

Translator's Foreword

“In the Name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful”

The Day of Judgement in the Holy Qur'an has been described as the Day of Regret (Yaum al-Hasrat), when the people would witness the inner essence of this world for the first time with their own eyes; they would then be crying: Is there a way to get out of Hell?¹

But then it would be too late. Unfortunately, for most of the people, it is only after their death or their being transferred into other world that they witness the esoteric essence of this creation. But the esoteric essence of this creation is a reality and there exists a complete harmony and co-ordination among its various constituents.

In the Islamic narrations it has been mentioned, that if a group of people are sitting at a place, then in case if they were engaged in a righteous deed, that piece of earth prays and seeks Allah's forgiveness (*istighfar*) for them. But if they were busy in sinning, the same spot sends cursing upon them. For a pious righteous scholar (*alim al-rabbani*), it is said that the whole universe, i.e. earth, mountains, plants, rivers, and even the fishes inside the water pray and seek Allah's forgiveness (*istighfar*) for him.²

Therefore, there is a direct relationship between human existence and the created world, if he sins the entire creation curses upon him, likewise if he engages into Allah's servitude and obedience, the entire creation prays for him and beseech Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), to bestow upon him His best blessings and bounties. Because, a sinner moves in the direction opposite to the divine aim of human creation, his sinning creates a disorder in the aim of human creation which is the movement towards Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted).

Since, Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), likes the tears of shame of sinners, he has created the Holy Month of Ramadhan a month of blessings and mercy. It is a month of worship, prayers, supplications, repentance, night-vigil, and self-purification. Worshipping in this month is bestowed rewards many times the reward of worship performed in other months.

Even the sleeping and breathing of a believer are given the reward of a worship. It is a month when the gates of Paradise are opened while Hell's doors are closed. Divine angels continuously invite the people

towards Allah's worship, especially at the dawn on the Night of Power (*Lailatul-Qadr*) in which the worshipping and night-vigil are superior than the prayer of thousand months.³

Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), in this month has granted an audience inviting all the believers for a divine feast, the invitation of which has been brought by His messengers.

The host is the Most Merciful and Compassionate Lord, His favourite angels are the servants, and the believers are the guests. The tablecloth of divine blessings, containing all sorts of rewards and favours has been spread. From all dimensions the divine special blessings and favours which can't be seen by the eyes, ears are helpless to hear about them, and human hearts can not even imagine them are readied to be awarded upon the guests in accordance to their merits, worth, and absorbing capacities. If we are negligent, we will feel regret on the Day of Judgement whereby feeling sorry and being regretful will not be of any advantage. There is a detailed sermon delivered by the Holy Prophet [s] describing the importance of this blessed month, a portion of which is quoted here as follows:

“O' people the month of Allah with blessing mercy and pardon has come to you, a month which is the best month among all months before Him; its days are the best days; its nights are the best nights and its hours are the best hours. It is the month in which you have been invited by Allah for a feast and have been selected as the recipient of this special favour. Your breathings merit the reward of a worship. In this month your deeds are accepted and prayers are granted.

Therefore, with true intention and pure hearts beseech Allah to bestow upon you His special favour to be able to observe fasting and recite the Holy Qur'an. Because, the most unfortunate and wretched one is the who remains deprived from Allah's pardon during this great month. With your thirst and hunger remind yourself about the thirst and hunger of the Day of Judgement; pay charity to poor and destitute people, pay respect to elders; be kind towards youngsters, and observe the bonds of relationship with your kith and kin.”

The Holy Month of Ramadhan is directly related to Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), because, it is the only month whose name has been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, the month in which the Holy Qur'an after descending through various veils in the Celestial Kingdom was revealed upon the sacred heart of the Holy Prophet [s] through Archangel Gabriel as described in the Holy Qur'an as follows:

“The Holy Month of Ramadhan in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the guidance, and the criterion (of right and wrong).”

– Holy Qur'an (2: 185).

The present book is the English translation of the Persian book: Spiritual Journey of the Mystics (*Saluk al-Arifan*) – which is the translation of Arabic book: *al-Muraqabat fi Amal al-Sunnah*, written by the most eminent perfect mystic Late Hajj Mirza Javad Agha Maliki Tabrizi. As the enclosed biography would reveal, he was the most eminent gnostic and ascetic of his period, who had attained the most Exalted

mystic position of (*Kashf-wa-Shahud*) a spiritual position, whereby the curtains are rolled up from the wayfarers esoteric eyes, enabling him to see into the unseen far beyond the limits of this material world.

The book presents a detailed description of etiquette and codes of special deeds performed by Allah's most sincere servants during the Holy Month of Ramadhan; the self-restraint and asceticism practised by them during these worships and the self-purification achieved by them.

The present translation covers the following topics: deeds and etiquette of the Holy Month of Ramadhan, special distinction of the Holy Month of Ramadhan, the splendour and eminence of supplications compiled by the Ahlul-Bait [a], etiquette and codes of prayer, the leadership (*Imamat*) and preaching (*Va'iz*), the Night of Power (*Lailatul-Qadr*), the last night of the Holy Month of Ramadhan, the commentary – world being the House of Illusion (*Dar al-Gharoor*), how to farewell the Holy Month of Ramadhan, and comments about the sense and perception among the solid bodies etc.

If the readers are seriously interested to discover the inner essence of the Ramadhan's reality far beyond the apparent rituals of not eating and drinking etc., they will find the content of this book highly useful and interesting. In the end, I would like to mention about the most severe calamity of our times, especially in the advanced materialistic societies which is – *the dryness of the eyes*. Following is a tradition narrated by Imam al-Sajjad [a]:

“O' Lord! I do complain to you, against the dryness of the eyes, which do not cry, are not afraid of you, and instead take pleasure in looking whatever makes them pleased.”

– Bihar al-Anwar vol. 94, p. 143

And the following narration:

“The dryness of the eyes is the result of hard-heartedness; hard-heartedness is caused due to excessive sinning; excessive sins are the result of consumption of food, which is arranged through forbidden and unlawful income; earning through forbidden and unlawful means is due to forgetting death; forgetting death is due to lengthy desires; lengthy desires are caused because of attachment to the world; and the world's attachment is the root of all evils.”

Therefore, if after offering daily prayers, recital of *Dua Kumail*,⁴ in the *Qunoot* of night-prayer, performance of deeds during the Nights of Power (*Lailatul-Qadr*) in the Holy Month of Ramadhan, and in general while communicating and establishing a link with the Most Supreme Reality, if one cannot shed a tear, then he should resort to spiritual physicians immediately without any further delay.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to all of those who have contributed towards the realisation of this translation, especially Ayatullah Ibrahim Amini, the learned scholar and jurisprudent from the Religious Learning Centre of Qum, and Hajj Agha Ansariyan for their encouragement, guidance, and valuable suggestions. I am indebted to my wife Mrs. Fatimeh Razavi and my daughter Miss. Saman

Zaidi in their painstaking efforts and endeavours for typesetting and designing of the text. Elucidatory footnotes added by the translator are identified with [Tr].

In the end I wish to apologise to my readers for possible errors and omissions, and sincerely welcome their suggestions and comments regarding this work as well as other translation works of this translator, published earlier by the Ansariyan Publications, on the following address. Also, it will be highly useful if the readers could communicate and let us know their needs and requirements about the Islamic books which should be translated from Arabic and Persian into English. We look forward to hear the comments of our dear readers.

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1. The Holy Qur'an (40:12)

2. Friday Prayer sermon of Tehran delivered by Ayatullah Imami Kashani on Ramadhan 10, 1418, Jan. 9, 1998

3. The Holy Qur'an (97:3)

4. Dua-Kumail: The Prayer of Kumail, a prayer taught to Kumail bin Ziyad – a close associate of Imam Ali [a] – by the Imam [a]. Its recitation is particularly recommended during Friday night (i.e., night after the end of Thursday). For the text see Sheikh Abbas Qummi's Mafatih al-Jinan pp. 83-90 [Tr.]

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