



The Answers of the Eighth Imam (A.S.)

Muhammad Husayn Pouramini



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Preface

Any man's world is intertwined with his thoughts, which is nothing but a process of questions and answers. When he asks, "who will answer my questions?", he seeks to find a meaning for his life, and hopes to hear the correct answer to his many questions. He looks for a flowing spring of knowledge to quench his thirst for finding answers to his questions.

As pioneer in providing responses [to ideological challenges], the sagacious Shī'a school has founded a culture, in which the questioner is considered respectful and the question is regarded a virtue. In contrast to some views that consider raising questioning in religious fields as forbidden, the Shī'a school regards looking for answers as a duty and right. The method in which the leaders [Imams] of our religion have followed in promoting the culture of asking questions and their endeavor in answering questions is a testimony to the soundness of this claim.

His Holiness Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), the Learned of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad's (S.A.W.) Household (*Ālim-i Āl-i Muḥammad – S.A.W.*), considered *asking questions* as a key to knowledge and was himself a forerunner in giving answers to [people's] questions and in promoting this

culture throughout his life. The Shī'a narrational, theological, and jurisprudential texts reflect the answers of his Holiness (A.S.) to a variety of different questions, which indicate his skillfulness in scholarly debates.

This book is a selection from Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) responses to several questions, arranged in two chapters of theology and philosophy of Islamic laws. The first chapter deals with the Imam's (A.S.) responses to questions about "God, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), and Imam (A.S.)"; and the second chapter addresses the "philosophy and secrets of Islamic laws."

In conclusion, we draw our readers' attention to the following:

In compiling this book, any made-up question other than those asked from the Imam (A.S.) is avoided and only what the Imam (A.S.) has answered orally or in written is quoted here.

This collection does not include the questions and answers brought up in the debates (Imam al-Riḍā's – A.S.), since presenting those debates requires an independent and separate research.

Muhammad Husayn Pouramini
Holy City of Mashhad, 2011

Chapter One: Religious Beliefs

- Knowing the God
- Knowing the Prophet
- Knowing the Imam
- Pilgrimage
- Mahdism

Knowing the God

Tawḥīd (Oneness of Allah)

Existence of God

§ Provide a reason for the existence of God.

I looked at myself and found out that I cannot add to or subtract from the dimensions of my body, protect it against harm and evil, and provide it with a profit and benevolence. Then, I made sure that this structure has a constructor and admitted to His existence. Similarly, I saw the emergence of clouds, the blowing of the wind, orbiting of the sun, the moon, and the stars as other astonishing and evident signs and found out that this cosmos has an Engineer and Inventor.¹

Reality of *Tawḥīd*

§ Can the reality of *tawḥīd* be grasped?

All praise is due to Allah Who originated all things by

1. Kulaynī, Abī Ja'far Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb ibn Ishāq, *Al-Kāfī*, Islāmiyya, 2nd edition, Tehran, 1362 sh/1983, vol. 1 p. 78-79.

His Power and Wisdom. To manifest His Wisdom and the truth of His Providence, He created whatever He wanted and howsoever He liked. Intelligence cannot comprehend Him, imaginations (*awhām*) cannot reach Him, eyes cannot see Him, and measurements cannot confine Him. The power of expression is unable to express Him in words. All sights are exhausted from reaching Him and the power of describing and defining have gone astray in its description and definition of His. He is hidden without any veil and is concealed without any covering. He is known without being seen, described without any form, and praised without any body. There is no god, except Allah, the Great, and the Most High.

The Best of Creators

§ Is there any creator other than the Great Creator?

Allah (Eminent is His Glory) says, ﴿So blessed is Allah, the best of creators!﴾.¹ [Since the word *khāliqīn* (creators) in the above noble verse is plural] Allah proclaims that there are creators among His slaves, such as Jesus, son of Mary, who made a bird out of clay that by the will of Allah flew; or the Samaritan who made a calf for them [the Children of Israel] that gave a lowing sound. [However, it is to be noted that all these actions and conducts are carried out by the authority and will of Allah].²

1. Q. 23:14.

2. Sharīf Qurshī, Bāqir, *Pazhuhishī daqīq dar Zindigānī-yi Imām ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, trans. Sayyid Muḥammad Ṣāliḥī, Islāmiyya, 1st edition, Tehran, 1382 sh/2003, vol. 1, pp. 415-416.

The Oneness of Allah

§ Isn't there a god except Allah in the heavens?

[No], He is the [only] God of the heavens and the earth, ﴿He is Allah in the heavens and on the earth.﴾¹ He is the One who is worshipped on the earth and in the heaven, ﴿It is He who is God in the sky, and God on the earth.﴾² He forms us in the wombs as He wishes, ﴿It is He who forms you in the wombs however He wishes.﴾³ He is with you wherever you are, ﴿and He is with you wherever you may be.﴾⁴ It is He who created the heaven, while it was smoke, ﴿He turned to the heaven, and it was smoke.﴾⁵ It is Allah who created all [the blessings and bounties] that is in the earth, ﴿It is He who created for you all that is in the earth, then He turned to the heaven, and fashioned it into seven heavens.﴾⁶ Your Lord is Allah who created the heavens and the earth in six days [six periods]. Then, He proceeded to administer the world of being, ﴿Indeed your Lord is Allah, who created the heavens and the earth in six days, and then settled on the Throne.﴾⁷ He existed while there were no creatures and He was ever there.⁸

§ Why is it obligatory to confess the Oneness of God

1. Q. 6:3.

2. Q. 43:84.

3. Q. 3:6.

4. Q. 57:4.

5. Q. 41:11.

6. Q. 2:29.

7. Q. 7:54.

8. Ṭabarsī, Aḥmad b. 'Alī, *Al-Iḥtijāj 'Alā Ahl al-Lijā*, trans. Bihzād Ja'farī, Islamiyya, 1st edition, Tehran, 1381/2002, vol. 2, p. 407.

and to cognize His Unity?

If this confession and cognition had not been obligatory for people, they would have probably presumed two or more administrators for the world. If, however, this was the case and there was no way for cognizing the real Creator and He did not separate Himself from the other one, then no human being would have known which one of them was his creator and thus would worship the one who was not his creator. Furthermore, it would not have been clear to him which one had created him, whose command he should obey, and whose prohibitions he should abide by.¹

On the other hand, if there were two gods, none of them deserved worship and obedience and it would be permissible to obey both of them if either one were to be obeyed, making the non-obedience of “Allah” inevitable. Therefore, this would be ingratitude and infidelity to Allah and to all the Prophets; and affirmation of any falsehood would cause disowning rights, legalizing all prohibitions and prohibiting all lawful things, and so on.

Besides, if it is permissible not to know God as One and know other than Him as God, then Satan can also claim to be other god and [thus] can contradict all God’s

1. Applying One (*wāhid*) to Allah the Exalted is different from applying it to human being because a human being comprises distinct organs such as heart, liver, eyes, kidney, and other organs and cells, which as a whole is called one. However, Allah the Almighty does not comprise various organs and different cells, to which the word one can be applied. See: Qurshī, Bāqir Sharf, *Pazhuhishī daqīq dar Zindigānī-yi Imām ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, pp. 412-414.

ordinances and call people to himself, in which there is a greater infidelity and more intense hypocrisy.¹

The final reason is that [in this case] it was permissible that all the things that applies to God's creatures, such as desperateness, ignorance, changeability, demise, lying, oppression, and tyranny, would apply to him, too. With these attributes, he would turn into someone in whose survival there would remain no hope and there would be no certainty in his justice and such an assumption would cause the corruption of the world and the destruction of his lordship.²

Attestation to God

§ Why were people tasked with attesting to Allah and Allah's authorities and to what has been revealed by the Almighty Allah?

When a person does not believe in Allah, they would not avoid misdemeanors, would not give up committing great sins, and would indulge in whatever corruption and tyranny they wish to – without fearing anyone. If this turns to be the case and everybody does whatever he wishes without fearing anybody, then people's life would be totally ruined, everyone would exploit everyone else, would violate people's properties and honor, would shed

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharā'iyi'*, Dāvārī, 1st edition, nd. pp. 255-256. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, Nashr-i Jahān, 1st edition, Tehran, 1378 sh/1999, vol. 2, p. 102.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharā'iyi'*, p. 256; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 102.

blood; the sanctities would be violated, everyone would kill everyone else indiscriminately and unlawfully, and thus causing destruction of the world, extermination of humankind, and ruining prosperity and generations.

Prohibition of depravity and decadence, commanding beneficence and goodness, and preventing evil acts would not be possible except when the people attest to the Almighty Allah and recognize the Commander and the Forbidder.

Similarly, we see that the people may become depraved due to perpetrating certain acts – hidden from others' eyes. So, if there were no attestation to God or an inner fear of Him, nobody would care about avoiding unlawful acts or committing cardinal sins if he sees he may fulfill his vain desires in private. That is because he sees his actions are hidden from sights and nobody notices his conducts; and this unbridled force can lead to the corruption and destruction of all people. Therefore, people's perseverance and well-being is dependent upon their belief in an Omniscient and All-knowing God who is well aware of the hidden and the manifest, the God who commands virtue and righteousness and forbids evil and indecency. Nothing remains hidden from Him and this attestation and belief causes people to keep away from various kinds of depravities.¹

1. Ḥakīmī, Muḥammad Riḍā, et al, *Al-Hayāt*, Daftar Nashr-i Farhang-i Islāmī, Tehran, 1380 sh/2001, vol. 1, pp. 657-658, vol. 2, p. 648.

Negation of the Corporeality of God

§ If God is not corporeal, then what do the verses referring to this issue mean?

What is meant by “looking” in the verse, ﴿looking at their Lord﴾,¹ is expectation of reward and mercy.

In the verse, ﴿No indeed! They will be alienated from their Lord on that day﴾,² it means that they are deprived of their Lord’s reward.

What is meant by “arrive” in the verse, ﴿and your Lord and the angels arrive in ranks﴾,³ is that your Lord’s command will arrive and the angels will be in ranks, as the attribute of arriving and leaving does not apply to God.⁴

§ Can God be apprehended?

Allah says, ﴿The sights do not apprehend Him, yet He apprehends the sights﴾,⁵ in which the sights do not refer to eyes [since the eyes are only able to see physical objects, which reflect light, and are not even able to see some physical entities such as gases, whereas God is not physical]. Rather, it [the sight] is the apprehension by the heart as this apprehension is much stronger than the apprehension by the eyes.⁶ [Therefore, the verse means that the apprehension by the heart cannot apprehend Him and He can apprehend it].

1. Q. 75:23.

2. Q. 83:15.

3. Q. 89:22.

4. Qummi, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Al-Tawḥīd*, Intishārāt-i Islāmī, Qum, 1398/1977, p. 162.

5. Q. 6:103.

6. Kulaynī, Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb, *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 99.

About God

§ Where is God? What is He and what does He rely on?

The word “where” asks about the location of the absent [just as when we are present in a place and another person is not there, we ask, “Where is he?"]. However, the Exalted Allah has neither been absent nor has anything existed before Him. He is everywhere. He is the Administrator, the Creator, the Protector, and the Preserver of the heavens and the earth.¹

It is He who created place without any place being [designated] for Him, created objects with different qualities without any qualities being [attributed] to Him²; and whose reliance has been on His own omnipotence.³

§ Since when has God existed?

It is to be answered that what time has there been that He has not existed so that it is specified since when He has existed.⁴

[God is not a body and essence to be in a place, nor is he a compound to have a quality]. So, God is not known in terms of quality and locality and is not apprehended by any senses or measured by any scales;⁵ since time and place are His creation, then how is He characterized by

1. Sharif Qurshī, Bāqir, *Pazhuhishī daqīq dar Zindigānī-yi Imā ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 212.

2. Kulaynī, Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb, *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, pp. 78-79.

3. Qummi, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 125.

4. Kulaynī, Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb, *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, pp. 78-79.

5. Ibid, vol. 1, pp. 78-79.

them?¹

§ Is the Almighty and Glorious Allah a thing or not?

The Exalted Allah has proved His being a thing, ﴿Say, "What thing is greatest as witness?" Say, "Allah! [He is] witness between me and you,﴾.² Then, we say He is a thing but not like other things; because, if we deny His being a thing, we have [indeed] nullified and negated Him.³

§ What does God's being *Baṣīr* (All-seeing) and *Samīʿ* (All-hearing) mean?

God hears what He sees and sees what He hears. His seeing is not with the eyes like the eyes of the creatures and His hearing is not like the hearing of the hearers; rather, the shade of a black speck in a dark night on a black stone under the earth and in the depth of the seas is not hidden from Him. Subtle words do not confuse Him, hearing words would not distract Him from hearing other words, no sound of His servants between the Throne and the earth would remain concealed from Him, either on the land or in the sea, and no voice would be mistaken by Him. It is in such a way that we say: He is All-hearing,

1. Ibid, vol. 1, p. 88.

2. Q. 6:19.

3. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ʿAlī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 134; people have three opinions about the way God exists: negation, similitude (*tashbīh*), and proving without similitude. Negation opinion is not right as it is the negation of existence, which is indisputable infidelity. Similitude opinion is not right because the Blessed and Exalted Allah is not material and is not finite. Therefore, is not similar to anything material. The third way, i.e., proving without similitude is the right way.

but not with ears.¹

§ What Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī (A.S.) said in response to a Jew who asked him, "Inform me of what is not with God and what God does not have and of what God does not know!"

What God does not know is what you Jews said that, "Ezra is the son of God," whereas God does not know any child belonging to Him; what is not with God is tyranny as God never tyrannizes His servants; and what Allah does not have is partner.

Thereupon, the Jew embraced Islam and pronounced (*shahādatayn*) the two testimonies or Muslim professions of faith.²

§ What does God's being "*Laṭīf* (All-attentive) and *Khabīr* (All-aware)" mean?

That we say God is All-attentive means that He has applied attentiveness and subtlety in creation and is well aware of subtle things. The unparalleled outcome and exquisite artistry of His work is clearly evident in the creation of plants and the small living creatures such as gnats and smaller than that, which are not seen with the eyes. When we look at the smallness of this creature with its delicacy and elegance, observe its instinctual guidance in mating, watch its attempts in escaping death trap, and see how it strives to fulfill its requirements; or when we see animate creatures living deep in the oceans, behind

1. Ṭabarsī, Aḥmad b. 'Alī, *Al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 2, p. 397.

2. Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Bihār al-Anwār*, Islāmiyya, Tehran, n.d., vol. 10, p. 11.

tree barks, and in the heart of the deserts; or when we see other living creatures that instruct their young or provide food for them; or when we notice their coloring mingling red with yellow and white with pink; and when we see other living creatures that cannot be observed with eyes nor touched with hands, then we will find out to what extent the Creator of all these creatures has applied subtlety and delicacy in His creation.¹

God's Creation

§ Why did God not create creatures as one species and created them in various forms?

The reason for the creation of creatures in various forms is to challenge the assumption that God is incapable, lest a form should occur to an infidel except that God has had created a creature similar to that form; and also to stop someone from saying whether God can create a creature in such and such a form except that he would find the like of it in His creation. With respect to God's various types of creatures, it is to be known that He is capable of everything.²

§ Did God create things with power or without it?

It is not permissible to say He created things with power, because when saying He created things with

1. Kulaynī, Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb, *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, pp. 119-120; Qummi, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 125; also see: Sharīf Qurshī, Bāqir, *Pazhuhishī daqīq dar Zindigānī-yi Imā 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, pp. 414-415.

2. Qummi, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 75; idem, *Ilal al-Sharāyi'*, vol. 1, p. 14.

power, it is as if regarding power as a means by which He has created things. This is polytheism, because He is not weak and incapable¹ and is not in need of others.²

Divine Will

§ What does Divine Will mean and what is its difference with the creature's will?

The creature's will is the intention they have in the heart and an action that they would carry out afterwards; but the will of the Almighty and Glorious Allah just includes initiation and creation and nothing else; because, He would never "ponder" or "intend". Such attributes belong to the created beings and the most Sacred Essence of Allah is exalted from them. Thus, God's Will is verily His Action and nothing other than that; when He decides on a matter, He just says to it "Be" and it is, without any words being involved, or any speech being made, or a thinking being applied, or a quality being intended, because His Sacred Essence is outside the restrictions of quality.³

§ Does God have willpower and providence over His servants' actions?

God's willpower and providence governs the fulfillment of commands and the Lord is pleased with fulfillment of

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1. What the Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) means is that power is the very essence of God and He has not created things with a power outside His essence.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 75; idem, *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 130.
 3. Kulaynī, Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb, *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 109.

His commands, and helps His servants in their obedience and devotional acts. However, God's willpower and providence is directed towards prohibition of committing sins; he gets furious at sins and punishes the perpetrators of sins.¹

Those Near to Allah

§ Are the angels or the earthly beings closer to God?

If what we mean by closeness is the closeness in terms of span (*wajab*) and cubit (*dhirāʿ*), it is to be said that all objects are the same to Him and creation is His action. He does not get occupied with some of His creatures and abandoning others. He manages His most sublime creatures, just as He handles His lowest creatures. He manages the first one of them just as He handles the last of them without any pains and inconvenience and without consulting and feeling tired. If what is meant by closeness is in terms of means, then the one who is the most obedient to Him is the nearest to Him. The servant is close to God when he falls down in prostration before Him in prayers. Four angels met; one of them was from among the highest creatures [North] and another was from among the lowest creatures [South]. One was from among the farthest East creatures and the other from among the farthest West creatures. They were asked, "Where are you from?" "We Have come from God," they

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ʿAlī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 250.

answered, “and He had sent us for such and such a task.” This is a reason that He is in a status without assimilation and allegory.¹

Divine Knowledge

§ Does God have knowledge of the incidents that have not taken place, or does He only know the past?

God the Exalted is aware of the things before they are created, ﴿Indeed We used to record what you used to do.﴾² He also says to the inmates of the Hell, ﴿But were they to be sent back they would revert to what they were forbidden, and they are indeed liars.﴾³

God the Exalted knows that if He sends them back to the world they would revert to indecent acts; and when the angels said, ﴿Will You set in it someone who will cause corruption in it, and shed blood, while we celebrate Your praise and proclaim Your sanctity? He said, “Indeed I know what you do not know.”﴾⁴

Therefore God’s knowledge of things is before they come to existence. God is Omnipotent, Omnipresent, and Omniscient.⁵

§ Was God aware of whatever He created before He created them, or did He not know until He created them?

God is always aware of everything before He creates

1. Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 10, pp. 346-347.

2. Q. 45:29.

3. Q. 6:28.

4. Q. 2:30.

5. ‘Aṭārudī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, Imam Reza World Congress, 1st edition, Mashhad, 1406, vol. 1, p. 31.

them, just as He is aware of them after their creation.¹

Description of God

§ Can God be described?

No! Any limited being would end up to its limit; when there is the possibility of having limits, there would be a possibility of increment and when there is the possibility of increment, there would be a possibility of restraints and shortcomings; and God transcends such attributes.²

Knowledge of God

§ What is the lowest level of knowledge of God?

The lowest level of knowledge of God is to confess that there is no god except Him; He has no match or equal, is eternal and everlasting, and there is no termination to His Sacred Existence. God has always existed and there is no destruction for Him, nor is there anything like Him.³

§ How is the true knowledge about God acquired?

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said in this regard, “True knowledge about God is to arrive at the conviction that the Lord has no equal and that He is the One God, the Creator, the Omnipotent, the Initiator of all creation, the End of all creatures, the Manifest and the Hidden, and

1. Kulaynī, Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb, *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 107; Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 54, p. 162.

2. ‘Aṭārudī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 40.

3. ‘Aṭārudī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 31.

that nothing is like Him.¹ If anyone knows God in this way, has attained the real and true knowledge of God.

1. 'Aṭārudī, 'Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol.1, p. 45; Sha'irī, Tāj al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-Akhhbār*, Raḍī Publication, 1st edition, Qum, 1405/1984, p. 5.

Justice

Free Will and Determination

§ Has God handed over the affairs of the world to His servants?

God is too just and wise to force His servants to commit sins. God says, “O Son of Adam! I am more entitled to your good deeds than you are and you are more entitled to your evil deeds than I am, because you do all these with the power I gave you; and you commit sins on your own, because you do it with the power that I entrusted you to do good deeds.”¹

§ Does God compel His servants to commit sins?

God has granted His servants an option and a respite to repent and return to Him.²

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1. Kulaynī, Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb, *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 157; ‘Aṭārudī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol.1, p. 35.
 2. ‘Aṭārudī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol.1, p. 319.

The Meaning of Free Will (*tafwīd*)

§ What does free will (*tafwīd*) mean?

God has entrusted His religious affairs to His Apostle (S.A.W.) and said, ﴿Take whatever the Apostle (S.A.W.) gives you, and relinquish whatever he forbids you.﴾¹

However, He has not entrusted the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) with creation and provision of sustenance to creatures and said, ﴿Allah is the creator of all things.﴾²

Similarly, He said, ﴿It is Allah who created you and then He provided for you, then He makes you die, then He will bring you to life. Is there anyone among your partners who does anything of that kind? Immaculate is He and exalted above [having] any partners that they ascribe [to Him]!﴾³

Imam al-Şādiq (A.S.) is quoted as saying, “There is neither determinism nor free will, but an intermediate position.” What does this *ḥadīth* mean?

Whoever presumes that God forces us to commit sins and then punishes us for it, is a believer in determination (*jabr*).

Whoever arrives at the conviction that God has relegated his servants’ affairs to the Infallible Imams (A.S.), it is called free will. Those who believe in determination are infidel and those believing in free will are polytheists.

However, the meaning of “intermediate position” is that

1. Q. 59:7.

2. Q. 132:16.

3. Q. 30:40; Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Şadūq), *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 202.

the people have practical ways for fulfilling the Lord's commands and abandoning sins; and that the way to goodness and felicity and evil and atrocity is open to them.¹

Obligation Limit

§ Does God demand tasks from His servants that are beyond their strength?

How would God make such demand, whereas He said, ﴿and your Lord is not tyrannical to the servants.﴾²? My father³ has quoted his father⁴ as saying, “Whoever supposes that the Lord forces His servants to sins or demands tasks from them that are beyond their capacity, you should not eat from the meat of the animal slaughtered by him, do not accept his testimony, do not follow him in prayer, and avoid giving legal alms (*zakāt*) to him.”⁵

The Verdict against the Heterodox and the Delegators

§ What is the verdict against the heterodox (*ghāliyyān*) and the delegators (*mufāwwiḍa*)?

The heterodox⁶ are infidels and the delegators are

1. 'Aṭārudī, 'Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol.1, p. 37.

2. Q. 41:46.

3. Imam Mūs al-Kāzīm (A.S.)

4. Imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq

5. 'Aṭārudī, 'Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol.1, p. 319.

6. One of the reasons of innocence states of Shī'ism is the emergence of feeble and exaggerating extremist thoughts promoted in the name of this pure school of thought to the benefit of the opponents, beliefs that the

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polytheist; whoever associates, visits them, eats or drinks with them, becomes their relative through marriage, grants them refuge, considers them trustworthy in keeping what they are entrusted with, acknowledges what they say, or helps them in what they say, has left from the circle of the authority jurisdiction of the Exalted God and His Noble Apostle (S.A.W.) and the guardianship (*wilāya*) of us – the members of the Holy Household.¹



Immaculate Imams (A.S.) have severely refuted and bewared their true followers of it and of its insane promoters. Undoubtedly, recognition of the deviated trend of heterodoxy and its feeble convictions can make every true follower secure from the dangers facing him. see: Mashkūr, Muḥammad Jawād, *Farhang-i Firaq-i Islāmī*, Islamic Research Foundation of Astan Quds Razavi, 1st edition, Mashhad, 1368 sh/1989; Qummi, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, trans. ‘Alī Akbar Ghaffārī, *Intishārāt-i Islāmī*, 1st edition, Qum, 1404/1983, vol. 6, p. 573.

1. Qummi, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 203; Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol.25, pp. 346-328.

Knowing the Prophet

Divine Prophets

Obedience to the Prophets

§ What is the reason for the necessity of recognition of the Prophets and admitting their obedience?

Since man has not been equipped with the necessary powers in his nature to be able to comprehend all that is best for him to do; and on the other hand, because the Creator is Most Exalted above that which is seen by eyes, then there should be an infallible Messenger in between Him and them, one who communicates Divine Orders and Admonishments to them to inform them about their benefits and losses. Otherwise, there would be no benefit in sending Prophets (Messengers) and this is far from the All-Wise Allah.¹

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 100-101; ‘Aṭārudī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol.1, p. 50.

Difference between Messengers, Prophets, and Imams

§ What difference is there between Messengers, Prophets, and Imams?

A Messenger (*rasūl*) is someone to whom Gabriel is descended while seeing him and hearing his words; Revelation is revealed to him and sometimes he sees Gabriel in a dream; e.g., Prophet Abraham's dreaming him giving him order to offer his son as a sacrifice. A Prophet (*nabī*) is someone who sometimes hears Gabriel and sometimes sees him while not hearing him. An Imam, however, is someone who hears Gabriel but does not see him.¹

Variety of Miracles

§ Why was Moses (A.S.) sent with the miracle of white hand, cane, and the nullifying sorcery, but Jesus (A.S.) was sent with the miraculous healing of the sick and Muḥammad (S.A.W.) with the Revealed Word, namely, the Qur'ān?

God sent Moses (A.S.) in the era in which sorcery prevailed; and it was for that reason that he brought forward his argument from God with the miracle of nullifying sorcery, which was beyond the capability of the people of that period. Allah, the Exalted, sent down Jesus (A.S.) when there were many chronic and incurable diseases and people were in dire need of medical treatment and physicians. Then, God sent down Jesus (A.S.) with the miracle of bringing the dead to life, healing the born-

1. Kulaynī, Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb, *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 176.

blind, and curing those afflicted with leprosy, which the people of that time were unable to handle, and thus completed His proof to them. Similarly, God sent down Muḥammad (S.A.W.) in a period when oratory and rhetoric was in vogue. Therefore, His Holiness (A.S.) was sent with the Book of God (the Holy Qur'ān), which contained admonitions, ordinances, annulling the polytheists' claims, proving the authenticity of his claim, and completing God's proof to them.¹

Steadfast Prophets

§ Why are some Prophets called *Ulu al-'Azm* (steadfast)?

They are called possessing firm purpose because they had *sharī'a* (revealed law). The Prophets after Noah (A.S.) used to act to his *sharī'a* and Book until Abraham (A.S.) was sent and after him all other Prophets followed his *sharī'a* and Book. After the Divine Mission of Moses (A.S.), the Prophets followed his *sharī'a* and Book until Jesus (A.S.) was sent and the Prophets after him acted to his *sharī'a* and Book until the Holy Apostle Muḥammad (S.A.W.) was sent.

These five Prophets are the steadfast Prophets and they are the most superior Prophets. Muḥammad's (S.A.W.) *sharī'a* will not be abrogated until the Resurrection Day and whoever claims to bring a book and *sharī'a* after the Holy Qur'ān, [is false in his claim and] his blood is

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 79-80; Idem, *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 121.

permissible to shed.¹

Concerning Adam (A.S.)

§ What was the fruit that Prophet Adam and Eve ate? Some believe it was wheat and others maintain it was jealousy. Which of these two is true?

All those views are true, because a tree in Paradise can bear several fruits and that wheat tree whose fruit also included grapes was not like the trees of the world. When God, honoring Adam, ordered the angels to fall down in prostration before him and entered him into Paradise, Adam said to himself, “Has God created a human being nobler than me?!” Being aware of Adam’s heartfelt mention, God told him, “O Adam! Raise up your head and behold the trunk of the Throne!” Adam raised his head and saw it was written on the trunk of the Throne, “There is no god but Allah, Muḥammad (S.A.W.) is the Messenger of Allah.” It went on reading, “‘Alī (A.S.), son of Abū Ṭālib, is the commander of the faithful and his wife, Fāṭima (S.A.), is superior to the women of the world, al-Ḥasan (A.S.) and al-Ḥusayn (A.S.) are the masters of the youth of the Paradise.” Adam said, “O God! Who are they?”

God said, “O Adam! They are your children who are superior to you and all my created beings. Had it not been for them, I would not have created you, and would not

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharā’i*, vol. 1, p. 123.

have created the Paradise and Hell, and the heaven and the earth. Beware of looking at them enviously for I will expel you from My presence.” However, he looked at them with envy and wished to reach their status; then, the Satan took over him, and he ate from the [forbidden] tree.”

In addition, the Satan took over Eve because she envied the status of Fāṭima (S.A.) and like Adam ate from the tree, resulting in God expelling them both from the Paradise and sending them down to earth and away from His presence.¹

People of Noah

§ Why did God drown all the people of Noah (A.S.), while there were children and innocent people among them?

There were no children among them, because God had already made the women infertile among the people of Noah (A.S.) for forty years; thus, their progeny were halted. It is not such that God punishes the innocent as He punishes the sinners; however, a group of those from among the people of Noah (A.S.) who drowned was

1. Qummi, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ma‘ānī al-Akḥbār*, Intishārāt-i Islāmī, 1st edition, Qum, 1403/1982, p. 124. idem, *‘Uyūn Akḥbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 306. Note: What is meant in this *ḥadīth* by envy is different from the wish for achieving the envied. Given the fact that they had known *Ahl al-Bayt* (A.S.) were superior to them, it behooved them to be content with what God wished; and this envy was abandonment of the preferable by such a high figure as Adam. See: Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 26, p. 273.

because they denied the Prophet of God, and another group were drowned because they were content with what the deniers did. Whoever is content with something, is like he who has done it himself.¹

Noah's Son

§ What is meant by the noble verse, ﴿O Noah! Indeed, He is not of your family. Indeed he is [personification] of unrighteous conduct.﴾² Was Noah's son not his real son and from among his progeny?

No, it is never so. Rather, he was his real son and since he was mischievous and disobeyed God's command, his spiritual bond to Noah (A.S.) was broken and Noah (A.S.) was told that his son was unrighteous.³

God's Speaking to Moses (A.S.)

§ How did God speak to the Prophet Moses (A.S.)?

God transcends talking to human beings in a language similar to theirs. The Creator's talking to the created is not like the created talking to the created; the words that were addressed to Moses (A.S.) were undoubtedly inspired in his heart.⁴

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1. Qummi, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 392; idem, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 75; idem, *Ilal al-Sharāyi'*, vol. 1, p. 30.
 2. Q. 11:46.
 3. Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 10, p. 65.
 4. Ṭabarsī, Aḥmad b. 'Alī, *Al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 2, p. 406.

Drowning the Pharaoh

§ Why did God drown Pharaoh despite his coming to faith?

Because the Pharaoh embraced faith only when he saw the chastisement and the faith after facing punishment is not accepted. It is the Exalted God's decree concerning both the past and the future generations that He says, ﴿Then, when they sighted Our punishment, they said, "We believe in Allah alone, and disavow what we used to take as His partners." But their faith was of no benefit to them when they sighted Our punishment.﴾¹ Yet, in another verse, He says, ﴿The day when some of your Lord's signs do come, faith shall not benefit any soul that had not believed beforehand and had not earned some goodness in its faith.﴾²

Similarly, when the Pharaoh was being drowned, God said, ﴿... he called out, "I believe that there is no god except Him in whom the Children of Israel believe, and I am one of those who submit [to Him]!"﴾³ He was told, ﴿"What! Now? When you have been disobedient heretofore and were among the agents of corruption?! So today We shall deliver your body so that you may be a sign for those who come after you."﴾⁴ And thus, despite having a coat of arms and heavy iron weaponry, his body was cast on a high land to be a warning and an example

1. Q. 40:84-85.

2. Q. 6:158.

3. Q. 10:90.

4. Q. 10:91-92.

for the future generations.

The other reason was that when the Pharaoh was drowning, he appealed to Moses (A.S.) and did not ask God for his deliverance. God revealed the following to Moses (A.S.), “O Moses! You had not created the Pharaoh. Had he asked me, I would have rescued him.”¹

Disciples of Jesus (A.S.)

§ Why were the companions of Jesus called *Hawāriyūn* (Disciples)?

Because they used to wash clothes and remove dirt and impurity from them; also because it is a noun adopted from *khubz al-ḥawwār*, meaning a kind of bread made of sieved flour. However, to us, they were called so because they would cleanse themselves and others of impurity by advice and admonitions.²

Nazarene

§ Why are Christians called Nazarenes?

Because they were inhabitants of Nazareth, a town in Shām (now Syria), where Mary (S.A.) and Jesus (A.S.) settled down upon their return from Egypt.³

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1. Qummi, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, pp. 77-78; idem, *‘Ilal al-Sharāyi’*, vol. 1, p. 59.
 2. Qummi, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyi’*, vol. 1, p. 80.
 3. Jazā’irī, Sayyid Ni‘matullāh, *Al-Nūr al-Mubīn fī Qaṣaṣ al-Anbiyā’ wa al-Mursalīn*, Ayatollah Mar‘ashī Library, 1st edition, Qum, 1409/1988, vol.1, p. 80.

The Great Prophet (S.A.W.)

§ Describe to us the moral characteristics and bodily features of the Great Prophet (S.A.W.).

‘Alī (A.S.) was asked, “Describe the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) to us in such a way as if we have seen him. We are eager to know the moral characteristics and bodily features of His Holiness (S.A.W.).”

Imam ‘Alī (A.S.) said, “The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had a wheat-colored face. His eyes were black and large; he had long hair and bushy beard. His neck was white and shining like silver.

There was a line of hair running from his chest down his navel, with no other hair left on his chest. His hands and feet were sizable and when he walked, it was as if his feet broke off from a stone, that is to say, he would lift his feet off the ground properly.

Whenever he came [toward someone] he would move as fast as rain and whenever he talked to someone he talked to them with his face perfectly turned toward them and looked them in the eyes. He was neither tall nor lanky, nor short and heavy set; there were veins in his face that became evident when he talked to people. His face was radiant and his body scented like musk.

He did not let weakness overtake him and would never offend anyone. He treated people well and talked to them softly and peacefully. He was more generous than all other people were; and whoever talked to him with spiritual understanding (*ma‘rifa*), he would befriend him.

There was a light on his forehead that whoever saw him would say, “I have never seen the like of him.”¹

Passing Away of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.)

§ At what age did the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) pass away?

My father narrated from his father on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) who quoted Imam ‘Alī (A.S.) as saying that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) passed away at the age of 63 in the year 11 AH.

The Holy Apostle (S.A.W.) had lived in Makkah for forty years when the Revelation came to him. He stayed on there for thirteen more years after *bi‘tha* (Prophetic Mission) and was fifty three years old when he entered Madinah, where he stayed for ten years until the end of his life.²

The Holy Prophet’s (S.A.W.) Commuting

§ It is narrated that when the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) passed on a route to go somewhere, he would return from another route. Is it true?

Yes! I do the same, too. This would increase sustenance.³

1. ‘Aṭārudī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 478.

2. *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 82.

3. ‘Allāma Ṭabāḩāṭabā’ī, Muḩammad ḩusayn, *Sunan al-Nabī*, 7th edition, p. 55.

Son of two Intended Sacrifices

§ What is the meaning of this *ḥadīth* related from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), “I am the son of two *Zabiḥs* (intended sacrifices)?”

He means Ismā‘īl b. Ibrāhīm (Ishmael son of Abraham) and ‘Abd Allāh b. Abd al-Muṭṭalib. Ismā‘īl is the forbearing and submissive child, the good news of whose birth was given to Prophet Abraham (A.S.) by God and when he was old enough, Abraham (A.S.) told him, “My son! I saw in a dream that I am sacrificing you. See what you think!”

Ismā‘īl (A.S.) said, “Father! Do whatever you have been commanded. – he did not tell him ‘do whatever you have dreamed’ – If Allah wishes, you will find me to be patient.”

So, when Abraham (A.S.) decided to sacrifice his son Ismā‘īl (A.S.), God sent a big ram, leaving it in his disposal to slaughter instead.

Now, every sheep sacrificed in Minā is a ransom for Ismā‘īl up until the Resurrection Day.¹

1. ‘Aṭārūdī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 61. Qummi, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Sahykh Ṣadūq), *Al-Khiṣāl*, Intishārāt-i Islāmī, 1st edition, Qum, 1362 sh/1983, vol. 1, pp. 55-56; Idem, ‘*Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 77; Jazā’irī, *Al-Nūr al-Mubīn fī Qaṣaṣ al-Anbiyā’ wa al-Mursalīn*, vol. 1, p. 128.

Knowing the Imams (A.S.)

‘Itrat

§ What is meant by pure ‘*itrat* (progeny of the Holy Prophet – S.A.W.)?

Pure ‘*itrat* is intended to mean those whom Allah has described in His Book and said about them, ﴿Indeed Allah desires to repel all impurity from you, O People of the Household, and purify you with a thorough purification.﴾¹ They are the ones that the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.) said about them, “I leave among you two precious things; if you hold onto them, you will never go astray after me: the Book of Allah (the Holy Qur‘ān) and my progeny (Ahl al-Bayt). The two will not separate from one another until they join me at the Pond of Kawthar.”²

1. Q. 33:33.

2. Qurshī, Bāqir Sharf, *Pazhuhishī daqīq dar Zindigānī-yi Imām ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, pp. 259-260.

Superiority of the *'itrat*

§ What is the reason for the superiority of the pure *'itrat*?

It can be understood from the following words of Allah, ﴿Certainly We sent Noah (A.S.) and Abraham (A.S.) and We ordained among their descendants prophethood and the Book. Some of them are [rightly] guided, and many of them are transgressors.﴾¹ that the inheritance of Prophethood and the Book is exclusive to those who are guided and not to the transgressors. Similarly, God has clarified in His Book the superiority of the *'itrat* above other people as follows, ﴿Indeed Allah chose Adam and Noah, and the progeny of Abraham and the progeny of 'Imrān above all the nations; offspring, one from the other, and Allah is All-hearing, All-knowing.﴾²

Yet, in another verse, Allah says, ﴿Or do they envy the people for what Allah has given them out of His grace? We have certainly given the progeny of Abraham the Book and wisdom, and We have given them a great sovereignty.﴾³ Then, He addresses the people as follows, ﴿O you who have faith! Obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those vested with authority among you.﴾⁴, that is to say, those whom Allah has given the Book and wisdom and who were envied because of that. Thus, what is meant by the noble verse, ﴿Or do they envy the people for what

1. Q. 57:26.

2. Q. 3:33-34.

3. Q. 4:54.

4. Q. 4:59.

Allah has given them out of His grace? We have certainly given the progeny of Abraham (A.S.) the Book and wisdom, and We have given them a great kingdom.¹ is the obedience to these pure ones and the sovereignty here means obedience to them.²

Heirs to the Divine Book

§ Who are the heirs to the Divine Book and the chosen servants mentioned in the verse, ﴿Then We made heirs to the Book those whom We chose from Our servants.﴾³?

What is meant in this verse by the heirs to the Book and the chosen ones is only the pure progeny of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), rather than all the *umma*; because God said in the next verse, ﴿Gardens of Eden, which they will enter...﴾⁴ which means the heirs to the Book are all inmates of Paradise and enjoy the bounties and blessings of it. At the same time, in the previous verse Allah introduced the *umma* to be of three groups: those who wrong themselves, the average, and those who take the lead in all the good works. There is no doubt that these three groups are not equal to each other and not all of them would be the inmates of the Paradise; rather, those who take the lead in good works, the blessed ones, and those enjoying Divine Grace are privileged as such.⁵

1. Q. 4:54.

2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* vol. 1, p. 230-231.

3. Q. 35:32.

4. Q. 35:33.

5. Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 25, p. 220; Qummī,



The Status of Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī (A.S.)

§ Why is Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī (A.S.) the divider of Paradise and Hell?

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said, "Loving 'Alī (A.S.) is faith and hating him is infidelity." Therefore, if dividing Paradise and Hell is based on loving and hating him, he is the divider of Paradise and Hell.¹

Ḥaḍrat Fāṭima's (A.S.) Age

§ How long did Ḥaḍrat Fāṭima (A.S.) live?

Fāṭima (A.S.) was born five years after *Bī'tha*, when the Qurayshīs were repairing the Ka'ba and was eighteen years old when she passed away. She lived eight years with the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.) in Makkah, another ten years after Hijra with him in Madinah, and seventy-five days after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) (before she passed away).²

Obedience to those Vested with Authority

§ Why did Allah appoint *Uli al-Amr* (those vested with authority) and made their obedience obligatory?

There are several answers to this question:

A. Because people are restricted to a certain limit and

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Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 228.

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 86.
2. 'Aṭārudī, 'Aziz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 139.

are enjoined not to violate the limit to avoid being exposed to corruption; and this would never be done unless when certain individuals are appointed to prevent people from tending toward corruption and inhibit transgression, aggression, and depravity. If it were not so, no one would withdraw from pleasure and corruption and would always consider his own benefits.

To this end, a guardian was assigned for people to prevent them from depravity and establish limits and ordinances.

B. We keep observing that the nations and sects cannot live on without a leader and that people have to have a leader and Imam in their worldly and religious affairs and it is not permissible as per the Wisdom of the Wise One to let the people live without a leader. Consistency and stability of a community would not be possible except through an Imam.

Having a leader, people can fight against an enemy, divide the benefits among themselves, put their community in order, and restore the right of the oppressed from the oppressor.

C. If God had not assigned an Imam, a guardian, a trustee, and a protector for people, the nation and the religion would have been devastated, the traditions and ordinances would have changed, the innovators would have increased or decreased religious commands, the atheists would have tampered with it, and misconceptions would have been created in the Islamic community. That is because all people are not equal in terms of intellect and intelligence and require instructors; otherwise, they would

have divided upon different issues and with such division and dispersed viewpoints they would have disintegrated their society.

If there were no Imams and leadership, the society would have corrupted, the religious laws, traditions, ordinances, and faithfulness would have been altered and the people would have been ruined and degraded.¹

The Imam's Characteristics

§ What are the Imam's characteristics?

The Imam has to be aware of the Torah, the Gospel, Psalms of David, and the Holy Qur'ān so that he can discuss with the people of Torah through the Torah, with the people of Gospel through the Gospel, and with the people of the Qur'ān through the Qur'ān. The Imam must know all languages so that every language is clear to him and be able to debate with everybody in his own language. In addition to these attributes, he must be God-fearing, free from any impurity, free from any imperfection, just, fair-minded, wise, affectionate, kind, forgiving,² compassionate, truthful, merciful, noble, and trustworthy.

The Imam's Genealogy

§ Why is it not permissible for the Imam to be of other

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, pp. 100-101; Majlisi, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 23, p. 32.
 2. Rāwandī, Shaykh Qutb al-Dī, *Al-Kharā'ij wa al-Jarā'ih*, Madrasa-yi Imām Mahdī, 1st edition, Qum, 1409/1988, vol. 1, p. 350.

than the Household of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.)?

The reasons for the impermissibility are as follows:

A. To know the Imam whose obedience is obligatory, there has to be a reason introducing him quite well and distinguishing him from others. This reason is the very well-known kinship and the apparent heirship (*waṣīyya*). This heirship distinguishes the Imam from others and guides people towards him.

B. If Imamate were in a household other than that of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), it was permissible for others who were not prophets to be superior to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.); because in that case, children of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had to obey the children of those who were not prophets such as Abū Jahl and Ibn Abī Mu‘ayt.

C. Once the people testify to the Prophethood of the Messenger (S.A.W.) and obey him, no one would hesitate to follow his offspring and obey them and this would not be hard for anyone. However, if the Divine Leader is one who is not from the Household of the Messenger of God (S.A.W.), everyone would consider himself to be more deserving for this position than others. Thus, they would become so arrogant that they would not obey him since they consider him to be less deserving of leadership than they themselves. Then this would cause corruption, discord, and disunion amongst the Muslim community.¹

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, pp. 102-103; Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 25, p. 145.

Reviving the Command of the Imams

§ What is the meaning of your saying, “May God bless the one who revives our command.”

It means to learn the sciences and knowledge of the Imams and teach them to the people; because, if the people know about the good and benefits of our sayings, they will follow us.”¹

The Necessity of the Existence of Imam

§ Will the earth be devoid of the Proof of Allah (*ḥujja*)?

If the earth is devoid of the Proof of Allah and is left without an Imam [even] for a moment, it will swallow its inhabitants.²

The Way to Know the Imam

§ How should the Imam be known?

The Imam should be known by knowledge and the fulfillment of his prayer.³

§ How would the Next Imam be Known?

The Imam has several signs: he should have knowledge and excellence; the preceding Imam by a last will should have assigned him; and the people should come over and ask which person the Imam has appointed as his heir, to

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1. Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 2, p. 145; Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, pp. 87; Idem, *Ma‘ānī al-Akḥbār*, p. 180.
 2. Kulaynī, Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb, *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 179; ‘Aṭārūdī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 88.
 3. ‘Aṭārūdī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 133.

whom it would be replied: such and such a person. Furthermore, another sign is the existence of weapon which whoever has it is the caliph and the Imam.¹

The Status of Imamate

§ Explain about the status and station of Imamate.

Imamate is too lofty, too noble, too highly uplifted, and too deeply established for the people to grasp with their wisdom or to be aware of with their intellect, or to select an Imam by means of their election.

Imamate is that with which God (Eminent is His Glory) characterized Prophet Abraham (A.S.) as a third status after appointing him as a Prophet and His friend, and as an excellence with which He honored him and by which made him renowned, and said, ﴿I am making you the Imam of mankind﴾.² When Abraham (A.S.) rejoiced at this, he asked, ﴿And from among my descendants?﴾³, to which the Exalted Allah replied, ﴿My pledge does not extend to the unjust﴾.⁴ Therefore, this verse has invalidated the Imamate of any tyrant up to the Resurrection Day, asserting that this position is exclusive to the chosen. Then, the Exalted Allah fully honored Abraham (A.S.) by providing his children with pure and pious descendants to deserve the position of Imamate. That is why He said, ﴿And We gave him Isaac,

1. Kulaynī, Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb, *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 92849; Qummi, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Sahykh Ṣadūq), *Al-Khiṣāl*, vol. 1, pp. 116-117.

2. Q. 2:124.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

and Jacob as well for a grandson, and each of them We made righteous. We made them Imams, guiding by Our command, and We revealed to them the performance of good deeds, the maintenance of prayers, and the giving of *zakāt*, and they used to worship Us. ﴿﴾¹ Thereby, Imamate remained with his grandsons and was transferred from some of them to others in subsequent centuries, until the Almighty Allah gave it as inheritance to our Prophet (S.A.W.) and said, ﴿﴾Indeed the nearest of all people to Abraham are those who follow him, and this prophet and those who have faith, and Allah is the guardian of the faithful.﴿﴾² Thus, Imamate was designated to him and he, by the leave of Allah, entrusted it to ‘Alī (A.S.) and as Allah had made obligatory, it was assigned to his selected grandchildren; namely, to those to whom Allah has bestowed knowledge and faith and said, ﴿﴾But those who were given knowledge and faith will say, “Certainly you remained in Allah’s Book until the Day of Resurrection.﴿﴾³ So, Imamate is exclusive to the children of Imam ‘Alī (A.S.) until the Resurrection Day, because there will be no Prophet after Muḥammad (S.A.W.).

Then, how could those ignorant ones select an Imam for themselves? Imamate is the status of the Prophets and the inheritance to the spiritual heirs. Imamate is the succession to God and to the Apostle (S.A.W.), the station of the Commander of the Faithful ‘Alī (A.S.) and the

1. Q. 21:72-73.

2. Q. 3:68.

3. Q. 30:56.

inheritance to Imam al-Ḥasan (A.S.) and Imam al-Ḥusayn (A.S.). Imamate is the leadership and discipline for the Islam, the reformer for the world, the source of glory and power for the faithful, the developing principle for the Islam, and its lofty branch. Prayer (*ṣalāt*), legal alms (*zakāt*), fasting, holy struggle (*jahād*), booty and profits, charitable donations, implementation of legal punishments and ordinances, and safeguarding the borders, etc. would reach their pinnacle with the presence of the Imam. He would make lawful (*ḥalāl*) what God has made lawful, would make unlawful (*ḥarām*) what God has made unlawful, would defend the religion of God, and would call people to God with wise sayings and clear arguments.

The Imam is God's trustee among His created ones and God's proof (*ḥujja*) to His servants, God's successor in His lands, and the caller to God, and defender of God's Sovereignty. The Imam is purified of sin and free from defect. Knowledge is exclusive to him and forbearance is among his characteristics. He is the order of religion and the source of honor for the Muslims and anger for the hypocrites and perishing of the unbelievers.... He carries on his shoulder the heavy burden of Imamate, he is aware of politics, and it is obligatory to obey him. He is the establisher of God's command, the admonisher of God's servants, and the guardian of His religion.¹

1. Ḥakīmī, Muḥammad Riḍā, et al, *Al-Ḥayāt*, vol. 2, pp. 310-312; Kulaynī, Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb, *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 200; Qummi, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Kamāl al-Dīn wa Tamām al-Ni'ma*, Islamiyya, Tehran, 1395/1969, vol. 2, p. 677.

Only one Imam

§ Why is there one Imam at a time on the earth?

The answer to this question is that there are several reasons for the non-existence of two Imams at a time:

A. There will be no discrepancies in the works and words of a single Imam as his views are decisive; whatever he wills will be carried out and whatever he ordains will be influential. Two Imams, however, cannot perform things together and their views do not conform.

When there are two Imams with their will and management contradictory and their obedience obligatory, it does not behoove one of them to obey the other, because as a consequence of the disagreement between the two Imams difference will arise in the society and depravity will prevail. If one of them is obeyed, the other one will be opposed to and sinfulness will engulf the society.

With the disagreement of two Imams, people will have no way for obedience and believing and will not distinguish truth from untruth. Since these two Imams whose obedience is obligatory are appointed by God, their disagreement is also set by God and it is He who has allowed for disagreement, and in fact, this disagreement and depravity is from God, because He has ordered people to obey the two disagreeing Imams.

B. If there were two Imams on earth, it would necessitate each Imam to call people to his way and prevent them from the other's way, and the people could not prefer one to the other. Thereupon, the commands and ordinances would nullify and the people's rights

would not be retained, once again leading the society into corruption.

C. If none of these two Imams and authorities were superior to the other in terms of ordinance, commanding, prohibiting, and elocution, it would be incumbent upon both of them to initiate talking and one of them was not entitled to talk before the other one, because they were not equal in Imamate.

Whenever it was permissible for one of them to be silent, it was permissible for the other one too; and when it became permissible for both of them to be silent, the rights and ordinances would go invalid and the punishments would be suspended and the people would once again become without an Imam.¹

Imam's Knowledge

§ How do you know the future news?

We have learned from the Apostle (S.A.W.) the knowledge about the future and we inherit it from each other.²

§ Inform us of what the Exalted Allah has granted to the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.)!

The Exalted Allah has confirmed us with the Holy Spirit. This Spirit is not of the angels and has been with no other prophet except with our Prophet (S.A.W.). It is

1. Qummi, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 254; idem, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 240; Kulaynī, Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb, *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, 1. 254.

2. 'Aṭarudī, 'Aziz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 133.

also with the Infallible Imams, whom God confirms and gives assistance. That Spirit is a sunbeam of light cast between God and us.¹

Concerning Ghadīr

§ What status does Ghadīr have?

As for the Day of Ghadīr, among such feasts as *Eid al-Adha*, *Eid al-Fitr*, and Friday, it is like the moon among the stars and it is a day on which Abraham (A.S.) was delivered from fire; a day on which one should go on fasting for thanksgiving.

The Day of Ghadīr is the day on which God perfected the religion and the Holy Apostle (S.A.W.) chose ‘Alī (A.S.) as the caliph and ruler for people and revealed his excellence and trusteeship (*wiṣāya*); he would fast on that day.

The Day of Ghadīr is called the “Day of Perfection”, a day on which the devils are driven away; it is a day on which the deeds of the Shī‘as and the friends of the Household of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) are accepted; it is a day on which Allah rejects the deeds of the opponents and belittles them.

Eid al-Ghadīr is a day on which Gabriel (A.S.) sets the special seat that God has bestowed upon him in front of *Bayt al-Ma‘mūr*², and mounts it, the angels surround him

1. Ibid.

2. *Bayt al-Ma‘mūr* is a Qur‘anic compound noun, meaning the “much frequented House”, which is mentioned once in *Sūrat al-Ṭūr*, verse 4. From the viewpoint of most interpreters, *Bayt al-Ma‘mūr* is capable of being



and invoke blessings and salutation to Muḥammad (S.A.W.) and ask for God's pardon for the followers of 'Alī (A.S.) and his progeny (A.S.) and their friends.

Ghadīr is a day on which God orders the scribes of the people's actions to avoid writing down the actions of the lovers of Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) and their followers and forgive them out of respect for Muḥammad (S.A.W.) and 'Alī (A.S.).

Ghadīr is a day when God made it exclusive to Muḥammad (S.A.W.) and his progeny (A.S.); those who engage in devotional acts on that day or make expenditure for their family and do good to their friends, will obtain the Lord's Grace and Blessings. On that day, the Lord would commend the Shi'as' endeavors and attempts, forgive their sins, and accept their deeds.

Ghadīr is a day on which sorrows would be removed, sins would be forgiven, and bounties and blessings would be granted.

Ghadīr is a day on which knowledge and excellence would be spread about and it is the day of glad tidings and

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comparative to *Bayt al-Ḥarām*. According to the earliest traditions and interpretations of the Companions (*ṣahāba*) and Successors to the Companions (*ṭabī'in*), *Bayt al-Ma'mūr* is a house which is exactly located parallel to the *Ka'ba* (*Bayt al-Ḥarām* or *Bayt al-'Atiq*). Everyday multitude of angels circumambulate it and perform prayer toward it and when they leave, they would never return there until the Day of Resurrection. This house is "much frequented" because of the great number of the worshipping angels there. It is worth mentioning that what is meant by "parallel" is the spiritual parallel, rather than the sensory or physical. See: Ṭabābātābā'i, Muḥammad Ḥusayn, *Tafsīr al-Mizān*, Intishārāt-i Islām, 1st edition, Qum, 1417/1996, vol. 8, p. 171; *Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif Tashayyu'*, vol. 3, p. 588.

the greatest *Eid*, on which prayers are answered.

Ghadīr is a day on which one should dress well and take off black clothes; it is a day on which sorrows will be removed and the sins of the followers of Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī (A.S.) would be forgiven.

Ghadīr is a day on which one should take lead in good works and it is a day on which one should plentifully recite benediction upon the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and his progeny (A.S.).

Ghadīr is a day on which God perfected the religion of Islam and approved it and it is an *Eid* for the Household of the Holy Prophet (A.S.); it is a day for accepting the deeds of the faithful and for their peace and comfort. It is a day for making many requests from God and for visiting one another.

Eid al-Ghadīr is the day of friendship and obtaining Divine Mercy.

Ghadīr is the day of purity and abandonment of sins; it is a day on which God must be worshipped and provide *ifṭār* (food for breaking the fast) to those fasting. Everyone who provides *ifṭār* to a fasting believer, it is as if he has provided *ifṭār* to a group [of fasting people].

Ghadīr is the day of greetings and felicitations and when a believer meets his brother, he says, "Praise be to God, who made us to hold fast to the guardianship (*wilāya*) of Amīr al-Muminīn 'Alī (A.S.) and the Imams (A.S.)."

On the Day of Ghadīr, one is to smile when facing people and talk to the believer cheerfully and light-heartedly. Whoever on the Day of Ghadīr meets their

brothers in faith with a smiling face, God will look at them with a glance of Mercy, grant a thousand of their wishes, make a palace of white pearls for them in the Paradise, and make their face radiant.

Ghadīr is a day of adornment. Whoever adorns themselves, God will forgive their sins and orders the angels to write down good deeds for them and upgrade their ranks; and if they die on that day, they will die as martyrs, and if they live on, they will become prosperous.

If they give food to a believer on the day of Ghadīr, it is as if they have given food to all the Prophets and pious people; and if they go visit their brothers in faith, God will light up seventy lights in their graves and will expand their grave and seventy thousand angels would visit their grave every day and give them the good news of entering the Paradise.....

Those who have accepted the guardianship of ‘Alī (A.S.) are like those [angels] who prostrated before Adam (A.S.) and those who have rejected the guardianship are like the Satan. On this day the verse, ﴿Today I have perfected your religion for you﴾¹ was revealed. God sent down all the Prophets on a day like the day of Ghadīr.

As for the greatness of Ghadīr in the sight of Allah, it suffices to say that on this day He appointed a successor to His Holy Prophet (S.A.W.).²

1. Q. 5:3.

2. ‘Aṭārudī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 17-21.

A Twenty Five Year Silence

§ Why was ‘Alī (A.S.) confined at home for 15 years not fighting against the enemies of God and finally began to fight during his rule?

His Holiness (A.S.) followed the example of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.) in this issue, as he did not fight against the polytheists for thirteen years in Makkah and 19 months stay in Madinah, because his followers were few in number and he did not have the power to confront them. Similarly, ‘Alī (A.S.) refused to fight against the enemies of God for this same reason. For the same reason that the Apostle of Allah’s (S.A.W.) Prophethood is not invalidated due to this abandonment – 13 years in Makkah and 19 months in Madinah – so also Imam ‘Alī’s (A.S.) Imamate is not invalidated – for 25 year abandonment of *Jahād*.¹

Disobedience to Imam ‘Alī (A.S.)!

§ Why did the people disobey ‘Alī (A.S.) despite being aware of his superiority?

Because Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Alī (A.S.) had killed in *Jahād* many of their fathers, brothers, grandfathers, uncles, and relatives who had been enemies of God and His Apostle (S.A.W.) and thus they had harbored a grudge against him and did not like him to rule over them; whereas, they had no such grudge towards others.²

1. Qummi, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 1, p. 148.

2. Qummi, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 1, p. 148; Aṭārudī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 136.

Concerning Fadak

§ Why did ‘Amīr al-Mu’minīn (A.S.), after taking the reign of caliphate, not give back the Fadak to its owner?

We, the Ahl al-Byat, are a Household whose right would not be restored except by God. We are the guardians of the Muslim and safeguard only their rights, get their rights from the tyrants, and forsake our own rights.¹

Negation of Extremists (Heterodox)

§ What is your opinion concerning extremists about the Infallibles (A.S.)?

My father related from his forefathers who related from ‘Alī (A.S.) who quoted the Holy Apostle (S.A.W.) as saying, “Do not regard me above what I am. For years, I have served the Exalted Allah as a slave, until He granted Prophethood to me and chose me. Therefore, I am His servant more than being a Prophet. The Almighty Allah says in the Holy Qur’ān, ﴿It does not behoove any human that Allah should give him the Book, judgment and prophethood, and then he should say to the people, “Be my servants instead of Allah.” Rather [he would say], “Be virtuous people, because of your teaching the Book and because of your studying it. And he would not command you to take the angels and the prophets for lords. Would

1. Qummi, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 1, p. 155; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 86.

he call you to unfaith after you have been Muslims?)¹

‘Alī (A.S.) said, “Two types of people are destroyed and misguided because of me: the lover, who raises me high above my limits and the extreme hater, who brings me far below the status that God has bestowed upon me. I despise both types and I will complain to God about them.

We repudiate the zealots, just as Jesus, son of Mary, repudiated the Nazarenes.²

The Exalted Allah said in the Holy Qur’ān, ﴿And when Allah will say, “O Jesus son of Mary! Was it you who said to the people, “Take me and my mother for gods besides Allah”? He replied, “Immaculate are You! It does not behoove me to say what I have no right to [say]. Had I said it, You would certainly have known it: You know whatever is in my ‘self’, and I do not know what is in Your Self. Indeed You are knower of all that is Unseen.﴾³ ﴿I did not say to them [anything] except what You had commanded me [to say]: “Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.” And I was a witness to them so long as I was among them. But when You had taken me away, You Yourself were watchful over them, and You are witness to all things.﴾⁴

He also said, ﴿The Messiah would never disdain being a servant of Allah, nor would the angels brought near [to Him].﴾⁵ And He said, ﴿The Messiah, son of Mary, is but

1. Q. 3:79-80.

2. What is meant here by Nazarenes is the extremists among the Christians.

3. Q. 5:117.

4. Q. 5:117.

5. Q. 4:172.

an apostle. Certainly [other] apostles have passed before him, and his mother was a truthful one. Both of them would eat food.¹

That means they too would ease nature. Whoever claims the Prophets and Imams to be God or claims the Imams to be Prophets, is a disbeliever; and if he claims other than Imams to be Imams, we would despise him both in this world and in the Hereafter.²

1. Q. 5:75.

2. 'Aṭārudī, 'Aziz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 134.

Pilgrimage

Pilgrimage to the Imam's Shrine

§ What is the reason for making pilgrimage to the Imam's shrines?

Every Imam has a right upon his friends and followers and if anyone wishes to fulfill his commitment, he should go visit their graves and if anyone shows a willingness to make pilgrimage to their shrines and acts on their words, they would intercede for them.¹

Burial Place of Ḥaḍrat Fāṭima (A.S.)

§ Where is Ḥaḍrat Fāṭima's (A.S.) grave?

She was buried in her own house. Then, when the Umayyads expanded the Holy Prophet's Mosque, it became part of the mosque.²

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *ʿIlal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 2, p. 459; idem, *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, p. 577; Kulaynī, Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb, *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 567.
 2. Kulaynī, Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb, *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 245; Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ma'ānī al-Akḥbār*, p. 124.

Pilgrimage to Imam al-Ḥusayn (A.S.)

§ Please explain about the excellence of pilgrimage to [the shrine of] Imam al-Ḥusayn (A.S.).

Whoever visits the mausoleum of Sayyid al-Shuhadā (A.S.) while recognizing his rightfulness, Allah will enter him among those brought near to Him.

Around the grave of Sayyid al-Shuhadā (A.S.), there are seventy thousand angels, covered with dust and sorrowful, weeping for Imam al-Ḥusayn (A.S.) until the Resurrection Day.¹

§ In which month shall we visit (the mausoleum of) Imam al-Ḥusayn (A.S.)?

In mid-Rajab and mid-Sha‘ban. It is preferable for the pilgrims to make ablution (*ghusl*) before setting out for pilgrimage and recite the Umm Dāwūd supplication while making pilgrimage. Once he wants to perform these actions, he should go on fasting on the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth of the month, make a *ghusl* at noontime on the fifteenth day, sit in a quiet place facing the *qibla* after having performed his noon and afternoon prayers, and recite *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa* 100 times, *Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ* 100 times, and *Āyat al-Kursī* 10 times. After that, he should recite *Sūrat al-An‘ām*, *Sūrat al-Isrā’* (*Banī Isrā’īl*), *Sūrat al-Kahf*, *Sūrat al-Luqmān*, *Sūrat al-Yā Sīn*, *Sūrat al-Ṣāffāt*, *Sūrat Fuṣṣilat*, *Sūrat al-Shūrā*, *Sūrat al-Dukhān*, *Sūrat al-Fath*, *Sūrat al-Wāqī‘a*, *Sūrat al-Mulk*,

1. Firūzābādī, Sayyid Murtaḍā, *Faḍā’il al-Khamsa min al-Ṣiḥāḥ al-Sitta*, Islāmīyya, 2nd edition, Tehran, 1392/1972, vol. 3, p. 321.

Sūrat al-Qalam, and *Sūrat al-Inshiqāq* to the end of the Qur'ān.

Once he is done with the reciting, he should say, “Allah, the Almighty, has spoken the truth; there is no god except Him, the Living One, the All-sustainer,” through the end of the supplication.¹

Pilgrimage to Imam Mūsā b. Ja‘far (A.S.)

§ Please explain the excellence of pilgrimage to Imam Mūsā b. Ja‘far (A.S.).

Making pilgrimage to him is like making pilgrimage to His Holiness Sayyid al-Shuhadā Imam al-Ḥusayn (A.S.).²

1. ‘Aṭārudī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 13.

2. Qummi, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, p. 582.

Mahdism (Expecting the Awaited Savior)

The Excellence of Mid-Sha‘bān

§ What excellence does the night of Mid-Sha‘bān have?
At this night, Allah frees a group of people from the Hell and forgives cardinal sins.¹

Awaiting the *Faraj*

§ What is awaiting the *Faraj* [the return of our savior, Imam al-Mahdī]?

Do you not know that awaiting the *Faraj* is *Faraj* in itself? Allah the Exalted says, ﴿So be on the watch; I too will be watching along with you.﴾²

The Qā'im of the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.)

§ Who is the Qā'im (awaited redeemer) of the Ahl al-

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1. Qummi, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 292.
 2. ‘Ayyāshī, Muḥammad b. Mas‘ūd, *Tafsīr al-‘Ayyāshī*, Islāmiyya, Tehran, n.d., vol.2, p. 159; Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, h. 52, p. 129; Qummi, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Kamāl al-Dīn wa Tamām al-Ni‘ma*, vol. 2, p. 645.

Bayt (A.S.)? When will he make his advent?

He is the fourth of my descendants, who is the son of the superior of the handmaids. By him will the Almighty Allah cleanse the earth of injustice and cruelty. He is the one in whose birth the people will become suspicious. Before his advent, he will be in hiding for a while and when he reappears, he would enlighten the earth with his glory and establish universal justice.

Mahdī is the one, upon whom the control of the earth will be bestowed, who does not have a shadow, to whom the herald will call people, and all the people of the world will hear the herald's call.

The herald will say, "Allah's authority on earth has appeared. Follow him, as he is in the right. The Almighty Allah says, ﴿If We wish We will send down to them a sign from the sky before which their heads will remain bowed in humility.﴾¹

The Imam after me will be my son, Muḥammad (A.S.), and after him, his son, 'Alī (A.S.), and after him, his son Ḥasan (A.S.), and then his son, the *Hujja*, the *Qā'im*, and the awaited one will be in occultation, to whom the people will be obedient at the time of his reappearance. If there is only one day left of the life on the earth, Allah will prolong it until His Holiness (A.S.) reappears and fills the world with justice and equity.

However, the day of his reappearance and advent, like the Day of Resurrection, is not known and its knowledge

1. Q. 26:4.

is with Allah. My father related from his forefathers and they quoted the Holy Apostle (S.A.W.) having been asked, “When will the *Qā’im* reappear?” He answered, “His uprising is like the Day of Resurrection, as God says, ﴿None except Him shall manifest it at its time. It will weigh heavy on the heavens and the earth. It will not overtake you but suddenly.﴾¹

Possessor of Authority

§ Are you the possessor of command (*Ṣāhib al-amr*)?

I am the possessor of command, but not the one who will fill the world with justice and equity.

When the *Qā’im* and the *Ṣāhib al-amr* arises, he will be old in age and young in body and appearance. The *Qā’im* and the *Ṣāhib al-amr* has a strong body and if he wants he can uproot a giant tree.

He will have the Moses’ stick and the Solomon’s ring with him. He is the fourth of my descendants whom God will hide from sight and whenever He determines, He will make him reappear to fill the world with justice and equity after it will have been filled with injustice and tyranny.²

The Signs of Imam al-Mahdī (A.S.)

§ What are the signs of Imam al-Mahdī (A.S.) when he

1. Q. 7:187.

2. Qummi, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Kamāl al-Dīn wa Tamām al-Ni’ma*, vol. 2, p. 645; Ṭabarsī, Aḥmad b. ‘Alī, *A’lām al-Warā bi A’lām al-Hudā*, Islāmiyya, 3rd edition, Tehran, 1390/1970, p. 434.

reappears?

One of his signs is that he has the age of the elderly and the face of the youth so that when people see him they presume him to be forty or younger. Indeed, of his signs is that the passage of day and night would not make him old until his death arrives.¹

Revenge for Imam al-Ḥusayn (A.S.)

§ It is related from Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) that when the Qā'im (A.S.) reappears, he will kill the descendants of the murderers of Imam al-Ḥusayn (A.S.) and will revenge them in place of their forefathers. Doesn't this contradict the noble verse that maintains, ﴿No bearer shall bear another's burden.﴾²?

That is right [it does not contradict the noble verse]; because descendents of the murderers of Imam al-Ḥusayn (A.S.) were in conformity with their forefathers' actions and took honor in them; whoever is content with the actions of a people, will be resurrected with them. If a man commits a murder in the East and someone in the West conforms that action, he is a partner in that murder and if the Qā'im (A.S.) will kill them, it is for this same reason.³

Concerning Return to Life

§ What is your opinion about *raj'a* (return to life)?

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1. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 652; Idem, *Kamāl al-Dīn wa Tamām al-Ni'ma*, vol. 2, p. 652.
 2. Q. 17:15.
 3. Qummi, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 229.

Return to life is true, it has happened in the previous *Ummas* (communities), too, and it is referred to in the Holy Qur'ān, as well. The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.) said, "Whatever has happened in the previous *Ummas* will happen in my *Umma* too.

Whenever Mahdī (A.S.), who is from among my descendants, reappears, Jesus (A.S.) will perform prayer behind him.

The Holy Apostle (S.A.W.) said, "Islam was lonely (*gharīb*) in the beginning and will be lonely again; how happy are the lonely!" he was asked, "O Rasūl Allāh! What will happen then?" He said, "The deserving will secure their rights."¹

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, pp. 201-202; Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 10, p. 346-347; 'Aṭārudī, 'Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 135.

Chapter Two: The Philosophy and Secrets of (Islamic) Rules

- Purification
- Prayer
- Fasting
- Legal Alms
- Ḥajj Pilgrimage
- Holy Struggle
- Transactions
- Foods and Beverages
- Marriage
- Divorce
- Inheritance
- Judgment and Testimony
- Legal Punishments
- Retaliated Punishment

Purification

The Reason for *Wuḍū*

§ Why has *wuḍū* (minor ablution) become obligatory in Islam?

Because when a servant wants to stand before the Lord to commune with Him, he has to be purified and clean from impurities, throw away lethargy and lassitude from himself, and stand before God with cleansed and peaceful heart.¹

What is the Reason for *Wuḍū*?

The reason is that the servant wants to stand before the Exalted Allah and meet Him with his physical body. So washing the face is necessary because of touching down one's forehead in prostration; washing one's two hands is necessary because of their being moved and that with their

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharā'iyi'*, vol. 1, p. 257; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 104; idem, *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 1, 56.

assistance there comes inclination and desire as well as apprehension and fear of breaking and separating. It is obligatory to wipe the [top of the] head and [the upper parts of] the two feet with a wet hand because they are apparent; and in all positions of the prayer we stand before God by them, and in them [top of the head and the upper parts of the two feet] there is not as much humbleness and sincerity of worship as there is in the face and the two hands;¹ so only wiping the top of the head and the upper parts of the two feet is made obligatory.

Organs of *Wuḍū*

§ Why is washing the hands and feet, and the face and head obligatory in *wuḍū*?

Once a servant stands before God, his apparent organs are the ones that are to be washed while making *wuḍū*. That is because the person who is performing prayer prostrates and shows humbleness and sincerity with his face, holds up his hands towards the heavens to implore to God, and bows down and prostrates in prayer with his head, and stands up and sits down with his feet.²

Washing or Wiping (*Mash*)

§ Why should the face and the two hands be washed

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī*, vol. 1, p. 280; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 89.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī*, vol. 1, p. 257; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 104.

and the head and the feet wiped with a wet hand, and why has washing the whole head and feet not become obligatory?

The instructions are for the following reasons:

1. The great worship includes *rukū'* (bowing down in prayer) and *sujūd* (prostration), which are carried out with hands and the head and feet are not involved in them. Thus, it is not necessary to wash them.

2. The people do not always have the capacity to wash their head and feet, as it is very difficult to wash them while travelling or in the cold weather or when one is sick. It is difficult both at night and during the day, but washing the face and the hands are easier.

Religious duties and obligations have been legislated as per the capacity of the weakest people and all the people, whether weak, strong, or well or sick, must act upon them.

3. Head and feet are not always apparent as the face and hands are.¹

Ghusl Janābat

§ What is the reason for *ghusl janābat* (major ablution for ritual impurity)?

The reason why *ghusl janābat* has become obligatory in the holy Islamic law is that for man to cleanse their body from filth and impurity and to be clean and pure; and since *janābat* (ritual impurity) has come out from the

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 104; 'Aṭārudī, 'Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 153.

entire body, therefore, it is obligatory to wash the whole body.¹

Prayer and Fasting during Menstruation

§ Why is a woman exempt from prayer and fasting when menstruating?

It is because she is impure in that period and God does not want to be worshipped without purification, and also because fasting is not correct for the person whose prayer is not correct.²

§ Why should a woman, when purified from menstruation, make up for her missed fasting days but not for her missed prayers?

This Islamic rule has various reasons as follows:

A. Fasting does not prevent a woman from serving her husband, doing her own tasks, or her housework; but prayer prevents her from such works, because prayer has to be performed several times during the day and night and a woman cannot perform these prayers, whereas fasting is not so.

B. There is hardship in prayer and human organs are engaged while performing it, whereas fasting does not involve the body and the one who is fasting has to avoid eating and drinking, not needing to engage the organs.

C. Prayer has to be performed at certain various times and when one performs a prayer, the time for another

1. Idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p 104.

2. Idem, *'Ilāl al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 271; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p 117.

prayer will arrive; however, fasting is not like this and it is done within certain times.¹

Recommended Ablutions

§ What is the reason behind the recommended ablution (*ghusl*) on the two *Eids* (*al-Aḍḥā* and *al-Fiṭr*)?

The reason for *ghusl* on the two *Eids*, on Friday, and other occasions is to dignify and honor Allah so that the servants may stand before the Almighty Allah and worship Him with clean and purified bodies and ask forgiveness for themselves. Furthermore, since the *Eid* day is a congregation day for the Muslims on which they meet and carry out worship of God en masse, thus *ghusl* was decreed to commemorate it and those days were given superiority over other days.

The *ghusl* on Friday causes one to keep clean and purified until the next Friday.²

Funeral Ablution (*Ghusl Mayyit*)

§ What is the reason behind *ghusl mayyit* (ritual ablution for the dead)?

The reason behind *ghusl mayyit* is to cleanse the dead bodies of impurities since, after death, they meet the angels and the people of the Hereafter; and such a meeting

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 1, P. 271; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 117.
 2. Idem, *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 1, p. 258; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 88.

necessitates to be purified and clean.

It is preferable (*mustahab*) for a human being when entering the presence of God and the purified people and communing with the people of the Hereafter to be clean and purified and to enter the presence of God with purity so that they may intercede for him with God.

The second reason is that at death, sperm is discharged from the corpse and that is why *ghusl* is to be performed on it.¹

§ Why should the person who performs *ghusl* on the dead body, take *ghusl* himself too?

Because, when the soul leaves the body, the filth and the traces of disease remains on it and that is why those who have touched it have to take *ghusl* and cleanse themselves.²

Touching the Corpse

§ Why doesn't the person who touches the dead body of creatures other than humans, such as birds, beasts, and other animals need to take *ghusl*?

The reason is that these creatures are clothed with such material as feather, wool, hair, and fur, which are undoubtedly clean and death does not have anything to do with them since there is no life in them to result in death; and what is mostly touched are these outer cover of them, whose touching does not necessitates *ghusl*. Thus, in

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyī*, vol. 1, P. 300; Aṭārudī, 'Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 414.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyī*, vol. 1, P. 268; idem, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 114.

general, the Holy Lawmaker has not made *ghusl* obligatory for touching them, even though their living parts are touched.¹

Shrouding and burying the Dead

§ Why has it become obligatory to shroud and bury the dead in the earth?

So that the dead may meet his lord with a clean body; also in order that his private parts are not visible to those who take him to the cemetery and the stink, the undesirable condition of the body, and the ugliness of the course is not seen by anyone, since looking a long time at a body afflicted with certain diseases would bring about hardness of the heart and its defects would make an adverse impact on the onlooker.

Similarly, the corpse is clothed in a shroud in order to make it appealing to the sight, lest the degenerating naked body would cause detestation in the people around it and make them totally forget the memory of the dead person, making them loose interest in him and even not to execute his will – whether obligatory or recommended.²

Funeral Prayers

§ What is the reason for performing funeral prayer

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 1, P. 268; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 114.
 2. Idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 114; idem, *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 1, p. 268.

(*ṣalāṭ al-janāza*) for the dead?

In order that the worshippers performing *ṣalāṭ al-janāza* may intercede for him with God and ask Him for his forgiveness, because the dead person is never more in need of intercession and forgiveness than after dying.¹

§ Why is performing funeral prayer permissible without *wuḍūʿ*?

Because there is no bowing down (*rukūʿ*) and prostration (*sujūd*) in this type of prayer; rather, there is supplication and begging for mercy, as in any case one can offer prayers and make a request from God, whether in purity or otherwise. It is only in obligatory prayer that *rukūʿ* and *sujūd* are required.²

§ Why doesn't funeral prayer have *rukūʿ* and *sujūd*?

Because, by this prayer, they want to ask forgiveness for the dead person, for he has left behind whatever he has had, which are no longer of any use to him, and he is in need of what is sent forth in advance.³

§ Why are five *takbīrs* (i.e. *Allāhu Akbar*, meaning Allah is the greatest) recited in funeral prayer?

It is related [in a *ḥadīth*] that it is adopted from the five daily prayers. Of course, this is the apparent aspect of the *ḥadīth*; there is also another aspect too; that is, the Exalted Allah has made five duties obligatory upon His servants.

1. Idem, *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 113; idem, *ʿIlal al-Sharāyīʿ*, vol. 1, p. 267.

2. Idem, *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 115; idem, *ʿIlal al-Sharāyīʿ*, vol. 1m p. 268.

3. Idem, *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 114; idem, *ʿIlal al-Sharāyīʿ*, vol. 1m p. 267.

The five obligations are *ṣalāt*, legal alms (*zakāt*), fasting, Ḥajj pilgrimage, and devotion to Imams (*wilāya*); and He has made a *takbīr* obligatory for every one of these obligations on behalf of the dead person.

Whoever has accepted the *wilāya* [of Holy Imams (A.S.)], recites five *takbīrs* and whoever has not, recites four *takbīrs*. Thus, you, the Shī‘as, recite five *takbīrs* and your opponents recite four *takbīrs*.¹

1. Idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 84, 114; idem, *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 1m p. 267; ‘Aṭārudī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 418.

Prayer

The Reason for Prayer

§ Why are the servants enjoined to [daily] prayer?

Prayer (*ṣalāt*) is confession to the Lordship of the Almighty Allah. Prayer means rejecting other objects of worship, leaving all of them behind, and reaching the Divine Presence. The praying servant stands before God with full modesty, humility, admitting servitude, and asking forgiveness for his past sins. Every day, he stands before the Lord and touches the ground with his forehead in humbleness to remember the All-powerful and Exalted Allah and not to forget Him; thus displaying his submission, apprehension, and misery to the Glorious Allah. Out of servitude and submission, he begs the All-powerful and Exalted Allah for faith and worldly gains and calls His Sacred Sanctuary for their increment, and humbly beseeches Him to keep him away from debasements and sins.¹

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyi’*, vol. 1 p. 256-257; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 103-104.

§ Why is the original prayer assigned to be two *rak'as* in number; to some prayers having been added one *rak'a* and to others two *rak'as*, and yet to some others nothing is added?

The prayer is basically one *rak'a*; because the basis is one and for this reason whenever the prayer is performed in less than one *rak'a*, it is not counted as prayer. Since the Almighty and Glorious Allah knew that the servants would not fully perform the one *rak'a*, less than which is not regarded as prayer at all, but they would perform it incompletely, therefore He added one more *rak'a* to it to compensate the incompleteness of the first *rak'a* with the second one; and, thereby the basic prayer was assigned to be two *rak'as*. Similarly, since the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.) knew that the servants would not perform these two *rak'as* with all that had been commanded, he added two *rak'as* to each one of the noon, afternoon, and late evening (*'ishā'*) prayers so as to compensate the inadequacy of the first and second *rak'as*. Also, since His Holiness (A.S.) knew that at the time of the evening prayer most of the people would fail to perform prayer and would engage instead in such acts as breaking their fast, eating food, making *wuḍū*, and preparing for the nightly rest, so he added only one *rak'a* to it so that the evening prayer would be light and easy for them. The other reason for adding one *rak'a* to the evening prayer is to add up the number of *rak'as* of prayer in the day and night to an odd number. As for the morning prayer, it was left unchanged and nothing was added to it because one is busier at the time of this prayer in beginning to pursue

one's own daily needs than at other times.

Furthermore, the hearts are free from care and preoccupation in the morning comparing other times of the day, because people are less engaged in transactions and dealings during the night, hence one is more observant to prayer in morning prayer than other times.¹

Prayer Times

§ Why has prayer become obligatory at certain times without priority and posterity?

These times are obvious to all the people on earth and the knowing and the ignorant are familiar with these four times:

The most important and well known, the sunset is the time for performing the evening prayer. Disappearing of the evening twilight, which is also well known, is the time for performing the late evening prayer. Also well known, the rising of dawn is the time for performing the morning prayer; and the beginning of the decline of the sun and the return of shadow toward the east, which is also well known, is the time obligatory for performing the noon prayer. However, there is no fixed and well-known time for performing the afternoon prayer; thus, its time is maintained to be after performing the previous prayer until when the shadow of the sundial marker becomes four times longer than the sundial marker itself.

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1 p. 161; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 107.

The other reason is that the Almighty and Glorious Allah likes people to worship Him at the beginning of every action. Thus, at the beginning of every day, i.e., every morning, He has commanded the people first to worship Him and then go on to earn their livelihood and worldly affairs. In this way, He made the morning prayer obligatory on them; and at noontime, when people stop their works and take a rest and eat and take a nap, He ordered them, before engaging in the above, to remember their Lord and worship Him. So, He made the noon prayer obligatory on them so that after performing this prayer they should go for fulfilling their needs.

After the noon is over and what was told is done with, when they want to disperse for work for the rest of the day, again they are to engage in worshipping the Exalted God and then engage in their work. When the night falls and the people return home and take off their ornaments, first they should worship their Lord and then deal with their wants; thus, the Exalted Allah made evening prayer obligatory on them, and when the time for sleep arrives and they are free from all tasks, the Exalted Allah likes them first to worship and show their devotion to Him before they go to sleep; and that is why He made late evening prayer obligatory.

Anyway! When people act according to this instruction and worship the Exalted Allah before engaging in any action, perform prayer, and then go on pursuing their worldly needs, they would never forget God and neglect

His remembrance, their heart would not harden and their inclination and desire for God would not decline.¹

Supererogatory (Recommended) Prayers

§ Why are recommended prayers assigned at different times and not at a single time?

The best times are three: at the decline of the sun and after that, the evening, and at dawn. God desired His servants to perform prayer at these three times for gaining proximity to Him, because it will be easier and more comfortable for all if the supererogatory prayers are performed at different times, than at a certain limited time.²

§ Why are supererogatory prayers thirty four *rak'as*?

Obligatory prayers are seventeen *rak'as* and the supererogatory prayers are designated to be double their number, which are for completing and complementing them so that if the obligatory prayers have been flawed, they would be compensated by the supererogatory prayers.³

§ Why is not the late evening supererogatory prayer cancelled?

This is not two *rak'as* of the 50 *rak'as* obligatory and supererogatory prayers; rather, it is added to the 50 *rak'as*

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyi'*, vol. 1, pp. 264; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 111.

2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyi'*, vol. 1, pp. 263-264; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 109-110.

3. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyi'*, vol. 1, pp. 263-264; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 109-110.

of the obligatory and supererogatory prayers so as there would be two *rak'as* of supererogatory for every *rak'a* of the obligatory prayer.¹

Call to Prayer (*Adhān*)

§ What is the reason for enjoining people to recite *adhān*?

For many reasons; like, for the people to remember prayer and the negligent to notice the prayer time. The muezzin should recite *adhān* for the pleasure of God and have the intention to encourage people to perform prayer, aiming at proclamation of Islam, expression of faith, and reminding the forgetful of the prayer time. A muezzin (or *mu'adhdhin*, a person who recites *adhān*) is called so because he calls people to prayer.²

§ Why does *adhān* begin with *takbīr* and end with *lā ilāha ill-Allāh*?

Adhān starts with *takbīr* (saying, “*Allāhu akbar*”, meaning, “Allah is the greatest”) and ends with *tahlīl* (saying, “*lā ilāha ill-Allāh*”, meaning, “There is no god but Allah”) because Allah has willed *adhān* to begin and end with His name and it is for this reason that the blessed word “Allah” comes both at the beginning and at the end of *adhān*.³

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 1, p. 259; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 106; idem, *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, 455.

2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 1, p. 258; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 105.

3. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 1, p. 258; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 105.

§ Why are four *takbīrs* recited at the beginning of *adhān*?

At the beginning of *adhān*, there is no statement that would make people aware and most of the listeners are unaware of *adhān*; for this reason, the first and the second two *takbīrs* are recited to make people aware to be prepared for hearing the next statements.

§ Why are *shahādatayn* (the two testimonies) recited after *takbīr*?

Because the perfection of faith is dependent on the following two:

A. Divine unity and attesting to the Oneness of the Exalted Allah.

B. Attesting to the Prophetic Mission of the Seal of the Prophets (S.A.W.); because obedience to God and to the Apostle (S.A.W.) and the knowledge of the two are concurrent. Thus, these two testimonies should be recited after *takbīr*.

The other reason is that the basis of faith is professing the testimonies. Thus, two testimonies are assigned, just as in other rights, two witnesses are assigned and when the muezzin is attesting to the Oneness of God and to the Prophetic Mission of the Apostle of God (S.A.W.), he is definitely attesting to the whole faith, and faith is the basis of the attestation of God and His Apostle (S.A.W.).²

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 1, p. 259; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 105-106.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 1, p. 259; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 106; idem, *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, 299-300.

§ Why is every statement of the *adhān* recited twice?

Repetition heard by the listeners and its emphasis is effective in that if it is not heard the first time, it will be heard the second time. The other reason is that since prayer is two *rak'as* by two *rak'as*, statements of *adhān* are assigned to be pronounced two times, as well.¹

§ Why is there an invitation to prayer after uttering the two testimonies?

Basically, *adhān* is legislated and formulated for prayer. Thus, the invitation to prayer is in the middle of the *adhān* with four phrases before it, including two *takbīrs* plus two testimonies. Then four phrases come after it, including two calls to salvation urging us to devotion and praying followed by two calls encouraging us to do excellent deeds. Then the muezzin recites two *takbīrs* and two *tahlīls* (there is no God but Allah), completing the four last phrases as he did regarding the first four phrases. He then finishes off by mentioning Allah just as he started out by mentioning the name of the Exalted Allah.²

§ Why is reciting *tahlīl* (There is no god but Allah) at the end of the *adhān*?

Because in reciting *tahlīl*, Allah's Name comes last, and the Exalted Allah liked the *adhān* to end in His Name as it began in His Name.³

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 258-259; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 105.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 259; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 106; 'Aṭṭarudī, 'Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, pp. 159-160.
 3. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 259; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 106.

§ Why is there not “*Subhān Allāh*” (glorious is Allah) or “*Al-Ḥamdu li Allāh*” (Praise be to Allah) at the end of *adhān* instead of *tahlīl*, while both also end with the Name of Allah?

Because *tahlīl* is testifying to the Unity of the Exalted Allah and refuting all deities other than Allah. It is the foundation of faith and is greater than *tasbīḥ* (saying *Subhān Allāh*) or *tahmīd* (saying *Al-Ḥamdu li Allāh*).¹

Takbīrat al-Ihram

§ Why do they raise the two hands for reciting *takbīr* [at the beginning of prayer]?

Raising the two hands is a kind of supplication and lamentation. The Exalted Allah likes His servants to be in a state of supplication and lamentation when remembering Him.

Thus, by raising one’s hands, one becomes more attentive to the intention and more willing in the heart of what one says and intends.

Furthermore, the obligatory amount of remembering God is the time engaged in prayer; and any *sunna* and preferable religious act (*mustaḥab*) assigned to be practiced along with it has to be in line with fulfilling that obligation and helping its fulfillment. Therefore, since in entering the prayer, which is an obligatory act of worship, the raising of the two hands is a kind of help in performing it. Thus, the Exalted Allah

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 1, p. 259; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 106.

likes this *sunna* to be done in fulfilling the obligatory.¹

Reading (*Qarā'at*)

§ Why is it ordered to read the Holy Qur'an in prayers?

So that the Holy Qur'an is not left abandoned, its recitation is not given up, and it is not ignored.²

§ Why is each prayer reading started by reciting the Opening Chapter (*Fātiḥa*) and not any of the other chapters [of the Holy Qur'an]?

It is because nowhere else in the Holy Qur'an is there such a vast amount of good deeds and wisdom compiled together as there is in the Opening Chapter, the exposition of which is as follows:

﴿All praise belongs to Allah﴾, would constitute the fulfillment of what the Exalted Allah has made incumbent upon His servants in terms of expressing their gratitude to Him for whatever good He has granted them success in achieving.

﴿Lord of all the worlds﴾, is the exaltation and praise of the Exalted Allah, testifying to Him that He is the Creator, the Owner and no one else is.

﴿The All-beneficent, the All-merciful﴾, is a phrase with which the servant seeks the pleasure of God and mentions His Favors and Blessings for all His creatures.

﴿Master of the Day of Retribution﴾, testifies being

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 264; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 111.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 260; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 107.

resurrected, returning, reckoning and being punished. It also means considering the Dominion (*mulk*) of the Hereafter for Him as the Dominion of this world is His.

﴿You [alone] do we worship﴾, is a statement with which the servant states being inclined towards the Exalted Allah, seeking proximity to Him, and proclaiming sincerity of actions for Him and no one else.

﴿To You [alone] do we turn for help﴾, is a statement with which the servant begs Allah for an increase in success and worshipping Him, and for the continuation of the blessings and Assistance He has granted.

﴿Guide us on the straight path﴾, is a statement with which the servant seeks His Guidance; thus grabbing onto His Rope, asking Him for an increase of his recognition of his Lord, His Glory, His Greatness, and His Almightyness.

﴿The path of those whom You have blessed﴾, is an emphasis on asking for and being inclined towards Him. It also constitutes mentioning the Blessings He has granted and to His friends as well as asking the same things for oneself.

﴿Such as have not incurred Your wrath﴾, a phrase with which the servant seeks refuge in Him from becoming one of the enemies or unbelievers; or becoming one who underestimates Him, what He commands, and what He prohibits.

﴿... nor [those who] are astray﴾. This phrase is a form of grabbing onto Him so as not to be amongst those who have gone astray - those who have strayed away from His

Path without recognition and thinking that they were doing good deeds.¹

Bowing Down (*Rukū'*) and Prostrating (*Sujūd*)

§ Why are there in every *rak'a* (cycle or unit of prayer) one *rukū'* and two *sujūds*?

Rukū' is regarded as a standing position and *sujūd* as a sitting position during prayer. The prayer in a sitting position (*qā'id*) is counted as half the prayer in a standing position; for this reason, a *sujūd* is assigned to be performed twice in a *rak'a* so as to be equal to a *rukū'* and no difference is left between them, because prayer consists of *rukū'* and *sujūd*. Therefore, there should be two *sujūds* for every *rukū'*.²

§ Why is there recitation of *tasbīḥ* (glorification of Allah by saying *subḥān Allah*) in *rukū'* and *sujūd*?

Because, besides the humbleness, submission, devotion, piety, humility, subordination, and proximity that the servant has towards his Lord, he sanctifies and glorifies Him, as well. Another reason is that the servant is to praise, glorify, obey, exalt and thank his Lord, so that his heart and mind is not distracted and his aspirations take him to others than God.³

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 260; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 107.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 262; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 108.
 3. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 261; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 108.

Qunūt

§ Why is the supplication recited in the first *rak'a* before recitation (of the Qur'ānic verse), but the *qunūt* (personal supplication in prayer) is recited after recitation (of the Qur'ānic verse) in the second *rak'a*?

The Exalted Allah loves that His servants start their standing up for their Lord and worshipping Him by reciting praises for Him, sanctifying Him, being inclined towards Him and being humble to Him, and end it all in a similar fashion. Therefore, the servant is to end the second *rak'a*, which is the end of the practice, by reciting the *qunūt* that includes praise, sanctification, inclination, and humbleness.

Moreover, sometimes in congregational prayers one may happen to join the prayer leader in the second *rak'a* after recitation (of the Qur'ānic verse). Therefore, while the prayer leader is reciting the *qunūt*, the standing will become long enough before the *rukū'* enabling the person to follow him in prayer and join the prayer in the second *rak'a*, thus missing only one *rak'a* of the prayer.¹

Tashahhud

§ Why is *tashahhud* (testifying faith) assigned after two *rak'as*?

It is because as before the bowing down and the prostration, the *adhān* and the supplications and recitations

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 261; idem, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 108.

are performed, so also after these two the *tashahhud*, the praising, and the supplications are recited.¹

Traveler's Prayer

§ Why is prayer shortened on a journey?

Obligatory prayers have originally been ten *rak'as*, and later on seven more *rak'as* have been added to them. Then, because of the troubles that the travelers would go through during a journey and for dealing with their routine affairs and out of His Mercy and Compassion, the Exalted Allah rescinded the *rak'as* that had been added to the prayers, except for the evening prayer, as this prayer is originally broken.²

§ Why is it permissible for the traveler and the sick to perform their mid-night prayer earlier at night?

The traveler has works to do and the sick is weak and has to rest. Thus, it has become permissible for them to perform their supererogatory prayers earlier at night so that the sick can rest and the traveler is able to do his work, which is making provision for his journey.³

Congregational Prayer

§ Why is congregational prayer legislated?

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 264; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, pp. 108-109.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 266; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 111.
 3. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 267; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 113.

Sincerity, unity, and worship of the Lord should be manifest, evident, and popular, since this manifestation and evidence is the Allah's Authority over the people of the East and the West. It is because the hypocrite, that is, the one who underestimates prayer and belittles it be forced to manifest openly what he has attested to, and perform the prayer among the group of Muslims and be mindful of it. Also, so that the testimony of some Muslims for others to become possible.

There are also other benefits in congregational prayer such as attending to the poor, helping out the helpless, benevolence, avoiding sins, and preventing many of sins, which can be done through attending congregational prayer.¹

Friday Prayer

§ Why is Friday noon prayer two *rak'as* when performed with a prayer leader, but four *rak'as* when performed with other than a prayer leader?

The reasons for this cutback are as follows:

A. The people come to the Friday prayer gathering from far distances and for this reason God likes the prayer to be easier for them so that the suffering they have undergone on their way may be made up for.

B. The prayer leader keeps people for the sermon and they keep waiting for prayer, and whoever waits for prayer

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *ʿIlal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 262; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p 109.

is like one who is engaged in performing prayer [and indeed his prayer is complete].

C. Congregational prayer is more complete than individual prayer because the prayer leader possesses knowledge, virtue, and equity.

D. Friday is an *Eid* day and the *Eid* prayer is two *rak'as*. It is not to be imagined that this prayer is broken; rather, it is complete, because the two sermons are like to *rak'as*. Thus, the sum total of the prayer and the sermons are counted as four *rak'as*.¹

§ Why are there sermons in Friday prayer?

Friday prayer is an occasion for public gathering and the Exalted Allah has wanted that the Friday prayer leader with his sermons encourage the people to fulfill their obligations, prevent them from committing sins, state the expedience of their religion and worldly life, and make them aware of the mischiefs and conditions that are detrimental or beneficial to them. It may be that the prayer leaders would not be able to carry out this task on days other than Fridays, because the only person that can carry this out is the Friday prayer leader.²

§ Why have two sermons been designated in the Friday prayer?

In order that in one sermon to glorify, praise, and sanctify the Exalted Allah, and in the other one to express

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyi'*, vol. 1, pp. 246-265; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p 111.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyi'*, vol. 1, pp. 246-265; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p 111.

people's needs and excuses; to admonish them against committing sins, and encourage them to supplicate; and make them aware of what would lead them to good and evil, i.e. the things comprising the servants' virtues and depravities.¹

§ Why are sermons delivered before prayer in Friday prayers and after the prayer in *Eid* prayers?

Because Friday prayers are permanent and are to be performed every week of the month and every month of the year; and since it is performed so often, the people might leave the prayer after it is over in case the sermons are to be delivered after performing the prayers. Once the people perform the prayer they would disperse and not wait for the sermon. Therefore, the sermon is to be delivered before the prayers, so that the people do not disperse or leave when the sermons are delivered. However, there are only two *Eid* prayers each year, which are much more magnificent than the Friday prayers, and many more people attend the *Eid* prayers, since more of them are interested in attending them. Even if some people decide to leave after saying the prayers, most of the people remain and the dispersing and leaving of some will not lead to making light of it.²

§ Why are four *rak'as* added to the Friday's supererogatory prayers?

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyi'*, vol. 1, pp. 246-265; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p 111.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyi'*, vol. 1, p. 265; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p 112.

It is because of the greatness of Friday, its honoring, and its difference from other days.¹

Signs Prayer

§ Why is performing a prayer obligatory when there is an eclipse?

It is because an eclipse is one of the signs (*āyāt*) of the Exalted Allah, which is not clear whether it has happened as Divine Mercy or Chastisement. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) desired that his *Umma* turn to their Creator and His Mercy when it occurs, so that they may be relieved from its evil and would be protected from its possible harm, as the people of Jonah [Yūnus] (A.S.) did [once they saw signs of punishment] when they appealed to and beseeched the Almighty Allah and He averted the punishment from them.²

§ Why are there ten times of *rukū'* (bowing down) in signs prayer?

The obligatory daily prayer initially assigned by the Exalted Allah was ten *rak'as*. These ten *rak'as* were put together in this prayer; and the reason why prostration is obligatory in it is that there is no prayer in which there is *rukū'* in it except that it has prostration, too. The other reason is that in this prayer prostration would in this way

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 265; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 112.

2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 269; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 115; *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, 541.

cause people to conclude their prayer with humbleness and sincerity.¹

§ Why weren't there prostrations instead of bowing down in signs prayer?

It is because praying while standing up is nobler than praying while sitting down; also, one who is standing would see the eclipse and its termination, whereas one who is prostrating would not see it.²

§ Why are the fundamentals of signs prayer different from other prayers?

Because signs prayer is designated for changes in the normal sequence of natural events such as the eclipse; and since the cause changes, the result will also change.³

***Eid al-Fiṭr* (Fast Breaking Feast)**

§ Why is the fast breaking day designated as a feast?

A. On this day people gather together and praise the Exalted Allah for what He has bestowed upon them. So, this day is considered to be a feast day and it is the day for the people to gather together. It is the day to break the fast, pay the alms-tax, long for and be humble to God.

B. The *fiṭr* day is the first day of the new year, in which eating and drinking is allowed following the month of

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyi'*, vol. 1, p. 269; idem, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p 115; *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, 541-542.

2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyi'*, vol. 1, p. 269; idem, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p 115; *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, 541-542.

3. Ibid.

Ramadan, because for the people of the truth the first month of the year is the Ramadan, from the beginning to the end of which eating and drinking is unlawful in its daytime. The first day that it becomes lawful for the religiously accountable (*mukallafs*) is the first day after the end of this month, and that same day is *Eid al-Fiṭr*. Thus, the Exalted Allah likes the people to hold congregations on that day and praise and sanctify Him.¹

§ Why are there twelve *takbīrs* in the congregational prayer of *Eid al-Fiṭr*?

It is because there are twelve *takbīrs* legal in each two *rak'as* of prayers. Thus there are twelve *takbīrs* in the congregational prayer of *Eid al-Fiṭr*.²

§ Why are there more *takbīrs* in the *Eid al-Fiṭr* prayer compared to other prayers?

Takbīr consists of glorifying the Most High God and thanking Him for guidance and good health as He says in the Holy Qur'ān, ﴿...and magnify Allah for guiding you, and that you may give thanks.

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyī*, vol. 1, p. 269; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p 115-116.

2. Ibid.

3. Q. 2:185; Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyī*, vol. 1, p. 269; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p 116; *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faḡīh*, vol. 2, 522.

Fasting

The Reason for Fasting

§ Why is fasting obligatory?

For five reasons fasting is obligatory:

A. To understand the pain of hunger and thirst.

B. To become aware of poverty and need in the hereafter with this feeling of hunger and thirst; that is, to know it as a reason for need in the Hereafter.

C. This way, the fasting person shows reverence, humbleness, and submissiveness, and knowingly and patiently benefits from his suffering hunger and thirst, hence, deserving reward. Furthermore, fasting preserves him from lustful and whimsical desires.

D. For the fasting person, it acts as an advisor concerning the present world, a promoter for fulfilling one's obligations, and a guide in the Hereafter.

E. The fasting person would feel the hardship of hunger and thirst of the poor and destitute, causing him to pay off his due portion of property [to be spent for the poor and

the needy].¹

Time of Fasting

§ Why has fasting become obligatory in the month of Ramadan and not in other months?

It is because of the advantages that this month has over other months, some of which are as follows:

A. The Holy Qur‘ān was revealed in this month.

B. In this month the Exalted Allah made a distinction between the true and the false, as He said in the Holy Qur‘ān, ﴿The month of Ramadan is one in which the Holy Qur‘an was sent down as guidance to mankind, with manifest proofs of guidance and the Criterion.﴾²

C. The Night of Divine Decree (*laylat al-ghadr*) falls in this month, at which every matter is planned and determined according to the (Divine) Wisdom. It is also the beginning of the year, at which the good and evil, the benefit and loss, and the provision and death of every person is established. Therefore, this night is called *laylat al-qadr* (the night of Divine Decree).³

Length of Fasting

§ Why were people ordained to fast only the month of

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 1, p. 270; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 116; ‘Aṭārudī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 201.

2. Q. 2:185.

3. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 1, p. 270; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, pp. 116-117; ‘Aṭārudī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 201.

Ramadan, neither less nor more?

It is because this period is the extent of fasting, which both the weak ones and the strong ones can tolerate. God has made incumbent upon people the obligatory deeds to the extent that the strong and the weak from among the people can do them. Then He has given the weak ones some freedom to do as per their capacity and has encouraged the strong ones to do the optional (*mustahab*) along with the obligatory (*wājib*).

If less than this were better for the people, God would have made less than this incumbent upon them and if more than this were better for them, God would have made more than this incumbent upon them.¹

Atonement for Fasting

§ Why has the two months atonement for fasting been ordained to be done successively?

It is for the people not to belittle and undermine fasting, because if they do it separately, it would not be much difficult.²

§ Why has fasting been assigned as atonement for the person who cannot afford setting free a slave and not *Hajj*, prayer, or any other act of devotion?

It is because *Hajj*, prayer, and other acts of devotion are a hindrance to one's practice of earning livelihood and following up one's worldly expedencies, and fasting is not so.³

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyi'*, vol. 1, p. 272; idem, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 117.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

Recommended Fasting

§ Why has recommended fasting been legislated?

In order to perfect the obligatory fasting.

§ Why has fasting three days in every month and once in every ten days been recommended?

The Exalted Allah says, ﴿Whoever brings virtue shall receive ten times its like.﴾²

Whoever fasts one day in every ten days is like a person who has fasted all his life; as Salmān Fārsī said, “fasting three days a month is like fasting all one’s life.”³

1. Ibid.

2. Q. 6:160.

3. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 1, p. 272; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 118.

Legal Alms (*Zakāt*)

The Reason for Legal Alms

§ What is the reason for the obligation of *zakāt*?

The obligation and secret of *zakāt* is for the livelihood and daily sustenance of the poor. If the rich do not give the right of the poor and the needy from their own property, their properties would be exposed to destruction.

The Exalted Allah has charged the healthy people with the duty of attending to the sick people and those who are incapacitated and troubled and has said in the Holy Qur'ān, ﴿You will surely be tested in your possessions and your souls.﴾¹

The Exalted Allah has set some rights for the poor in the properties of the rich and has said that they must pay their *zakāt*; and concerning the soul, they have to be patient and forbearing in their difficulties and be thankful and grateful to their Lord for what they own. They have to be constantly mindful of the poor and the weak and give

1. Q. 6:186.

away in charity from the properties they acquire and help them in their religious matters.

Zakāt is an admonition for the wealthy and the rich to be mindful of the needy; and they should be thankful of God that He granted them bounties and wealth. The wealthy people should always be in humility and fear of God and pay their obligatory legal dues lest they would one day turn needful of *zakāt* like the poor.¹

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyi’*, vol. 1, p. 369; idem, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, pp. 89-90; idem, *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, pp. 8-9; Ḥakīmī, Muḥammad Riḍā, *Al-Ḥayāt*, vol. 5, pp. 201-202.

Hajj Pilgrimage

The Reason for *Hajj* Pilgrimage

§ Why is it obligatory for people to perform *Hajj* pilgrimage?

People are obligated to perform *Hajj* pilgrimage to go toward the Almighty Allah and ask for increase of blessings, to relieve from sins, repent their past, and become religious and committed in the future. Furthermore, they expend some wealth on *Hajj*, put themselves in trouble, go away from their wife and children, abandon pleasures, step on this journey with firm steps in the cold and heat, and constantly engage in humility and attentiveness to God. In addition, *Hajj* pilgrimage has benefits for the people in the West and the East; whether from among different professions, tradesmen, sales clerks, or caravan leaders, they all get together during *Hajj* pilgrimage and this causes the fulfillment of their needs.

Similarly, people would gain religious awareness and

hear traditions of the Holy Imams (A.S.)¹, and this would spread about every corner of the world by them, about which Allah has said, ﴿But why should not there go forth a group from each of their sections to become learned in religion, and to warn their people when they return to them, so that they may beware?﴾.² He has also said, ﴿that they may witness the benefits for them...﴾³

The location of Ka'ba

§ Why is the Sacred House of God located in the center of the earth?

It is because the center of the earth was a point, from under which the earth expanded. The earth was uncovered from under the Rukn-i Shāmī⁴ [the corner toward the direction of Syria], which was the first spot located on the earth, because Rukn-i Shāmī is the middle point of the earth, hence the people of the East and West are equal in performing Ḥajj pilgrimage.⁵

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1. That is to say, during the lifetime of the Holy Imams (A.S.), people would make themselves present in Makkah for performing their *Hajj* pilgrimage and take audience with the Imams (A.S.) and on their return to their homelands, they would recount to their people whatever they had heard from the noble Imams (A.S.).
 2. Q. 9:122.
 3. Q. 22:28.
 4. Ka'ba has four corners, whose naming is based on the direction towards a land each one of them is facing, which include Rukn-i 'Irāqī, Rukn-i Shāmī, Rukn-i Maghribī, and Rukn-i Yamānī.
 5. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyi'*, vol. 2, p. 396; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 90; Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 54, p. 64.

The Time of *Hajj*

§ Why is the time for performing *Hajj* pilgrimage set to be the first ten days of the Dhul *Hijja*, and not before or after that?

We may say that when the Exalted Allah made this devotional act incumbent upon His servants, He established and set the worship positions – such as *minā*, ‘*arafāt*, and *mash‘ar* – during *tashrīq* days¹, and the first ones to have gone on the pilgrimage were the angels, who circumambulated [around the Ka‘ba] during this same time. Then He established what the angels did as a precedent (*sunna*) for humankind all the way up until the Resurrection Day. Thus, the Prophets Adam (A.S.), Noah (A.S.), Abraham (A.S.), Moses (A.S.), Jesus (A.S.) and Muḥammad (S.A.W.) and all the other Prophets performed the *Hajj* pilgrimage during the same period of time, and God made it a precedent for their progeny all the way up until the Resurrection Day.²

Number of *Hajj* Pilgrimages

§ Why have people been ordered to perform the obligatory *Hajj* pilgrimage once and not more?

It is because the Exalted Allah ordained the obligatory deeds taking into consideration the weakest people as He said in the Holy Qur‘ān, ﴿[then] make [such sacrificial]

1. Namely the 11th, 12th, and 13th of Dhul *Hijja*.

2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī‘*, vol. 1, p. 274; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 120.

offering as is feasible.)¹ So that, this way, both the poor and the rich can make their sacrifices. So is also true for other obligatory deeds; that is to say, they are ordained considering the weakest people. One of these obligatory deeds is to go on the *Hajj* pilgrimage which is obligatory once in one's lifetime. Then, those who are better off and are interested are encouraged to perform it several more times as per their capacity.²

The Reason for *Iḥrām*

§ Why have people been ordered to put on *iḥrām* (pilgrimage garb)?

So that they may be humble before entering the Divine Sanctuary and His Protection. That is to quit licentiousness; engaging in worldly affairs, its ornaments and pleasures, and to struggle hard to achieve what they have set out to do there.

In addition to these, there are other things in *iḥrām* including honoring the Exalted Allah and His House; expressing humbleness to Him when having the intention to visit the House of Allah; hoping His Rewards; fearing His Chastisements; and going towards Him in a state of humbleness, subordination and submissiveness.³

1. Q. 2:196.

2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 273; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 120.

3. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 1, p. 274; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 120; 'Āmilī, Muḥammad b. Ḥasan (Ḥurr 'Āmilī), *Wasā'il al-Shī'a*, vol. 12, p. 314.

Talbīya

§ What is the reason for reciting *talbīya* (saying *labbayk Allāhumma labbayk* = at your service, my God, at your service)?

When people put on *iḥrām*, the Blessed and Exalted God calls them on and says, “O My servants! As you put on *iḥrām* for Me, I will forbid the Hellfire from burning you,” and the people say, “*Labbayk, Allāhumma labbayk.*”

The people recite this phrase as answering God’s calling on them.¹

The Reason for Circumambulation (*Tawāf*)

§ What is the reason for circumambulating the Ka’ba?

It is because when the Exalted Allah told the angels, ﴿Indeed I am going to appoint a vicegerent on the earth.﴾ The angels said, ﴿Will You set in it someone who will cause corruption in it, and shed blood?﴾ Allah rejected their statement, and said, ﴿Indeed I know what you do not Know.﴾²

The angels found out that they have spoken unjustly. Thus, they repented and took refuge in the Throne of the Lord and beseeched for God’s pardon.

The Exalted Allah willed to build a house across from the Throne in the Fourth Heaven named as *Bayt al-*

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharā’i’*, vol. 2, p. 416; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 83; *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, p. 196; ‘Āmilī, Muḥammad b. Ḥasan (Ḥurr ‘Āmilī), *Wasā’il al-Shī’a*, vol. 12, p. 375.

2. Q. 2:30.

Ma'mūr (much frequented house). Then, he built the Ka'ba on earth and ordered Adam to circumambulate that house, and this practice has remained among the Adam's children up until the Resurrection Day.¹

Touching the Black Stone

§ What is the reason for touching and kissing the Black Stone (*ḥajar al-aswad*)?

The reason for touching and kissing the Black Stone is that when the Exalted Allah secured covenants from human beings, He left them [the covenants] with the Black Stone in trust. Therefore, He obligated people to touch the Black Stone when circumambulating the Ka'ba and to say while touching it, "This is what I was entrusted with and I fulfilled it. This is my covenant and I honored it. Therefore, bear witness that I honored my covenant."²

Istimtā' in Ḥajj

§ Why does enjoyment with one's wife (*istiyimtā'*) become lawful after *Umrat al-Tamattu'* and before *Ḥajj*?

This is a commutation from the Lord and a mercy from Him towards the servants so that they may remain whole in their *iḥrām* and their deprivation from pleasures would not become so lengthy that it would lead them to

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *ʿIlal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 2, p. 91; idem, *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 91; Majlisi, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 55, p. 58.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *ʿIlal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 2, p. 91; idem, *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 91.

corruption. Furthermore, the *Ḥajj* and *‘Umra* [*Tamattu*] are both obligatory and if there is no exit from the *iḥrām* and enjoyment of pleasures, it is much likely that because of the prolonging *iḥrām* the people may abandon *‘Umra*. Therefore, to prevent it, *istimtā‘* became legitimate between the *Ḥajj* and *‘Umra*. It is also to be noted that *Ḥajj* is not separate from *‘Umra*; rather, they are both together, but due to the above-mentioned considerations, *istimtā‘* divided them.¹

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī‘*, vol. 1, p. 274; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 120.

Jihād

Fleeing from *Jihād*

§ What is the reason for the prohibition of fleeing from *jihād* (holy war)?

The Exalted Allah has made fleeing from *jihād* unlawful (*ḥarām*) for the following reasons:

A. Escape from battle would cause infirmity and defeat in religion.

B. Escape from battle would cause making light of the Messengers and just religious leaders.

C. Escape from *jihād* means giving up assisting the Imams (A.S.) against the enemies and abandoning them and not accompanying them in punishing the enemies.

D. Escape from the battlefield causes the enemies to be emboldened over the Muslims, proceeding to captivate and massacre them, and ruin the religion of God.¹

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyī*, vol. 2, p. 481; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 92; *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 3, p. 565; ‘Āmilī, Muḥammad b. Ḥasan (Ḥurr ‘Āmilī), *Wasā’il al-Shī’a*, vol. 15, p. 87.

Transactions

Usury (*Ribā*) and Sacrilege

§ What is the secret of prohibiting usury (*ribā*) after knowing the Decree of God?

It is because the perpetrator obtaining *ribā* has heedlessly underrated the Divine prohibition and involved in it, which is a mortal sin, because he has involved in it while knowing its unlawfulness. This is definitely underrating Divine prohibition, which leads to entering heresy (*kufṛ*).¹

Transactional Usury

§ What is the reason for the unlawfulness of (transactional) usury and God's prohibiting it?

It is because usury is the source of the corruption of one's properties, because if someone buys a *dirham* for

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyī*, vol. 2, p. 483; idem, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 94; idem, *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 3, p. 566; Ḥakīmī, Muḥammad Riḍā, *Al-Ḥayāt*, vol. 4, pp. 190-261, and vol. 5, p. 611.

two *dirhams*, the price of a *dirham* is one *dirham* and the other *dirham* is void [and without an equal]. Therefore, a usurious dealing is in any case to the loss of both the seller and buyer. Thus, the Exalted Allah has made it unlawful to the servants, because it causes the spoil of the properties, just as He has prohibited leaving the properties of the feeble-minded to themselves since there is the fear that they may ruin their properties, unless when they have regained their mental soundness. It is for this reason that the Almighty Allah has made usury unlawful.¹

Debt Usury

§ What is the reason for the unlawfulness of debt usury?

The reason for the debt usury to become unlawfulness is that usury would destroy good deeds and ruin properties, prompts the wealthy to demand interests (*ribā*), make them neglect giving loans and undertaking obligatory tasks and doing good works, and in all of these there is spoil and oppression [of the borrowers] and destruction of the [people's] properties.²

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 2, p. 484; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, pp. 93-94; Ḥakīmī, Muḥammad Riḍā, *Al-Ḥayāt*, vol. 4, p. 460, and vol. 5, p. 610.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 2, p. 483; idem, *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 3, p. 566.

Foods and Drinks

The Invocation of *Bism Allāh* When Slaughtering Animals

§ Why is it unlawful (*ḥarām*) to eat from the meat of an animal that is slaughtered without saying *bism Allāh* (in the Name of Allah) or killed in the name of other than Allah?

It is unlawful because the Exalted and Almighty Allah has made incumbent upon His created beings attesting to Him [i.e., to His existence] and mention His Name over whatever (animals) they slaughter and not any other names. Another reason is that there should not be any equality between what is done to get nearer to Him and what confirms the worship of the devils and idols. By regarding as unlawful what has been slaughtered with other names than Allah's, we have abided by this principle; because there lies a confession to His Lordship and Unity in mentioning the Name of the Exalted Allah and there lies polytheism and seeking to approach other deities in mentioning any other names (while

slaughtering). Therefore, remembering Allah and mentioning His Name over what is slaughtered is what would make a distinction between what Allah has allowed and what He has forbidden to eat; that is to say, it is lawful (*ḥalāl*) if His name is mentioned; otherwise, it is unlawful.¹

Wild Cow (Bison) Meat and the Like

§ What is the reason for the allowance of eating wild cow meat and the like?

The reason is that these animals eat natural and healthy foods and do not eat abominable or forbidden foods and that their meat has no harm for human beings. They are also not created to be ugly or evil.²

Meat of the Carnivorous Animals

§ What is the reason for the prohibition of eating the meat of carnivorous animals?

All the carnivorous birds and wild animals are *ḥarām* (unlawful) to eat, because they eat carcass, human flesh, filth, and the like. Thus, the Exalted and Glorious Allah has set some signs for distinguishing the wild animals from the animals whose meat is lawful to eat and the *ḥarām* birds from the birds whose meat is lawful to eat. In

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharā’i’*, vol. 2, pp. 481-482; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 93; Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 323.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 97; Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 175.

this respect, my father (A.S.) said, “The meat of any wild animal having fangs and any bird having claws is *ḥarām*; whereas, any bird that has gizzard is lawful to eat.”

The other difference between the birds whose meat is lawful and those whose meat is unlawful is that which my father referred to as such, “Eat from the meat of any bird that flaps its wings while flying, and do not eat the meat of the bird that keeps its wings motionless while it flies. This is the difference between the lawful and the unlawful.”¹

Carcass Meat

§ What is the reason for the prohibition of carcass meat?

There are things [microbes] in the carcass meat that causes disease and harm to human body and God has wanted mentioning His Holy name make the animal *ḥalāl* when slaughtering it; His name has not been mentioned over the carcass, and God has wanted this to be among the differences between *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām*.²

Rabbit's Meat

§ What is the reason for the prohibition of rabbit's meat?

Rabbit's meat is *ḥarām*, because it is like a kind of cat

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyi’*, vol. 2, p. 482.

2. Ibid, vol. 2, p. 485; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 94; Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 165.

(*sannūr*) and it has claws like the wild animals and it is filthy, too. In addition to this, it bleeds like in menstruating, since it is one of the metamorphosed animals, which is regarded one of the factors of its filthiness.¹

Monkey's Meat

§ What is the reason for the prohibition of monkey's meat?

Monkeys, like pigs, are among the metamorphosed animals and the Exalted and Almighty Allah has set it as a lesson to take heed for the people, and as a sign for the occurrence of metamorphosis to them.

It should be said that the Almighty Allah has established it like man to be a proof for man that it is one of the creatures upon which there was God's Wrath.²

Pig's Meat

§ What is the reason for the prohibition of pig's meat?

A pig's meat is *ḥarām* to eat because it is a very spiteful and filthy animal and the Almighty Allah has set it as a lesson to take heed for the people, as a fear for people, and as a sign for the occurrence of metamorphosis to them.

Another reason is that its food is from the most impure

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *ʿIlal al-Sharāʿiyi*, vol. 2, p. 482; idem, *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 93; Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 171.

2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *ʿIlal al-Sharāʿiyi*, vol. 2, p. 485; idem, *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 94; Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 165.

of the impure, etc.¹

Eating a Spleen

§ What is the reason for the prohibition of eating a spleen?

God forbade eating a spleen since there is blood in it and it is like eating blood and the dead.²

Eating Blood

§ What is the reason for the prohibition of eating blood?

The Exalted Allah forbade eating blood as He forbade eating the dead because of the existence of things in them which would corrupt the body and would cause bile, bad breath, foul body odor, ill temper, getting mean, lack of kindness and mercy to others so much that one might even kill his own father or friend or spouse.³

Drinking Wine

§ What is the reason for the prohibition of drinking wine?

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 2, p. 485; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 94; Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 165.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 2, pp. 484-485; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 94; Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 166 and vol. 63, p. 36.
 3. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 2, p. 485; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 94; Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 165.

The Exalted and Glorious Allah has forbidden drinking wine for the following several reasons:

- A. There is corruption in it.
- B. It would spoil the drinker's intellect.
- C. It would make the drinker deny the Exalted and Almighty Allah.
- D. It would make the drinker fabricate lies against Allah and His Messengers.
- E. The drinker may display other vices as well.
- G. It would result in committing murder, calumny, and adultery.
- H. It would also cause the drinker to be indifferent to and heedless of avoiding inviolable ordinances of Allah.

For these reasons, any intoxicating drink is ordained to be *ḥarām*, because the outcome of drinking wine would result from these kinds of drinks, too; that is to say, any corruption that occurs by drinking wine also takes place by drinking such liquids, as well. Therefore, whoever believes in God and the Hereafter, enjoys our affection and guardianship, and basically, the affection and guardianship of the Household of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) is their creed and faith, should avoid intoxicating drinks, because there is no association between us and drinking intoxication.¹ [That is to say, the wine-drinker should not be hopeful of our guardianship and affection helping him achieve salvation; as he will be deprived of our intercession].

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyi’*, vol. 2, pp. 474-475; idem, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, pp. 98-99; Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 63, pp. 483-484.

Marriage

Obligation of Paying Marriage Dowry by Men

§ Why is it obligatory for men and not for the women to pay marriage dowry (*mahr*)?

It is obligatory because the living expenses lie with the men and also because the woman leaves herself at the man's disposal.¹

The Amount of *Mahr al-Sunna*

§ Why is *mahr al-sunna* (bridal portion as common in Islamic traditions) determined to be five hundred *dirhams* (silver coin)?

The Blessed and Exalted Allah has made it obligatory upon Himself that once a believer repeats one hundred times the recital *Allāhu Akbar*, one hundred times the recital *Al-Ḥamdu li-Allāh*, one hundred times the recital *Lā ilāha ill Allā*, and recite one hundred *ṣalawāts* upon

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyi'*, vol. 2, pp. 500-501; idem, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, pp. 94-95.

Muḥammad (S.A.W.) and His Household (A.S.), and then say, “*Allāhumma zawwijnī min al-ḥūr al-‘ayn*” (O Allah! Marry off *ḥūr al-‘ayn* [big-eyed houris] to me!), He will certainly marry off a houri of the Paradise’s houris to him, and make these recitals as its *mahr*. Then, He inspired to His Apostle (S.A.W.) to assign the *mahr* of the faithful women as five hundred *dirham* and the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.) did so.¹

Polygamy

§ What is the reason that a man can marry four women but it is *ḥarām* for a woman to get married to more than one man?

The reason is that if a man has four wives, the child that is born to any of them belongs to him; whereas, if the woman has two or more husbands and a child is born to her, it would not be clear whose father the child belongs to, because all of them have slept with the woman and this would undoubtedly spoil the lineage, inheritance,² and the legal notions.

Unlawfulness of Homosexuality

§ What is the reason for the unlawfulness of homosexuality

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 2, p. 499; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 84; ‘Aṭarudī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 261.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 2, p. 504; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 95; ‘Aṭarudī, ‘Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 284.

[being a gay or a lesbian]?

The reason why the Almighty Allah has forbidden the lustful indulgence of men with men and women with women is that if this indecent conduct becomes prevalent in the society, the men and women would no longer seek one another and the human generation would become extinct, the society would disintegrate, and corruption would take over the world.¹

Father's Appropriation of his Child's Property

§ What is the reason for the lawfulness of the child's property for the father without the child's permission and the unlawfulness of the father's property for the child without the father's permission?

As the Exalted Allah has stated, the child is given to the father and is introduced as a Divine gift to him. Allah says, ﴿He gives females to whomever He wishes, and gives males to whomever He wishes.﴾² It is obvious that when the child is given [belongs] to the father, his property is, all the more so, regarded as belonging to him, too.

Similarly, it is because the father is always responsible for his child and his expenses are always incumbent upon him, for which he would be called to account; as the Exalted Allah has attributed the child to his father and is called after him, ﴿Call them after their fathers. That is

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharā'iyi*, vol. 2, p. 547; idem, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 97.

2. Q. 42:49.

more just with Allah. ﴿﴾¹

The other reason is the statement of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), who said, “You and your property belong to your father.”²

1. Q. 33:5.

2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 2, p. 524; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 96.

Divorce

Repetition of Divorce

§ Why is divorce ordained to be repeated three times?

Divorce is ordained to be repeated three times for the following reasons:

A. If a man divorces his wife for the first time, he may find an inclination toward the woman or give up his anger and make peace and restart their life together.

B. It sometimes happens that a couple may get involved in a quarrel and separate in anger and then after a while their anger subsides and make peace again.

C. Also in order to make the women obey their husbands and to prevent them from sins.¹

§ Why is a woman divorced for three times *ḥarām* to her husband unless she gets married to another man and then get divorced from him?

Because the Exalted Allah has permitted for two times

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyī*, vol. 2, p. 507; idem, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 95; *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 3, p. 502.

divorce and has said, ﴿[Revocable] divorce¹ may be only twice; then [let there be] either an honorable retention, or a kindly release.﴾² which asserts kindness in the third divorce, and since the Exalted Allah has viewed divorce as repulsive, so He has ordained it to be *ḥarām* the third time. Hence, the woman is not *ḥalāl* to her husband unless she gets married to another man [and gets divorced from him to be able to get married to her first husband again]. It is for the people not to underestimate divorce and not to maltreat women.³

Eternal *Ḥarām*

§ What is the reason that the woman becomes permanently *ḥarām* to her husband after nine times of divorce?

The reasons are as follows:

A. So that the man may not treat divorce as joking and not to consider the woman as weak and divorce her whenever he wishes and get married to her again.

B. To be disappointed of getting married to his wife again after nine divorces.⁴

1. Revocable divorce is such that the man divorces the woman once or twice verbally and in that case he has the right to bring her back to marital life so long as she is in her *ʿidda* (waiting period after divorce). See: Mishkīnī, Mirzā ‘Alī, *Muṣṭalahāt al-Fiqh*, p. 269; Khomeini, Rūḥullāh (Imam), *Tawḍīḥ al-Masā’il (Muḥashshā)*, Intishārāt-i Islāmī, Qum, 1409/1988.

2. Q. 2:229.

3. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *ʿIlal al-Sharāyī*, vol. 2, p. 507; idem, *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 85; *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 3, p. 502.

4. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *ʿIlal al-Sharāyī*, vol. 2, p. 507; idem, *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 95; idem, *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 3, p. 503.

Inheritance

The Amount of Inheritance

§ Why is the women's inheritance half that of the men's?

Because a woman receives alimony (*nafaqa*) from her husband but a man has to provide for the family's expenses; that is why the men's share of inheritance is more.

Another reason is that women are under the spousal support of men; and it is obligatory for men to provide the means of life for women and pay for their livelihood, but there is no such responsibility for women regarding the protection and maintenance of men. That is why the Exalted Allah ordained a larger share for men and said in the Holy Qur'an, ﴿Men are the managers of women, because of the advantage Allah has granted some of them over others, and by virtue of their spending out of their wealth.﴾¹

1. Q. 4:44. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharāyī*; vol. 2, p. 570; idem, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 98; idem, *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 4, p. 350.

Judgment and Testimony

Bearing Testimony

§ What is the reason for not accepting women's testimony for divorce and sighting the crescent?

The reason why women's testimony for sighting the crescent at the beginning of the [lunar] month and for divorce is not accepted is that they are often weak at sighting the moon [crescent]. As for divorce, they may defend the women in divorce; that is why their testimony is not accepted except where exigency necessitates, such as the testimony of the midwife [as to the birth of the infant alive] and the instances where men are not allowed to see, in which case women's testimony is accepted.¹

Number of Witnesses

§ Why has the Exalted Allah required four witnesses in

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Ilal al-Sharā'iyi*, vol. 2, p. 509; idem, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 95; 'Aṭārudī, 'Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 40.

regard to adultery; but for other rights, He has considered the testimony of two witnesses as sufficient?

Because the Exalted Allah has treated adultery with great severity, as it concerns preservation and safeguarding of chastity and since it involves the killing of the people, the disruption of the relationship between fathers and children, and causes inheritance problems that if it were not treated carefully, the society would become corrupted and chaos would follow.¹

The Claimant and the Denier

§ Why is not the rule, “the claimant must provide evident proof (*bayyina*) and the denier must take an oath” applicable except in case of murder?

The reason why in all rights the claimant has to provide evident proof and the denier has to take an oath is that the denier disclaims the accusation and cannot provide evident proof.² However, in case of murder, providing evident proof is upon the denier and the claimant has to take an oath, because caution has been taken here to observe the rights of the Muslims, otherwise, their blood would be shed with impunity and retaliation punishment (*qiṣāṣ*) would be no longer an option.

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī*, vol. 2, p. 510; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 96.

2. *Al-bayyinatu ‘alā al-mudda’ī wa al-yamīnu ‘alā man Ankara*; in a disputation, the claimant has to provide evident proof (two just witnesses) and (if there is no evident proof) the denier has to take an oath so as to win the claim. See: Mūsawī Bujnurdū, Ḥasan, *Al-Qawā’id al-Fiqhīyya* vol. 3, p. 690.

Thus, if someone intends to kill another person, he should know that others are informed of his enmity toward that person and if he were accused of his murder, nobody would testify for his acquittal. Furthermore, it would be very difficult, or rather impossible for the accused to provide a witness; hence, no one would dare the intention to kill, because he would normally find no witness to dismiss his accusation.¹

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 2, p. 542; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 96.

Legal Punishments

Prohibition of Adultery

§ What is the reason for the prohibition of adultery?

The Exalted Allah has prohibited adultery because it results in corruption and sin, causing homicide, disrupting family relations, abandoning proper raising of children thus born, and prevalence of relevant corruptions in society.¹

Punishment of the Adulterer

§ Why should the adulterer be severely flogged?

The reason for severely flogging the adulterers is that they have committed adultery and have enjoyed it and flogging is a retribution for them to take warning as well as others to know that adultery and violation of chastity is among the greatest crimes and sins.²

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1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 2, p. 479; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 385; idem, *Man lā Yaḥḍuru al-Faqīh*, vol. 3, p. 565.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, vol. 2, p. 544; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 97.

§ What is the reason that at the fourth time of adultery and after three times of legal punishment administered to the adulterers (whether men or women), they must be killed?

It is because they did not respect the Divine Law and not only they ignored it but also its retribution was not of much importance to them; they felt to be totally free and thought it would not create a serious problem for them except one hundred lashes that had not been a significant matter for them, meaning they can repeat this heinous act and bear its penalty, too. [Thus, if not prevented, the society would fall apart.]

Another reason is that the one who does not care about God and His sanctions and underrates them is an unbeliever (*kāfir*) and the person who is an unbeliever and who abandons the rule of Truth deserves to be killed. Because of underrating the Divine Sanctions, this person is an unbeliever and it becomes incumbent to kill them.¹

Prohibition of Robbery

§ What is the reason for the prohibition of robbery and theft?

If robbery and theft were permissible, all the people's properties would have been lost, bloodshed and homicide would prevail, and all the people would be exposed to loss and damage; because, in order to seize someone's assets,

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 97.

people would perforce murder or fought with him, they would envy each other, business and industry would be closed, and nobody would undertake any profession and make any effort. If this happens, everyone would feel equally entitled to the properties that have been acquired with personal efforts.¹

Punishment of Robbery

§ What is the reason for cutting off the fingers of the right hand of the robber?

It is because the robber engages in this act using his right hand, which is the noblest human part, and is more useful and better than other parts of the body. Therefore, cutting it off is a punishment and also a lesson for others to take heed of and not to obtain any property in ways other than what is legitimate. Also most thefts are carried out using the right hand. God also forbade the forceful seizure of property and obtaining it through ways other than the legally allowed ways, since there is a lot of corruption in that. It is forbidden since corruption is the main cause of destruction.²

1. Qummī, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 96.

2. Ibid.

Retaliated Punishment (*Qiṣāṣ*)

The Reason for Compurgation (*Qasāma*)

§ What is the reason for compurgation¹?

It is because there is strictness and precaution established in murder to prevent the Muslims' blood shed with impunity.²

Prohibition of Murder

§ What is the reason for the prohibition of murder?

The reason why the Exalted Allah has prohibited homicide is because if it were not unlawful (*ḥarām*), chaos would prevail in society, people would not feel secure, corruption would disintegrate community, and the law and order would break down.³

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1. *Qasāma* or taking oath repeatedly (fifty times) by the claimant of the blood. It is done when the murder victim is found in a neighborhood and the murderer is not known and the speculative proof denotes that he is from among them.
 2. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *ʿIlal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 2, p. 542; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 96; 'Aṭārudī, 'Azīz Allāh, *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 504.
 3. Qummī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *ʿIlal al-Sharāyī'*, vol. 2, p. 478; idem, *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 91.

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