَامَهُ أَخِذًا بِشَرَائِعِ دِينِكَ

“[O Allah] do not make my recitation a recitation that lacks contemplation but make me one of those who contemplate upon Your verses and rulings and act upon Your divine law.”²

¹ Uyūn al-Akhhbār al-Riḍā, vol. 1, pg 296.

² Biḥār al-Anwār, vol. 89, pg 207.

3. Laylat al-Qadr (The Night of Ordainment)

Imam عليه السلام then continues his supplication until he reaches the following phrase, which is the last merit and virtue he عليه السلام mentions for the Month of Ramaḍān,

تُمْ فَضَّلَ لَيْلَةً وَاحِدَةً مِنْ لَيَالِيهِ عَلَى لَيَالِي أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ، وَ سَمَّاَهَا لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ، تَنْزَلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ سَلَامٌ، دَائِمِ الْبَرَكَاتِ إِلَى طُلُوعِ الْفَجْرِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ بِمَا أَحْكَمَ مِنْ قَضَائِهِ.

“He then made one of its nights superior over the nights of a thousand months and named it the Night of Ordainment; in it the angels and the Spirit descend, by the leave of their Lord, with every command. Peace and continuous blessings until the rising of the dawn upon whomever He wills from amongst His servants according to the firm decree He has made.”

3.1. Meaning of Qadr

Regarding the meaning of *Qadr*, various opinions have been given by the scholars.

Some have said that that the word Qadr means decree and ordainment, in that Allah decrees and ordains every aspect and matter of the year in it as according to the Holy Qur'ān, “*Every definite matter is resolved in it.*”¹

In addition, traditions indicating this meaning are also available.²

Others have said that it means virtuous and grand; hence the Night of Ordainment is a virtuous and grand night because of either what was revealed in it i.e. the Holy Qur'ān or that the vigils and worships performed in it have a very grand reward.

Lastly, it could possibly mean tightness and restriction as per the verse, “*and let he whose provision has been tightened.*”³In that the World, with all its vastness, becomes tight and restricted for space by the amount of angels that descend on this night.⁴

¹ فيها يُفْرَقُ كُلُّ أَمْرٍ حَكِيمٍ (4) Dukhān\4

² See: al-Kafī, vol. 7, pg 625.

³ وَ مَنْ قُدِرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُ (7) Talāq\7

⁴ Ni'mat al-Allah, Jazāirī, Sharḥ al-Kabīr 'alā al-Sahīfah al-Sajjādiyah, Tehran, Pajuhishkhadah Baqir al-Uloom, 1431 AH, 1st ed., pg 111.

3.2. In which Night is it?

It is unanimously accepted by the Shia scholars and by the majority of Sunni scholars that the Night of Ordainment is in the last ten days of the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān. However, in identifying its exact time, forty three opinions exist.¹ The Shia scholars, based on traditions from the Pure Ahl al-Bayt عليه السلام, confine the night between the nineteenth, twenty first and twenty third nights of the Blessed Month², whereas the view of the Sunni scholars vary greatly because of the traditions available on this subject.³

In another tradition, however, it mentions that all three nights are in fact a part of the process of the Night of Ordainment. It has been reported from Imam Sādiq عليه السلام that Allah عز وجل on the nineteenth night decrees matters, on the twenty first night verifies them and then on the night of the twenty third sanctions them.⁴

¹ Riyāḍ al-Sālikīn, vol. 6, pg 37

² Sharḥ al-Kabīr 'alā al-Saḥīfah al-Sajjādiyah, pg 112.

³ Jalāl al-Dīn, al-Suyūfī, al-Dur al-Manthūr, Qum, Kitāb Khāneh Sayyid Mar'ashī Najafī, 1404 AH, 1st ed., vol. 6, pgs 372-376.

⁴ al-Kafī, vol. 7, pg 628.

3.3. A Journey of a Thousand Nights

The Night of Ordainment is like no other night. It is said to be the heart of the Month of Ramaḍān¹ and that any worship done within it is better than that action done in a thousand months that do not possess it.² However, this is no ordinary journey; it requires prior preparation; a heart and soul that has not been prepared beforehand cannot receive the abundant blessings and virtues that are contained in this night. That person who is able to traverse the path of 80-plus months of worship in this night, is that person who over the entire year observes the Divine Law of Allah ﷻ to the tee and then on the Night of Ordainment experiences such a change within his existence that a simple prostration becomes a prostration of eighty months! This effect is reserved for the special friends of Allah ﷻ, who have earned it.

¹ Ibid, pg 379.

² Ibid, pg 626.

However, it is also possible that what is meant here is that the actions and worships of every person on that night will be rewarded equivalent to a thousand months of worship performed according to that person's own status.¹

3.4. Night of Ordainment; Night of Attachment with Imam Mahdī عجل الله فرجه

The question that must now be asked is that upon whom do the angels and the Spirit descend upon? It cannot be an ordinary soul, but has to be a person who possesses a soul large enough to accept and receive the communications and greetings that the celestial beings will bring from their Lord. This person can be non-other than the Imam of the time, Imam Mahdī عجل الله فرجه.² However, this night is not merely a means of providing firm proof for the necessary existence of the Imam³, but because of this night being a firm proof, a person in these nights should strive and sincerely ask Allah ﷻ to make him one of the true supporters and followers of the Imam عجل الله فرجه. It is of no coincidence that one of the recommended supplications for the Nights of Ordainment is the

¹ Shuhūd va Shanākt, vol. 3, pgs 400-401.

² Riyāḍ al-Sālikīn, vol. 6, pg 34.

³ al-Kafī, vol. 1, pgs 618-619.

continuous praying for the safety of Imam Mahdī عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَوَجَّهَ الشَّرِّيفَ,¹ as it is hoped that this continued remembrance will lead one to form an attachment with his Divine Leader, *Inshā Allah*.

Conclusion

Imam Sajjād عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ has shown us through this supplication that the Month of Ramaḍān truly is a blessed month, and is an opportunity for one to achieve great spiritual advancement and self-purification. But in order to achieve and receive the countless bounties of Allah عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ in this month, one must prepare and be prepared to strive and work for it by performing the compulsory and recommended acts, especially the reciting of the Holy Qur'ān, to the best of one's ability, and that the culmination of this effort will come to fruition on the Nights of Ordainment.

¹ Ali ibn Mūsā, Ibn Tāwūs, al-Iqbāl al-'Amāl, Qum, Daftar Tablīghāt Islamī, 1386 SH, 1st ed., vol. 1, pg 191.

Section 3:

The Supplications of Imam

Sajjād ؑ concerning

personal matters

The Blessed Month of Ramaḍān is a time for a person to reflect upon his actions over the past year; to analyze if he had used the gifts granted to him by Allah ﷻ for their rightful purposes. But it is also a time to improve oneself for the following year; to strengthen one's resolve and understanding of how to correctly worship and use the gifts of Allah ﷻ correctly.

Our physical body and every function connected to it is one of the greatest gifts that Allah ﷻ has granted mankind and it is up to us to use them in a way that is approved and pleasing to the one who gave them to us.

In this section, the supplications that Imam Sajjād عليه السلام made regarding certain body parts and functions, and on the perfection of certain forms of worship are attempted to be explained and elaborated on by using the Holy Qu'rān and the narrations of Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Pure Family عليهم السلام.

1. Pure Physical Fasting

After mentioning and expressing the merits and greatness of the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān, Imam عليه السلام then begins his supplications and requests from Allah ﷻ.

A point that is worthy of note and is something that is seen constantly throughout the supplications of Şahīfah al-Sajjādiyah is that Imam ﷺ usually, before every request, begins by sending salutations upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Pure Family ﷺ. The philosophies mentioned for this by the scholars vary and we do not wish to enter into that discussion¹; but one of the most obvious reasons for this practice of the Imam ﷺ is that it is a means of teaching and showing the etiquettes of prayer, in a practical way, to those who wish to call upon Allah ﷻ.²

The Imam ﷺ then continues his supplication and recites the following passage,

وَ أَعِنَّا عَلَى صِيَامِهِ بِكَفِّ الْجَوَارِحِ عَنْ مَعَاصِيكَ، وَ اسْتِعْمَالِهَا فِيهِ بِمَا يُرْضِيكَ

“O Allah help us to fast in it by our restraining our limbs from acts of disobedience towards You and our employing them in those acts which please You.”

¹ Şahbā ye Huḍūr, pg. 135-136; Sīmā ye Ramaḍān, pg 44.

² For details on the benefits of sending salutations refer to al-Kāfī, vol. 4, pgs 348-359

The above passage clearly shows and teaches us that fasting is not merely an outward form of worship that only involves keeping away from food and drink for a specific amount of time rather it involves much more than that for it to be considered a true form of fasting.

Imam Sādiq عليه السلام emphasizes the above point in an authentic narration in which he عليه السلام said,

إِذَا صُئِمْتَ، فَلْيَصُمْ سَمْعُكَ وَبَصَرُكَ وَشَعْرُكَ وَجِلْدُكَ وَعَدَدَ أَشْيَاءَ غَيْرَ هَذَا، وَقَالَ: لَا يَكُونُ يَوْمٌ
صَوْمِكَ كَيَوْمِ فِطْرِكَ

“When you are fasting, your ears, eyes, hair, skin (the Imam then mentioned other body parts) must also be fasting.” The Imam عليه السلام then continued and said, “The day you are fasting must not be the same as a day when you are not fasting.”¹

1.1. Ears

The Imam عليه السلام then mentions six body parts, starting with the ears, in which he asks for assistance in their restraint from Allah عز وجل.

¹ Al-Kāfi, vol. 7, pg. 436.

The Imam عليه السلام says,

حَتَّى لَا نُصْغِيَ بِأَسْمَاعِنَا إِلَى لَغْوٍ

“So that we do not lend our ears to vain talk”

The above phrase of the supplication is beautifully explained by the following verse of the Holy Qu’rān,

وَ إِذَا سَمِعُوا اللَّغْوَ أَعْرَضُوا عَنْهُ

“And when they hear vain talk, they avoid it...”¹

In explaining what is meant by vain talk in the above verse, it has been mentioned from Imam Sadiq عليه السلام that two possible referents are lying and haram music.²

Another possible referent for what could be meant by vain talk is backbiting.

In this connection the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said,

السَّامِعُ لِلْغَيْبَةِ أَحَدُ الْمُعْتَابِينَ

¹ Qasas\55

² Alī ibn Ibrāhīm, al-Qummī, Tafsīr al-Qummī, Qum, Dār al-Kitāb, 1363 SH, 3rd ed., vol. 2, pg. 142.

“The listener of backbiting is counted as one of the backbiters.”¹

As can be seen from the above traditions a fasting person, especially during the blessed month must protect his ears and hearing from all things that are of no benefit from him or even at times might even be a sin if he gives ear to them. However, Imam Sajjād عليه السلام in the beginning phrase also asked Allah ﷻ for assistance in using these body parts to attain his satisfaction.

One such way to use the ears as a means of earning Allah ﷻ satisfaction is by listening to the Holy Qu’rān, admonishments and wise, uplifting words in this blessed month which, as seen above, is so intrinsically connected to this blessed month.

Imam Sādiq عليه السلام sums up the above concepts wonderfully when he says,

زَكَاةُ الْأُذُنِ اسْتِمَاعُ الْعَيْنِ وَالْحِكْمَةُ وَالْقُرْآنُ وَفَوَائِدُ الدِّينِ مِنَ الْمَوْعِظَةِ وَالنَّصِيحَةِ وَمَا فِيهِ نَجَاتُكَ وَ
الإِعْرَاضُ عَمَّا هُوَ ضِدُّهُ مِنَ الكَذِبِ وَالغَيْبَةِ وَأَشْبَاهِهِمَا

“The tax of the ears is using them to listen to wisdom and knowledge, the Holy Qu’rān and anything that will benefit a person’s religion and take him to

¹ Mustadrak al-Wasāil wa Mustanbit al-Masāil, vol. 9, pg, 133.

felicity; also to turn them away from all that which contradicts the above from lying, backbiting and their likes.”¹

Is not the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān a perfect and pristine time to pay this ‘tax’?

Imam ‘Alī عليه السلام, when mentioned the attributes of the true believers in his famous sermon known as Hammām, he says,

وَقَفُّوا أَسْمَاعَهُمْ عَلَى الْعِلْمِ النَّافِعِ لَهُمْ

“And they open their ears to knowledge that will be of benefit to them.”²

1.2. Eyes

Imam Sajjād عليه السلام then continues and says,

وَلَا نُسْرِعْ بِأَبْصَارِنَا إِلَى لَهْوٍ

“And [so that] we do not hurry with our eyes to diversion”

¹ Miṣbāh al-Sharī‘ah, attributed to Imam Sādiq عليه السلام, Beirut, A’lamī, 1400 AH, 1st ed., pg. 51.

² Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 193.

One of the clearest referents of this diversion is looking at things which are impermissible, such as a non-mahram¹ etc.

A narration in this regard reported from the Holy Prophet ﷺ shows precisely what the Imam ﷺ is teaching in these phrases. It is reported that he ﷺ said,

خَمْسٌ يُفْطِرْنَ الصَّائِمَ: الْكُذْبُ وَالْغِيْبَةُ وَالنَّمِيْمَةُ وَالْيَمِيْنُ الْكَادِبَةُ وَالنَّظْرُ بِشَهْوَةٍ.

*“Five things break a person’s fast; lying, backbiting, tale-telling, a fake promise and a lustful look.”*²

The above tradition clearly shows that fasting is not only merely refraining from food and drink but rather it is also about keeping away from unethical traits. As even thou in terms of jurisprudence, the above five things do not break the fast, but they in reality render the fast insignificant and devoid of any spirituality and upliftment to the fasting person, which is the actual goal.

¹ A non-mahram is a person, man or woman, who is not related by either blood or relationship to a person and marriage with them via the opposite sex, is allowed.

² Muhammad Muhsin, Fayḍ Kāshānī, al-Muḥajjah al-Bayḍā, Qum, Jāmi’ah Mudarrisīn, 1376 SH, 4th ed., vol. 2, pg 132.

Therefore, protecting one’s eyes from seeing things that it must not see is one of the most important responsibilities that a person must perform, especially in the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān. For when mentioning the rights of the eyes, Imam Sajjād عليه السلام himself says, “And the right of the eyes is that they should be covered from seeing things that are impermissible for them and only be used in places where they will acquire lessons from or gain knowledge; for surely the eyes are the doors to guidance.”¹

In further elaborating on this the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a famous tradition that,

النَّظْرُ سَهْمٌ مَسْمُومٌ مِنْ سِهَامِ إِبْلِيسَ فَمَنْ تَرَكَهَا خَوْفًا مِنَ اللَّهِ أَعْطَاهُ اللَّهُ إِيمَانًا يَجِدُ حَلَاوَتَهُ فِي قَلْبِهِ

“Looking [at something impermissible] is a poisoned arrow from the arrows of Iblīs; so whoever abandons it out of fear of Allah ﷻ, Allah ﷻ will grant that person such belief whose sweetness will be felt in his heart.”²

¹ Ḥasan ibn Alī, ibn Sh’abah Ḥarānī, Tuḥf al-‘Uqūl, Qum, Jāmi’ah Mudarrisīn, 1404 AH, 2nd ed., pg. 257.

² Biḥār al- Anwār, vol 101, pg 38.

In continuing with the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān being the month of the Holy Qu'rān, we end this section with the following narration reported from the Holy Prophet ﷺ,

أَنَّ النَّظَرَ إِلَى الْكُعْبَةِ عِبَادَةٌ وَ النَّظَرَ إِلَى الْوَالِدَيْنِ عِبَادَةٌ وَ النَّظَرَ فِي الْمُصْحَفِ مِنْ غَيْرِ قِرَاءَةٍ عِبَادَةٌ وَ
النَّظَرَ إِلَى وَجْهِ الْعَالِمِ عِبَادَةٌ وَ النَّظَرَ إِلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ عِبَادَةٌ.

“Surely looking at the Ka’bah is worship; looking at one’s parents is worship; looking at the Holy Qur’an, even without reciting it is worship; looking at the face of a true scholar is worship and looking towards the Pure Family of Muhammad ﷺ is worship.”¹

1.3. Hands

The Imam ﷺ then moves onto the next body part and says,

وَ حَتَّى لَا نَبْسُطَ أَيْدِينَا إِلَى مَحْظُورٍ

“And we stretch not our hands towards that which is forbidden.”

¹ Muhammad ibn Ali, ibn Bābawayh (Sadūq), Man Lā Yaḥḍurū Hu al-Faqīh, Qum, Jāmi’ah Mudarrisīn, 1413 AH, 2nd ed., vol. 2 , pg. 205.

There are many possible referents for the above statement. One of the clearest is the touching of a non-maḥram.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said,

مَنْ صَافَحَ امْرَأَةً تَحْرُمُ عَلَيْهِ فَقَدْ بَاءَ بِسَخَطٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَ مِنَ التَّرَمِّ امْرَأَةً حَرَامًا فُرِنَ فِي سِلْسِلَةٍ
مِنْ نَارٍ مَعَ شَيْطَانٍ فَيُقَدَّفَانِ فِي النَّارِ

“Whoever gives their hand to a woman who is not his maḥram, surely has earned and will face the wrath of Allah ﷻ, and whoever hugs a non- maḥram woman, they both will be bound with Shaytān with chains and in that state will be thrown into the Hell fire.”¹

Another more subtle referent is the acquiring of wealth and possessions.

It is reported from Imam Sādiq ؑ, who narrates that the Holy Prophet ﷺ, said,

إِنَّ أَحْوَفَ مَا أَخَافُ عَلَى أُمَّتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي هَذِهِ الْمَكَاسِبُ الْحَرَامُ

¹ Man Lā Yahḍurū Hu al-Faqīh, vol. 4, pg. 14.

“The thing I fear the most for from my nation who will come after me is their participation in forbidden transactions and business dealings.”¹

Within this very referent, many sub-referents also exist, for example, stealing, usury, usurpation, cheating in business etc. All of which need to be refrained from at all times, but more so during the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān, as this a month that is meant to purify a person and his belongs and not make them even more stained and blackened. The Blessed Month of Ramaḍān is also the ideal time to prevent and stop oneself from performing the above mentioned actions, as it is a month when purity can be attained with the assistance of Allah ﷻ

So rather than stretching one’s hand towards that which is forbidden, one should instead “give a helping hand”, which again can be done in so many different ways. One of the best methods, especially during the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān is to provide Ifṭār² to those who are in need to the extent of one’s

¹ Al-Kāfi, vol. 9, pg 678.

² The meal that is had at sunset or dawn to complete the fast of that day

ability. For the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in his famous sermon of Sh’abānīyah,

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ مَنْ فَطَّرَ مِنْكُمْ صَائِمًا مُؤْمِنًا فِي هَذَا الشَّهْرِ كَانَ لَهُ بِدَلِّكَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ عِتْقُ رَقَبَةٍ وَ مَغْفِرَةٌ
لِمَا مَضَى مِنْ ذُنُوبِهِ

“O people! Whoever from amongst you provides Iftār for a fasting believer in this blessed month, his reward with Allah ﷻ will be as if he has freed a slave and has had all his past sins forgiven.”

فَقِيلَ لَهُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ لَيْسَ كُنُنَا يَفْدِرُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ

It was then asked, “O Messenger of Allah ﷺ what if one does have the means to do so?”

فَقَالَ ص اتَّقُوا النَّارَ وَ لَوْ بِشِقِّ تَمْرَةٍ اتَّقُوا النَّارَ وَ لَوْ بِشَرْبَةِ مِنْ مَاءٍ

The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied, “Protect yourselves from the fire! Even if it be just with a single date or a glass of water.”¹

1.4. Legs

The Imam ﷺ then continues and says,

¹ Uyūn al-Akhbār al-Riḍā, vol.1, pg 295

وَلَا نَخْطُو بِأَفْئَامِنَا إِلَىٰ مَحْجُورٍ

“And we stride not with our feet toward the prohibited”

The feet are our natural means of transport, hence we can use them to take us towards things and places which are permissible and which earn the pleasure of Allah ﷻ or towards those things and places which are forbidden and which earn the wrath of Allah ﷻ

Imam Sajjād ؑ explains this further when he says, “And the right of the legs is that they should not be used to take you to places that are forbidden, and you should not place them on a path that will degrade and humiliate you. For surely they are the means for taking steps on the path of religions and for one’s advancement, and you will be standing on the bridge [on the Day of Judgment] with these very legs, so ensure that they do not slip and throw you into the fire.”¹

¹ Tuhf al-‘Uqūl, pg 257

An example of a forbidden place is a gathering of vainness and idleness, which especially during the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān is a type of gathering that should be avoided. In this regard the Imam Alī عليه السلام has said,

مَجَالِسُ اللَّهْوِ تُفْسِدُ الْإِيمَانَ

“A gathering of idleness and sin corrupts belief.”¹

Imam Sādiq عليه السلام describes which type of gatherings the legs should be used to go to, he عليه السلام says,

زَكَاةُ الرَّجْلِ السَّعْيُ فِي حُقُوقِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى مِنْ زِيَارَةِ الصَّالِحِينَ وَ مَجَالِسِ الذِّكْرِ

“The tax of the legs is that they are used in trying to perform the rights of Allah تعالى, such as visiting the righteous and attending gatherings of his remembrance.”²

In explaining the benefit of sitting with the righteous and by keeping in mind that one of the main purposes of the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān is the reformation of the human soul, Imam Sajjād عليه السلام says,

¹ ‘Abd al-Wāḥid ibn Muhammad, Tamīmī Amidī, Ghurur al-Ḥikam wa Durur al-Kalam, Qum, Dār ah-Kutub al-Islamī, 1410 AH, 2nd ed. pg. 708

² Miṣbāḥ al-Sharī’ah, pg 52

مُجَالَسَةُ الصَّالِحِينَ دَاعِيَةٌ إِلَى الصَّلَاحِ

“A gathering with the righteous, invites a person towards reform.”¹

1.5. Stomach

In continuing his supplication the Imam عليه السلام says,

وَ حَتَّى لَا تَعْيَ بَطُونُنَا إِلَّا مَا أَحَلَّتْ

“And let our bellies hold only that which You have made lawful”

The Blessed Month of Ramaḍān, as stated earlier, is a month for purification and upliftment. So a person who eats things that are forbidden will not only be doing a disservice to this blessed month, but also to himself.

It is reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said,

الْعِبَادَةُ مَعَ أَكْلِ الْحَرَامِ كَالْبِنَاءِ عَلَى الرَّمْلِ

“Worship accompanied with eating that which is forbidden is like building a house on soft sand”²

¹ Al-Kāfi, vol. 1, pg. 41

² Biḥār al-Anwār, vol. 100, pg. 16

The deeds and actions we perform in this blessed month should be a spring board for the rest of the year until the next Blessed Month of Ramaḍān, but eating forbidden things will only render our efforts worthless. It must be noted that forbidden does not only mean the food or drink itself is forbidden, rather even allowed food and drink purchased with illegally earned money will have the same consequences.

Therefore in this blessed month a person should strive extra hard to ensure that the food and drink used to start and end the virtuous deed of fasting are pure and certain. As Imam Sajjād عليه السلام is reported to have said,

مَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ أَحَبَّ إِلَى اللَّهِ بَعْدَ مَعْرِفَتِهِ مِنْ عِفَّةِ بَطْنٍ

“There is no action more beloved to Allah ﷻ, after knowledge of Him, than purity of the stomach.”¹

In a similar narration, Imam Bāqir عليه السلام is reported to have said,

مَا عُبِدَ اللَّهُ بِشَيْءٍ أَفْضَلَ مِنْ عِفَّةِ بَطْنٍ

“Allah ﷻ is not worshipped by any action better than purity of the stomach.”¹

¹ Tuḥf al-‘Uqūl, pg. 282

1.6. Tongue

The Imam عليه السلام then mentions, arguably, the most important body part last.

He عليه السلام says,

وَلَا تَنْطِقَ أَلْسِنَتُنَا إِلَّا بِمَا مَثَلَتْ

“And let our tongues speak only that which you have characterized”

It is reported that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said,

إِذَا أَصْبَحَ ابْنُ آدَمَ أَصْبَحَتْ الْأَعْضَاءُ كُلُّهَا تَسْتَكْفِي اللِّسَانَ أَي تَقُولُ إِيَّاكَ اللَّهُ فِينَا فَإِنَّكَ إِنْ اسْتَقَمْتَ اسْتَقَمْنَا

وَ إِنْ إِعْوَجَجْتَ إِعْوَجَجْنَا

“Whenever a person awakes, so does all his limbs and body parts; they all then turn towards the tongue and say to it, “Fear Allah ﷻ with regards to us!

If you are right and correct, we will all be right and correct; but if you deviate, we will all deviate.”²

The above tradition clearly shows the significance of the tongue in the destiny of man. Therefore, it is incumbent upon a person to control his tongue during

¹ Al-Kāfi, vol. 3, pg. 203

² al-Muḥajjah al-Baydā, vol. 5, pgs 193-194

the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān and not perform actions that will render his fast spiritually null and void. For if the tongue is guided the rest of the body parts and limbs will follow suite, as per above tradition. One such action is lying, in a very explicit narration regarding lying during the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān, Imam Bāqir عليه السلام says,

إِنَّ الْكُذِبَةَ لَيُفْطِرُ الصِّيَامَ

“Surely lying breaks the fast.”¹

Another explicit narration concerns cursing and swearing at another person, as it has been reported from Imam Sādiq عليه السلام who said that his father عليه السلام said that one day the Holy Prophet ﷺ heard a lady cursing her female servant while she was fasting. The Holy Prophet ﷺ then asked for some food to be brought and told the lady to eat. She replied to him that she was fasting. The Holy Prophet ﷺ then said to her,

كَيْفَ تَكُونِينَ صَائِمَةً وَقَدْ سَبَبْتِ جَارِيَتِكَ؟! إِنَّ الصَّوْمَ لَيْسَ مِنَ الطَّعَامِ وَالشَّرَابِ

¹ Biḥār al-Anwār, vol. 94, pg 352

“How can you be fasting and at the same time swear at your female servant?!? Fasting is not only about refraining from food and drink!”¹

So the tongue must be controlled in this blessed month, but it must also be used to earn the blessings that Allah ﷻ has specifically ordained for this month and there is no better way to that than by reciting the Holy Qu’rān.

In the sermon of Sh’abānīyyah, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said concerning the reciting of the Holy Qu’rān in this blessed month, the month of its revelation,

وَمَنْ تَلَا فِيهِ آيَةً مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ كَانَ لَهُ مِثْلُ أَجْرِ مَنْ خَتَمَ الْقُرْآنَ فِي غَيْرِهِ مِنَ الشُّهُورِ

“And whoever recites within this blessed month a verse from amongst the verses of the Holy Qu’rān, he will be rewarded the like of that person who completes the entire Qu’rān in another month [other than the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān]”²

¹ Al-Kāfi, vol. 7, pg 437

² Uyūn al-Akḥbār al-Riḍā, vol 1, pg 296

Other worthy actions that should be done in this month via the tongue are reciting of the specific supplications recorded for this month¹, doing abundant remembrance (zikr) and continuously asking for forgiveness from Allah ﷻ.²

2. Perfection of Worship

Following on from asking Allah ﷻ for assistance in controlling and using the body parts and functions in a way which earns His ﷻ pleasure, Imam ﷺ then asks for assistance in maintaining and perfecting certain acts of worship during this month.

2.1. Prayer

The first and most important act of worship that needs to be attended to is the ritual prayer, for it is the pinnacle of worship of a true servant of Allah ﷻ. For prayer in its true meaning is meant to prevent a person from falling into sin at the onset, “...and maintain the prayer. Indeed the prayer prevents indecencies and wrongs.”³ It is then also a means to seek assistance from Allah ﷻ, “O you

¹ Mustadrak al-Wasāil wa Mustanbit al-Masāil, vol. 7, pg 361

² Al-Kāfi, vol. 7, pg. 440

³ Ankabūt\45

who have faith! Take recourse in patience and prayer,”¹ and then finally it will be this prayer that will be the sign of one’s success and salvation, “*Certainly, the faithful have attained salvation; those who are humble in their prayers.*”²

Imam Sajjād عليه السلام mentions this act of worship by saying,

وَقَفْنَا فِيهِ عَلَى مَوَاقِبِ الصَّلَوَاتِ الْخَمْسِ بِحُدُودِهَا الَّتِي حَدَدْتَ، وَفُرُوضِهَا الَّتِي فَرَضْتَ، وَوُجُوبِهَا الَّتِي وَظَّفْتَ، وَأَوْقَاتِهَا الَّتِي وَقَّتَ

“In it [i.e. the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān] make us attend to the appointed moments of the five prayers within the bounds You have set, the obligations You have decreed, the duties You have assigned, and the times You have specified.”

As can be noticed in the above passage, the discussion of prayer is vast³ and contains many facets and it is not the intention of this brief study to discuss all

¹ Baqarah\153

² Mu’minūn\1-2

³ For a more detailed look at the prayer, the reader may refer to the following two books of Sayyid Ruhullah, Khomeinī: Ādāb al-Ṣalāt (The Disciplines of the Prayer), Trans. Muhammad Ja’fār Khalīlī and Sālār Manāfī -

of them, but to merely skim the surface of this all important religious duty. Therefore we will suffice ourselves with discussing just one of these facets mentioned in the above passage that has a significant practical usage.

The first part of the above passage deals with the concept of mawāqīt¹, or the prescribed times of the five daily prayers and it from this phrase that we understand the importance of praying at the very onset of the prayer (Awal al-Waqt), especially during the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān, as the rewards for doing so are multiplied beyond imagination..

Imam Riḍa عليه السلام is reported to have said in a lengthy narration,

وَالصَّلَاةُ فِي أَوَّلِ الْوَقْتِ أَفْضَلُ

*“Prayer at its onset is better [than at other times]”*²

It has been reported from one of the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that,

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ يُحَدِّثُنَا وَنُحَدِّثُهُ فَإِذَا حَضَرَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَكَأَنَّهُ لَمْ يَعْرِفْنَا وَ لَمْ نَعْرِفْهُ

Anāri, Qum, The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini’s Works and The Mystery of Prayer, Trans. Sayyid Amjad H. Shah Naqavi, Leiden, the Netherlands, Brill.

¹ Mawāqīt is the plural form of Mīqāt, which means time; but it can also mean place. (Riyāḍ al-Sālikīn, vol.6, pg 48.)

² ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍa, vol.2 , pg 123

“The Holy Prophet ﷺ used to speak to us, and we with him, but when the time for prayer entered, it was if he did not recognize us and us not him.”¹

The above narration shows the importance the Holy Prophet ﷺ would give to the beginning time of the prayer, so much so that his entire focus was on Allah ﷻ.

It has also been reported that Imam Riḍa ؑ said,

إِذَا دَخَلَ الْوَقْتُ عَلَيْكَ فَصَلِّهَا فَإِنَّكَ لَا تَدْرِي مَا يَكُونُ

“Whenever the time of prayer enters upon you, pray immediately; as you do not know what will happen later on.”²

Even though jurisprudentially the person would not have performed a sin, but he missed out on a conversation with his Lord.

In a narration from Imam Ṣādiq ؑ, it is reported that he said regarding the times of prayer,

أَوَّلُهُ رِضْوَانُ اللَّهِ وَ آخِرُهُ عَفْوُ اللَّهِ وَ الْعَفْوُ لَا يَكُونُ إِلَّا عَنْ ذَنْبٍ

¹ Biḥār al-Anwār, vol. 67, pg. 400

² Wasāil al-Shia, vol. 4, pg 119

“At its onset contains the Riḍwān (pleasure) of Allah ﷻ and its end contains His ‘Afw (forgiveness); as this forgiveness is only for one’s sins.”¹

So if a person performs his prayer at its first time, he will enter into the pleasure of Allah ﷻ; however, if he delays his prayer and prays outside of the first time, he will earn the forgiveness of Allah ﷻ. Therefore it is far greater to enter into the pleasure of Allah ﷻ because within this pleasure, forgiveness also exists; however His ﷻ pleasure does not exist within his forgiveness.²

2.2. Complete Purity

Imam Sajjād عليه السلام then asks Allah ﷻ to assist him in performing the prayer with a complete purity, he says,

عَلَىٰ أَتْمِّ الطُّهُورِ وَ أَسْبَغِهِ

“[And make us attend to all this] whilst being in the completest and amplest of purity.”

¹ Wasāil al-Shia, vol. 4, pg 123.

² Sayyid Muhammad, Yathrabī, Sayri dar Risālah Huqūq Imam Sajjād عليه السلام, Qum, Ansāriyān, 1387 SH, 5th ed, vol. 1, pg. 288

The word *tahūr* in the above passage is inclusive of both the major (ghusl) and minor (Wuḍū) ablutions,¹ and what is meant by completest and amplest (isbāgh) is that the wuḍū be performed in a way that includes all that which Allah ﷻ has made compulsory and all that which the Holy Prophet ﷺ added to it as recommendations and perfections.²

Therefore, as can be seen, the issue of purity, both intrinsic and extrinsic is of great importance in this blessed month. So one of the practical lessons that we can extract from this passage of the Imam ʿAlī is the issue of performing ritual purity correctly and as an extension trying to be in the state of ritual purity at all times and as much as possible, especially in this month.

It has been mentioned that Wuḍū is a shield for the believers and protects him from the arrows and tricks of the Devil, but more so it protects him from his vain desires and prevents him from committing sins. It is also one of the most important elements in spiritual wayfaring and bestows the human spirit with a special receptivity, as a result of which it can benefit from the special Lordly

¹ Riyāḍ al-Sālikīn, vol. 6, pg. 51

² Ibid

bestowals of grace¹ and mercy that are available during the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān.

It is reported that the Holy Prophet ﷺ advised Imam Alī ؑ by saying to him,

يا عَلِيُّ! دَاوِمْ عَلَى وُضُوءٍ، فَإِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ مَا دَامَ عَلَى الطُّهُورِ وَ لَمْ يُحْدِثْ

“O Alī! Always maintain yourself in a state of ritual purity, for indeed the angels seek forgiveness for the human being as long as he is in the state of ritual purity and has not done any act that breaks the ritual purity.”²

In another tradition from Imam Ṣādiq ؑ, it is reported that he has said,

أَنَّ الْوُضُوءَ عَلَى الْوُضُوءِ نُورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ وَ مَنْ جَدَّدَ وُضُوءَهُ مِنْ غَيْرِ حَدَثٍ آخَرَ جَدَّدَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ
تَوْبَتَهُ مِنْ غَيْرِ اسْتِغْفَارٍ

“Surely Wuḍū upon Wuḍū is like light upon light; whoever repeats his Wuḍū without having done something that breaks it, Allah ﷻ will forgive his sins without him asking for forgiveness.”³

¹ Muhammad, Khalfān, Seeking Light, London, World Federation of KSIMC, 2014, 1st ed., pgs 29-32

² Mahdī, Mehrizī & Alī, Ṣadrāi Khuī, Mīrāth Hadīth Shīa, Qum, Dar al-Hadīth, 1378 SH, 1st ed., vol. 2, pg 20

³ Man Lā Yaḥḍurū Hu al-Faqīh, vol. 1, pg. 41

2.3. Fasting

What has become clear from the above discussions is that fasting, like all other acts of worships ordained by Allah ﷻ, has varying degrees. In this regard the scholars of ethics and mysticism have divided fasting into three categories, the fast of the ordinary people; the fast of the elite; and the fast of the elite of the elite.

The fast of the ordinary people is abstinence of the stomach and the private parts from fulfilling the carnal desires.

Hence, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said,

إِنَّ أَيْسَرَ مَا افْتَرَضَ اللَّهُ عَلَى الصَّائِمِ فِي صِيَامِهِ تَرْكُ الطَّعَامِ وَالشَّرَابِ

“Indeed the easiest thing that Allah ﷻ has made compulsory upon the fasting person during his fast is to refrain from food and drink.”¹

The fast of the elite is restraining the hearing, sight, tongue, hands, feet and all other limbs from misdeeds. So, Imam Sajjād ؑ is teaching us and preparing us

¹ Wasāil al-Shi’ah, vol. 10, pg 164

to reach this level of fasting, a fasting that goes beyond mere refrainment of carnal desires and is a stepping stone in reaching the final stage of fasting.

The fast of the elite of the elite, which is a fast of the heart and refrainment from all lowly and worldly thoughts, a fast in which the person abstains from everything other than Allah ﷻ.¹

Imam al-Muttaqīn, Alī ﷻ, in a narration indicating towards these three stages, has said,

صَوْمُ الْقَلْبِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ صِيَامِ اللِّسَانِ وَ صَوْمُ اللِّسَانِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ صِيَامِ الْبَطْنِ

“The fasting of the heart is greater than the fasting of the tongue; but the fasting of the tongue is greater than the fasting of the stomach.”²

Conclusion

The Blessed Month of Ramaḍān is not only a time to abstain from food and drink, but is a time to spiritually grow and attain moral and human perfection.

In these supplications the Imam ﷻ showed us and taught us,

¹ Muhammad Muḥsin, Fayḍ Kāshānī, Spiritual Mysteries and Ethical Secrets, Amina Inloes; Nazmina Virjee and Muhammad Reza Tajri, London, ICAS, 2012, 1st ed., pgs 537-540

² Ghurur al-Ḥikam wa Durur al-Kalam, pg 423

comprehensively, the way of how to achieve a fasting that will enable us to reach that goal of becoming servants of Allah ﷻ, a fasting known by the ethical scholars as being the fasting of the elite, but this requires effort and the will power of the faster is the only thing that will determine whether not this stage has been reached or not.

Section 4:

The Supplications of Imam Sajjād عليه السلام concerning social matters

After providing a road map of how to enter the fasting of the elite, Imam عليه السلام then details the social duties and responsibilities that a person should perform in the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān and the phrases of the Imam عليه السلام will be elaborated on using the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Pure Progeny عليهم السلام.

For even thou fasting is a personal matter and its goal per say is individual spiritual upliftment and growth, but the greater aim is to have a community of such elevated individuals, and the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān and fasting is a means to that end. An issue of note that must be mentioned is that these actions are recommended do to at all times, but the Imam عليه السلام mentions them here in order to show the added importance of them during the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān.¹

It was asked of the Holy Prophet ﷺ as to who is the most beloved person in the eyes of Allah ﷻ, he replied,

أَنْفَعُ النَّاسِ لِلنَّاسِ

¹ Payāmhā va Hidāyathā, vol. 7, pg. 106

“[The most beloved person in the eyes of Allah ﷺ] is he who is the most beneficial to other people.”¹

It is also reported from Imam Ṣādiq عليه السلام who narrates from the Holy Prophet ﷺ that,

الْخَلْقُ عِيَالُ اللَّهِ، فَأَحَبُّ الْخَلْقِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَنْ نَفَعَ عِيَالَ اللَّهِ

“Creation [mankind] is the family of Allah ﷺ; so the most beloved creation in the eyes of Allah ﷺ is he who benefits the family of Allah ﷺ.”²

4.1. Maintaining Family Ties

The first and probably most important social duty that a person has is within his own home, as the idiom goes “Generosity begins from home.” The Imam عليه السلام begins this section of the supplication with the following,

وَفَقَّنَا فِيهِ لِأَنْ نَصِلَ أَرْحَامَنَا بِالْبِرِّ وَالصَّلَاةِ

“Give us success in this month to tighten our bonds of kin with goodness and favour.”

¹ Al-Kāfi, vol. 3, pg 420

² Ibid, pg 419

Allah ﷻ in the Holy Qur’ān warns those who are God-conscious to be careful and wary about their blood relations and to keep good relations with them.

He ﷻ says,

وَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَ الْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

“Be wary of Allah, in whose Name you adjure one another, and the wombs (i.e. be wary of Allah and observe the rights of the blood relations and beware of breaking the ties of kinship)¹. Indeed Allah is watchful over you.”²

Imam Bāqir ؑ is reported to have said the following concerning the merits of keeping family ties,

صِلَةُ الْأَرْحَامِ تُرَكِّي الْأَعْمَالَ، وَتُنْمِي الْأَمْوَالَ، وَتَدْفَعُ الْبَلْوَى، وَ تُبَسِّرُ الْحِسَابَ، وَ تُنْسِي فِي الْأَجَلِ

“Maintaining family ties purifies one’s deeds and actions; increases wealth; prevents calamities; will make accountability on the Day of Judgment easier and delays death.”³

¹ Holy Qu’rān, Translated by Alī Qulī Qarā’ī, pg 106

² Nisā\1

³ Al-Kāfi, vol. 3, pg 387

In contrast, Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام, when asked what sin brings about death faster, he replied,

قَطِيعَةُ الرَّحِمِ

“The cutting of family ties.”¹

An important question that however needs to be answered is what exactly constitutes as maintaining family ties and if not done is counted as the breaking of family ties. According to the scholars, this matter goes back to the culture and common practice of the people of a particular place and has no standard answer, as what is considered as cutting of ties in one place might not be considered as such in another place. Also, the actions that constitutes the maintaining of family ties can be as simple as greeting and sending *Salāms*², but in this blessed month, as was mentioned earlier, the giving of Iftār and assisting family members, not only financially, especially those in need has great reward and importance.³

¹ Al-Kāfī, vol. 4, pg 62

² Ibid, vol.3, pg 398

³ Fehrī, Sharḥ va Tarjumah al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyah, vol. 3, pgs 264-265

4.2. Observing the Rights of One's Neighbours

After one's own home, the closest societal member is one's neighbor. The Imam عليه السلام says,

أَنْ نَتَّعَاهَدَ جِيرَانَنَا بِالْإِفْضَالِ وَالْعَطِيَّةِ

“[Give us success to] attend to our neighbours with kindness and benevolence.”

The Holy Qur'an usually discusses topics in a general and unspecific way, but at times, in order to show the importance of the issue being discussed, it will mention it in specific and expressive way. One such example of this is the right and order of kindness to one's neighbour, be they close or far.¹

It is reported from the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he said,

مَا زَالَ جِبْرِئِيلُ عليه السلام يُوصِينِي بِالْجَارِ حَتَّى ظَنَنْتُ أَنَّهُ سَيُورُّهُ

¹ Nisā\36

“Jibraīl advised me so frequently about my neighbours that I thought they would be included amongst inheritors.”¹

So the supplication of Imam عليه السلام is teaching us that we should be kind to our neighbours and assist them if we can, more so in this blessed month. Invite them for Iftār and accept their invitation, pray for them² and more importantly not to annoy and disturb them during this blessed month.

As it has been reported that it was said to the Holy Prophet ﷺ,

فُلَانَةٌ تَصُومُ النَّهَارَ وَتَقُومُ اللَّيْلَ وَتُؤْذِي جَارَهَا بِلِسَانِهَا قَالَ لَا خَيْرَ فِيهَا هِيَ مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ قَالُوا وَفُلَانَةٌ
تُصَلِّي الْمَكْتُوبَةَ وَتَصُومُ شَهْرَ رَمَضَانَ وَ لَا تُؤْذِي جَارَهَا فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ هِيَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ

“A certain lady fasts during the day and stands in prayer during the night but she annoys her neighbour with her tongue and speech.” The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied, “There is no goodness in her; she is from amongst the people of the Hell-fire.” It was then said to him ﷺ, “Another lady only prays her compulsory prayers and fasts only during the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān, but

¹ Man Lā Yahḍuru Hu al-Faqih, vol. 4, pg 13

² Biḥār al-Anwār, vol. 43, pg 82

she never annoys her neighbour,” the Holy Prophet ﷺ said to them, “She is from amongst the people of Paradise.”¹

4.3. Paying the Zakāt

The Imam عليه السلام continues and says,

أَنْ نُخَلِّصَ أَمْوَالَنَا مِنَ التَّبِعَاتِ، وَ أَنْ نُطَهِّرَهَا بِإِخْرَاجِ الزَّكَّوَاتِ

“[Give us success to] rid our possessions from claims and to purify them through paying the religious alms.”

What is clear from the above passage is that one’s wealth and possessions have a tax on them that needs to be paid in order for them to become pure, and if this is not done then that wealth and those possessions will remain in a state of impurity. One of those taxes or claims upon wealth is zakāt.

Imam Kāzīm عليه السلام is reported to have said,

حَصِّنُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بِالزَّكَّاتِ

“Guard your wealth by means of zakāt.”¹

¹ Mustadrak al-Wasāil wa Mustanbit al-Masāil, vol. 8, pgs 423-424

It is also reported from Imam Bāqir عليه السلام who said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّوَجَلَّ قَرَنَ الزَّكَاةَ بِالصَّلَاةِ، فَقَالَ أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ، فَمَنْ أَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَ لَمْ يُؤْتِ
الزَّكَاةَ، لَمْ يُقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ

“Indeed Allah ﷻ has associated zakāt with prayer, as He ﷻ has said, ‘and maintain the prayer and give the zakāt,’² so that person who maintains the prayer but does not give the zakat has in reality not maintained the prayer.”³

According to the contemporary scholars of Islamic Law i.e. the jurists, nothing other than zakat and khums is compulsory upon the wealth and possessions of a person and if anything else is said to have been compulsory, it is because of emphasis on that deed and action.⁴

One such narration is the following lengthy one from Imam Ṣādiq عليه السلام who, when the subject zakat was brought up in the presence of some wealthy personalities, said,

¹ Al-Kāfi, vol. 7, pg 362

² Baqarah\43;83 and 110

³ Al-Kāfi, vol. 7, pg 38

⁴ Fehrī, Sharḥ va Tarjumah al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah, vol. 3, pg 269

إِنَّ الزَّكَاةَ لَيْسَ يُحْمَدُ بِهَا صَاحِبُهَا، وَ إِنَّمَا هُوَ شَيْءٌ ظَاهِرٌ، إِنَّمَا حَقَّنَ بِهَا دَمَهُ وَ سُمِّيَ بِهَا مُسْلِمًا، وَ لَوْ
لَمْ يُؤَدِّهَا لَمْ تُقْبَلْ لَهُ صَلَاةٌ ، وَ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا فِي أَمْوَالِكُمْ غَيْرَ الزَّكَاةِ

فَقُلْتُ: أَصْلَحَكَ اللَّهُ، وَ مَا عَلَيْنَا فِي أَمْوَالِنَا غَيْرُ الزَّكَاةِ؟

فَقَالَ: «سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ! أَمَا تَسْمَعُ اللَّهَ- عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ- يَقُولُ فِي كِتَابِهِ: وَ الَّذِينَ فِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ مَعْلُومٌ لِلسَّائِلِ وَ
المَحْرُومِ؟»

قَالَ: قُلْتُ: مَاذَا الْحَقُّ الْمَعْلُومُ الَّذِي عَلَيْنَا؟

قَالَ: هُوَ الشَّيْءُ يَعْمَلُهُ الرَّجُلُ فِي مَالِهِ، يُعْطِيهِ فِي الْيَوْمِ ، أَوْ فِي الْجُمُعَةِ، أَوْ فِي الشَّهْرِ قَلَّ أَوْ كَثُرَ غَيْرَ
أَنَّهُ يَدُومُ عَلَيْهِ.

“Surely the one who pays the zakat is not praised, as it is a clear ruling which protects the blood of the payer and he is named a Muslim, and if a person does not pay it, his prayer will not be accepted. Indeed upon your wealth is another right other than zakat.”

We said to the Imam, “Other than zakat, what other right is upon our wealth?”

The Imam ﷺ replied in amazement, “Glory be to Allah! Have you not heard His ﷻ saying in the Holy Qur’ān where he says, ‘and in whose wealth there is a known right for the beggar and the deprived?’”¹

We asked, “What is this known right?”

The Imam ﷺ replied, “A person should put a fixed amount aside from his wealth and every day or one a week on a Friday or once a month gives it to a person in need, the amount is not important but what is important is that it must be done continuously.”²

So during the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān, we should try and put this narration into practice by giving that known right on a continuous basis within the blessed month and aiming to continue with that practice till the next Blessed Month of Ramaḍān. *Inshā Allah.*

¹ Ma’ārij\24-25

² Al-Kāfi, vol. 7, pgs 13-14

4.4. Communicating with a person who has Cut Ties

The next three supplications that the Imam عليه السلام recites are in asking Allah سبحانه for success in having good relationships with all people within society, even those who do not wish the same. From the onset it must be stated that it requires a person with a high moral character to actually put these teachings of Imam Sajjād عليه السلام into practice.

The Imam عليه السلام firstly asks,

أَنْ نُرَاجِعَ مَنْ هَاجَرََنَا

“[Give us success to] return to him who has gone far from us.”

The Imam Alī عليه السلام is reported to have said,

ارْحَمْ أَخَاكَ وَ إِنْ عَصَاكَ وَ صِلْهُ وَ إِنْ جَفَاكَ

“Be merciful to your brother, even if he is hostile towards you and have a relationship with him, even if he distances himself from you.”¹

In another narration the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is reported to have said,

¹ Biḥār al-Anwār, vol 74, 166

أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِخَيْرِ خَلَائِقِ الدُّنْيَا وَ الآخِرَةِ؟ ... وَ تَصِلُ مَنْ قَطَعَكَ

“Should I not inform you of the best moral traits of this World and the Hereafter?And maintaining a relationship with a person who has cut you off.”¹

This becomes even more significant if that person is a family member, and as has been discussed previously, the ill effects of cutting relationships are not something that should be taken lightly. Therefore, this blessed month is a month to build bridges and to heal old wounds; it is not only a month to enhance one’s relationship with Allah ﷻ, but also with His family. As it is reported that Amīr al-Mu’minīn ؑ has said in this regard,

صِلُوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ وَ إِنْ قَطَعُوكُمْ

“Maintain family ties and relationships, even if they cut relations with you.”²

4.5. Fairness to a person who has acted Unjustly

The Imam ؑ then says,

¹ Al-Kāfi, vol.10, pg 575

² Biḥār al-Anwār, vol. 71, pg 94

أَنْ تُنصِفَ مَنْ ظَلَمَنَا

“[Give us success to] treat justly him who has wronged us.”

Only a person with an extreme high and elevated moral status will be able to put these words into practice, so naturally we look towards the reciter of these words for guidance.

It is reported that Imam Sajjād عليه السلام said to the Shī’ah,

عَلَيْكُمْ بِأَدَاءِ الْأَمَانَةِ فَوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ مُحَمَّدًا بِالْحَقِّ نَبِيًّا لَوْ أَنَّ قَاتِلَ أَبِي الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ انْتَمَنِي عَلَى السَّيْفِ
الَّذِي قَتَلَهُ بِهِ لِأَدِّيْتُهُ إِلَيْهِ

“O my Shī’ah, I advise regarding fulfilling trusts left in your care. For by the right of the one who sent Muhammad ﷺ with truth, if the killer of my father had to leave the very sword he killed my father with as a trust in my care, I would return it to him.”¹

It is narrated that one of the cousins of Imam Sajjād عليه السلام named Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan was unhappy with the Imam عليه السلام for some reason. One day, whilst the Imam عليه السلام was sitting amongst his companions in the masjid, Ḥasan entered and

¹ Muhammad ibn Aḥmad, Fitāl Nīshāpūrī, Rawḍah al-Wa’izīn, Qum, Raḍī, 1375 SH, 1st ed.. vol. 2, pg 373

began to hurl abuse at the Imam ﷺ, but the Imam ﷺ remained silent throughout until Ḥasan left. That very night, the Imam ﷺ went to the house of Ḥasan and knocked on the door, when Ḥasan came out the Imam ﷺ said to him,

يَا أَخِي إِنْ كُنْتَ صَادِقاً فِيمَا قُلْتَ فَغَفَرَ اللَّهُ لِي وَ إِنْ كُنْتَ كَاذِباً فِيهِ فَغَفَرَ اللَّهُ لَكَ وَ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ وَ رَحْمَةُ
اللَّهِ وَ بَرَكَاتُهُ

“O my brother, if what you said about me is true, I ask Allah ﷻ to forgive me; but if what you said is untrue and a lie I ask Allah ﷻ to forgive you. May His peace and blessing be upon you.”

The Imam ﷺ then left after saying these which had a profound effect on his cousin, who chased after the Imam ﷺ while crying profusely and said to the Imam, “I swear by Allah ﷻ that I will never again perform something that displeases you.” The Imam ﷺ then said to him, “I have forgiven you concerning that which you have said.”¹

¹ Alī ibn Īsā, Arbilī, Kashf al-Ghammah fī Maʿrifatih al-Aʿimmah, Tabriz, Banī Hāshamī, 1381 SH, 1st ed., vol. 2, pg 75

4.6. Making peace with one's enemies

The final supplication that the Imam عليه السلام makes in this section is the following,

أَنْ نُسَالِمَ مَنْ عَادَانَا

“[Give us success to] make peace with him who shows enmity towards us.”

Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام is reported to have said,

لَيْسَ مِنْ شِيَمِ الْكِرَامِ تَعْجِيلُ الْإِنْتِقَامِ

“Hastening towards revenge is not from the ethics of magnanimous people.”

But as history testifies, the most magnanimous people to walk this Earth were the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Pure Progeny عليهم السلام. Therefore it is only fitting to end this section with anecdotes from the lives of the greatest of role models.

It is reported that one day a person from Shām rode into Madinah and as soon as he laid eyes on Imam Ḥasan عليه السلام, because of all the negative propaganda he was fed in Shām by the government of the time against the Family of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, started to curse the Imam عليه السلام. However, the Imam did not respond to him in kind but rather when he was finished the Imam went up to him with

a smile on his face, greeted him and said to him, “It seems that you are a stranger in this town, if you need anything, we will provide it for you; if you need directions, we will direct you; if you wish, we will take you load to your destination; if you are hungry, we will provide food for you; if you need clothing, shelter or refuge or anything for that matter, we will provide it for you. If you come to our home, you are welcome to stay as our guest till the time you decide to leave.”

On these honourable words and experiencing this conduct from the Imam, the rider from Shām broke down in tears and said,

أَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ خَلِيفَةُ اللَّهِ فِي أَرْضِهِ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتِهِ وَ كُنْتَ أَنْتَ وَ أَبُوكَ أَبْعَصَ خَلْقِ اللَّهِ إِلَيَّ وَ
الآنَ أَنْتَ أَحَبُّ خَلْقِ اللَّهِ إِلَيَّ

“I bear witness that you are the caliph of Allah ﷺ on Earth, Allah knows best where to place His apostleship!¹ Previously, you and your father were the

¹ Anām\124

most hated of Allah’s creation in my opinion, but now you are the most beloved.”¹

We end with an anecdote from the one who not only spoke these blessed words discussed in this work, but was the living and breathing example of it.

It is narrated that when Walīd ibn ‘Abd al-Mālīk, the ruler of that time, removed Hishām ibn Ismā’īl from the seat of governorship of Madinah, he also ordered that Hishām be kept in the house of Marwān ibn Hakam so that people could exact revenge on him for all the oppression he had done to them. Hishām feared the most for what Imam Alī ibn Ḥusayn ؑ and the family of Alī ؑ would do to him. He thought to himself that after all the oppression, tyranny and slander that he had done to them, the minimum punishment they would request is his death.

When, eventually, the Imam ؑ, with a large group of his family members stopped in front of the house of Marwān, the Imam greeted Hishām in a loud voice and had also beforehand told his family members and companions not to

¹ Biḥār al-Anwār, vol. 43, pg 344.

abuse or slander him. It is narrated that the Imam ﷺ went up to him, shook his hand and said to him, “If you need any assistance, we are prepared to help you.” It is reported that when the Imam was leaving, Hishām shouted in a loud voice, “Allah knows best where to place His apostleship!”¹

From that day on, Hishām was no longer reprimanded and reproached by the people of Madinah.²

Conclusion

In this section, Imam Sajjād ﷺ is teaching us that fasting is not something that only has personal benefits, but those spiritual ranks and levels that are acquired via fasting a true fast must be shown in a person’s interactions and dealings with other people within the society, beginning at home and then the community and large. For it is through these interactions that one can truly test and see for himself that whether or not he has achieved the fasting that Allah ﷻ ordained for him and which ends in him being entirely God-conscious.

What was also noticed in this section is that the Imam ﷺ is the living

¹ Anām\124

² Biḥār al-Anwār, vol. 46, pg 55-56 & 94

exemplary role model of these very words, in reality these words are the mirror of his very existence and conduct and therefore it is up to us to try and inculcate as much of these words as possible into our own existence in order to truly become a follower of this pure personality.

Final Conclusion

From the very beginning of this supplication, Imam Sajjād's ﷺ goal is to present to the reader a spiritual roadmap on how to gain the outmost benefit from an opportunity gifted by Allah ﷻ. By beginning with the greatest and magnificence of this blessed month, the Imam ﷺ makes the reader aware of just how grand this month is in the eyes of Allah ﷻ and as a result the reader becomes alive to the fact that this is no ordinary time that can merely be wasted.

The Imam ﷺ then provides a personal development program in order for a person to go beyond just the mere refrainment of food, drink and other carnal desires, and as we have shown via the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Pure Progeny ﷺ that fasting is much more than that.

Finally, the Imam ﷺ provides us with situations that provide us with litmus tests to see whether or not we have acquired that God-consciousness associated with fasting, and not only does he provide us with mere theoretical guidance, but through historical anecdotes we came to realize that he, as the saying goes, 'practiced what he preached.'

We ask Allah ﷻ to enable us to put into practice that which we have written and to inculcate in ourselves the depths of these words of Imam Sajjād ؑ and that we are able to make use of this precious gift i.e. the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān in a way that is both pleasing to Him ﷻ and the one who thought us the path to this pleasure.

Recommendations for Further Research

- 1) A complete exposition on the 44th Supplication of al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah.
- 2) The Blessed Month of Ramaḍān; a time for attaining Allah's ﷻ mercy and forgiveness. (An analyze of the concept of forgiveness in the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān; based upon al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah).
- 3) The Blessed Month of Ramaḍān; an existential reality. (A study on the salutations sent upon the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān as recited by Imam Sajjād ﷺ in the 45th Supplication of al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah).

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