

Tales Narrated by Grand Ayatullah Sheikh Bahjat

1. Value of Prayer in its Early Time

Sheikh Misbah says, “Ayatullah Bahjat used to quote the late Qadi saying, ‘If one of you performs the obligatory prayer in its early time and does not reach high stations, let him curse me!’ Or, according to another version of the narrative, he said, ‘Let him spit in my face.’”

There is a great mystery in the early prayer time, and there is a difference between “Safeguard the prayers” and “Uphold the prayers”. If one who prays pays special attention to his prayer and sticks to performing it when it is first due, this deed by itself has many effects even if he does not pray it will a full heart.

2. Keeping Sunan Alive

Hujjatul-Islam wal Muslimin Quddas, one of the students of Ayatullah Bahjat, says, “The sheikh always used to advise us not to let the *sunan* be forgotten, so much so that the innovations take their place. One day he said this to us: ‘Ayatullah Hajj Sheikh Murtaqa Taleqani (one of the professors of manners and one of the most brilliant scholars in al-Najaf al-Ashraf) was invited to partake of the *iftar* with a number of scholars, including Grand Ayatullah the late al-Khu’i. When food was presented and everyone sat at the table, Sheikh Hajj Murtaqa Taleqani said, ‘There is no salt on the table!’ And he did not stretch his hand to the food although the distance between the place where the food was served and the kitchen was quite long, and it seems that the food was coming from another house. Anyway, the sheikh did not stretch his hand to the food till they brought the salt. The others, too, did not stretch their hands to the food out of their respect for the sheikh, including the late Ayatullah al-Khu’i. After the *majlis* had been concluded, and when they all wanted to disperse, Sayyid al-Khu’i addressed Sheikh Taleqani saying, ‘O Sheikh, if you were tied to this Sunnah to this extent, it would be better to carry with you a little salt so people do not have to wait for you like that.’ It is then that Sheikh Taleqani took out a small

bag of salt which he was carrying in his pocket and said, 'I was carrying salt with me, but I wanted this good Islamic tradition to be observed.'”

3. Clemency and Generosity of the Imams (as)

Sayyid Quddas says, “One day Sheikh Bahjat talked about the generosity and open-handedness of the Imams saying, ‘In Iraq, there is a small village near the place where Tigris and Euphrates rivers meet called al-Musayyab. A Shiite man used to pass by this village from time to time whenever he went to perform the *ziyara* of the Commander of the Faithful (as), and a Sunni man, too, was residing in this village. The latter quite often used to make fun of the Shiite man whenever he saw him going to visit the shrine of the Commander of the Faithful (as), so much so that he dared once to speak ill of the holy Imam (as), so the Shiite man was very angry and he complained about this matter to the Commander of the Faithful (as) during one of his visit. During that night, he saw the Imam (as) in a vision and once more complained to him about this matter. The Imam (as) said, ‘He [the Sunni man] has done us a favor, and we cannot punish him in the life of this world no matter what sins he committed.’ The Shiite man asked, ‘What favor is it? Did he do you a favor when he dared to speak ill of you?’ The Imam (as) said, ‘No, but he was sitting one day at the meeting place of both rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, and he was looking at the Euphrates.

He remembered the Karbala story and the thirst of Imam al-Husayn (as), so he said this to himself: ‘Omer ibn Saad was wrong when he killed those men as they were thirsty, and it was better for him to give them water then kill them.’ A tear trickled down from his eyes out of grief for Abu Abdullah (as); therefore, it became mandatory on us never to punish him in this life.’ The Shiite man says, ‘I woke up from my sleep and returned to al-Musayyab and met the Sunni man on the road who said this to me in ridicule: ‘Did you visit your imam, and did you convey our message to him?’ I said, ‘Yes, I conveyed your message to him, and I carry his message to you.’ The man laughed and said, ‘What is this message which you carry to me?’ I narrated to him the incident from beginning to end. The Sunni man lowered his head to the ground and kept thinking: ‘O Lord! Nobody at that moment was near me, and I did not talk about this incident to anyone; so, how did the Imam (as) become acquainted with it?’ Then he said, ‘I testify that there is no god save Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and that Ali, the Commander of the Faithful, is a friend of Allah and the *wasi* of the Messenger of Allah.’”

4. Value of Ablution and Purification

Sayyid Quddas also said, “One day, I went to the house of Sheikh Bahjat a few minutes before the start of the class, and I found a sheikh sitting there. Sheikh Bahjat was paying him a special attention. A few minutes later, the sheikh said, ‘This man does not go to bed before performing his ablution. Even if he woke up several times during the night, he would still perform the ablution every time he woke up.’”

5. Personality of Sheikh Muhammad Husayn Kampani

Sheikh Misbah Yazdi says, “One day, Sheikh Bahjat said, ‘Sheikh Muhammad Husayn was a great scholar, so much so that if you get acquainted with his scholarly productions, you will imagine he does not do any other job except study and research all day long. And if you became acquainted with his worship program, you will imagine he keeps himself busy doing nothing but worshipping.’ The late Sheikh Muhammad Husayn Kampani used to say, ‘I attended the class of the late Akhound Khurasani, author of the *Kifaya* book, for thirteen years. During this period, I did not miss his class except one single night (it seems the sheikh used to teach at night). During that night, I was going to visit both Jawad Imams (as) in al-Kadhimiyya.

My return was chaotic, so I could not attend the class, but I used to guess the pursuits that the professor was going to submit prior to my attendance. When I reached Najaf and talked with the friends, I saw that all the pursuits which the professor had submitted were the ones which I guessed and wrote prior to my attendance, and my writings almost lacked nothing.’ Sheikh Kampani used to commit himself to regularly attend the class of the professor despite his lofty scholarly position. He did not miss the class except one single night although he was capable of writing the lesson’s pursuits prior to his attendance.

“Besides these invaluable scholarly activities, he was committed to his adoration programs, too. Whoever saw him worshipping could hardly believe he was doing anything else besides adoration. He was regular in reciting the Ashura *ziyara* and the *ziyara* of Ja`far al-Tayyar, may Allah be pleased with him. According to the prevailing tradition among Najaf’s scholars who used to hold weekly commemorative *majalis* on Thursdays or Fridays, so the *majlis* could be an opportunity for friends, professors and students on one hand, and a means to seek nearness to Allah on the other. Sheikh Kampani used to hold a commemorative *majlis* every Thursday, and he used to commit himself to sitting in the place where tea is prepared or keep himself busy arranging people’s shoes. As he was thus engaged, his tongue quickly moved, and he was muttering words the meaning of which we did not understand, but we used to wonder about the *dhikr* that the sheikh was reciting as he stood up or sat down. One day a close friend of his asked him (this was the late Sheikh Ali Muhammad Burujardi, may Allah be pleased with him), ‘Our sheikh! What is this *dhikr* to which you commit yourself and not leave even when you offer the Salam?’ The sheikh smiled and said after a short contemplation, ‘It is better if one recites Surat al-Qadr [chapter of the Night of Power] a thousand times a day.’”

6. Feeling Pleased with whatever Pleases Allah

Hujjatul-Islam wal Muslimin Quddas, one of the students of Sheikh Bahjat, says, “One day I went to the house of Sheikh Bahjat a few minutes before the start of the class because often the sheikh used to attend the class room when some of his students come (even if it is one single student), and he would narrate a story or a tradition or a moral lesson till all the students attend.

For this reason, I went to the house of the sheikh early, hoping to hear those pursuits. Luckily, when the sheikh heard my voice as I said, ‘Ya Allah!’ as I entered, he came to the room early and said this to me after the greeting and the salutation, ‘In the city of Najaf, a handsome Iranian youth was with us from the people of Hamadan, and he was famous for being neat and physically well formed. One day, this youth became paralyzed to the extent he could not walk except after leaning on a cane. I tried not to meet him because I used to think he would feel embarrassed due to his particular condition; therefore, I used to avoid meeting him so I would not add one more grief to his grieves.

One day, I got out of the alley and saw him standing in the street, so I had no choice except to meet him. Without contemplating, I asked him, ‘How do you feel? (but I was upset with having said so and kept saying this to myself: ‘What empty talk is this?! Do you not see in what condition he is?!). But contrary to my expectation, when he opened his mouth to answer my question, his speech was like cool water with which he put out what I had felt inside. He kept praising and thanking Allah with a spirit filled with activity and pleasure as if he was drowned in blessings of Allah, the Praised and the most exalted One. I felt relieved and my grief departed from me.’”

7. Blessing and Greatness of the Wilaya

Hujjatul-Islam Quddas also says this: “One day the sheikh talked about the wilaya and its greatness. He said, ‘One day, a Sayyid prepared food for ten or fifteen men from among the people of knowledge in the city of Najaf or al-Kadhimiyya, but the messenger of this man made a mistake and called all the students of the school whose number exceeded sixty or seventy. When the guests arrived, the man noticed that the food was not enough for all these guests whom the place could not accommodate. He considered informing Ayatullah Hajj Sheikh Fath Ali al-Kadhimi.

When the latter heard about it, he said, ‘Do not do anything till I attend.’ When the sheikh attended, he said, ‘Bring me a clean piece of white cloth,’ then he opened the pot and looked at the rice, covering it with the piece of cloth. He said, ‘Bring me the plates. As I cool the food, you should distribute the food.’ He kept repeating these words: ‘This Ali is the best of humans, and whoever denies it disbelieves.’ He fed through the blessing of Ali’s lofty status all the guests without the food diminishing a bit.

“One of the students of the sheikh (Tehrani) narrated this incident in a different way thus: ‘The sheikh used to narrate the incident like this: ‘One day, the late Mirza Husayn Nawari, author of *Mustadrak al-Wasaail*, asked someone to invite a hundred persons to partake of the food during the Thursday and Friday evenings, but that person invited a hundred person to have dinner on a Thursday (whereas Mirza Husayn Nawari had prepared food for one person only on that day, and he meant to tell the man to prepare food—for the hundred persons—the next day). When the Mirza realized what had happened, he said, ‘Inform the Akhund Mulla Fath Ali Sultani (who was then residing in Samarra) about it.’ When the late Mulla became acquainted with the matter, he said, ‘Do not do anything till I get there.’ When he attended, he said, ‘Bring me a good piece of cloth,’ then he put that cloth on the pot, rubbing his hand on

it three times and saying each time, 'Ali (as) is the best of humans; whoever denies it commits apostasy,' then he ordered them to distribute the food. All the guests were fed.”

8. Value of Sincerity in Action

Sayyid Quddas also says this: “One day the sheikh talked about the rewards for a deed of righteousness (no matter how small) saying, ‘A scholar of Najaf offered one day by way of charity one dirham to a destitute man (whereas he had nothing in his pocket other than that dirham), In his vision he saw that night that he was invited to a spacious orchard where a beautiful mansion was in it the like of which he never saw. He asked who the orchard and the mansion belonged to. He was told they were for him. He was very surprised and said to himself, ‘I did not do anything to be worthy of all this recognition.’ They said to him, ‘Are you surprised?’ He said, ‘Yes.’ They said, ‘Do not be surprised; it is the reward for the dirham which you gave that poor man by way of charity in sincerity and in love for benevolence.’”

9. Keeping a Firm Foot on the Creed

Sayyid Quddas also says the following:” One day the sheikh talked about keeping one’s foot firm on the creed and safeguarding piety and Godliness. He said, ‘One of the great spiritual leaders saw someone in the courtyard of the shrine of the Commander of the Faithful (as). His submission, humbleness and good manners drew attention to him, and his age, which exceeded seventy, increased his dignified look. The spiritual scholar went to that man and asked him about his condition, his state of mind and how his life was. The man said, ‘Since I reached adolescence and till now, I never committed a sin deliberately.’ There is no doubt that such precision, monitoring and persistence produce such fruits.”

10. Attention Paid to the Imam of the Time (aj) of True Shiites

Sayyid Quddas also says, “One day the sheikh said, ‘A God-fearing doctor who believed in the *wilaya* of the Commander of the Faithful (as) wanted to know the names of the supporters of the Hujja Imam (as) [al-Mahdi]. As he was sitting in his medical office, which was located in his house, a man entered, greeted him then sat and said, ‘O Sayyid! The supporters of the Hujja (as) are so-and-so,’ naming them quickly one after the other. Among them was the name ‘Bahram’.

Anyway, the man, in just few minutes, counted three hundred and thirteen names and said, ‘These are supporters of al-Mahdi (as),’ then he stood up, bade the doctor farewell and went out. The doctor said, ‘When that man left, I woke up from my unawareness and kept asking myself, ‘Who was this man?! Was I asleep or awake? So, I asked my wife, who was in the next room, if anyone was in my room. She said, ‘Yes, a man came and he was speaking quickly’. I, therefore, realized I was not asleep, and that this man was not an ordinary person.’”

11. Seeking the Lord Wholeheartedly

Sayyid Quddas also says the following, “One day the sheikh said, ‘It was customary in Najaf al–Ashraf that the students observed the times of the *ziyara*, performing the visit of the holy sites on foot in the form of a crowd and groups, and they used to stop walking during the night to perform the night prayer individually.

During one of those trips, a spiritual Sayyid (a sheikh who was accompanying one of those crowds) kept a distance between himself and the others so he could perform the night prayer in isolation. Suddenly, the group heard the sound of a lion roaring nearby, so they were greatly frightened, but they saw the lion getting closer to that sheikh. They, therefore, said to themselves, ‘We belong to Allah, and to Him shall we return’ because they were unable to do anything at all. The lion got closer to the man till he stood beside him as the sheikh was (apparently) reciting the *witr* prayer. The lion stood near him for few minutes looking at him, and the sheikh was standing without making any motion. A few minutes later, the lion went away without harming the sheikh in the least. When it was a little bit far from them, the group went to the sheikh and, after the sheikh had already completed his *witr* prayer, they said to him, ‘How courageous and firm you are! You were not afraid of the lion and did not run away from it! How strong your heart is, and how great your courage is!’ The sheikh said to them, ‘I was not only afraid of the lion but terrified! But I felt that fleeing away from it would be futile because I would not then be able to rid myself of it, so I told myself that if it was my destiny to die, it would be better I died as I was busy worshipping my Lord, so my soul stabilized and my firmness increased.’

“Hujjatul–Islam wal Muslimin Sayyid Tehrani narrated this incident to me from Ayatullah Bahjat thus: ‘Sheikh Bahjat used to transmit the same incident from time to time this way: ‘There was a man in Najaf who was famous for being unafraid of the lion and that he stood once near a lion in the desert. Once this man was asked about the truth in this story, so he said, ‘No, I was indeed afraid of the lion, but I once was praying in the desert, and as I was busy performing the prayer, a lion came to me from the mountain side. I told myself that I would not be able to get rid of it; so, it would be better if I continued my prayer. It would be good if it ravished me as I was busy praying; therefore, I did not stop my prayer, and I did not undergo any reaction till the lion got near to me and circled me then returned from where it had come from.’”

12. Care Paid by al–Zahra (as) to her Offspring

Sayyid Quddas also says this: “One day the sheikh said, ‘One of the wealthy men of Rasht who was then living in al–Najaf al–Ashraf married his daughter off to a poor Sayyid who descended from the lineage of the Imams (as), but she did not care about her husband and did not prepare the food for him because she had lived in the midst of a wealthy family. One day she saw in her dream Lady Fatima al–Zahra (peace be with her) saying this to her: ‘Daughter! Why do you not improve your conduct with my son, and why do you not cook food for him?’ She said, ‘I am not ready to cook food for this man.’

Lady Fatima al-Zahra (peace be with her) insisted on her, but she did not change her statement, whereupon Lady Fatima al-Zahra (peace be with her) said to her, 'Bring the ingredients needed to be cooked and place them in the pot and on the stove, and everything would be ready.' She woke up puzzled about this incident, but she wanted to try the matter. She placed the ingredients on the stove as al-Zahra (peace of Allah be with her) had ordered her. At the time of lunch or dinner, the food was ready, and the aroma of the stew was filling the house. This woman continued to cook the food this way, so much so that some guests who stayed over for the evening with her husband, having partaken of the food, said they had never tasted such food like that as long as they lived.'"

13. How Friends of Allah Live

Sayyid Quddas also says this: "The sheikh said the following one day: 'They carried the coffin of one of the good persons in al-Najaf al-Ashraf for burial there, and the coffin was escorted by a man who recited the Holy Qur'an and whom they had rented to accompany the coffin and recite the Qur'an till they would reach their destination. One night, everyone was asleep when the man started reciting Chapter Yasin.

When he reached this sacred verse 'Did I not take your pledge, O descendants of Adam, ... etc.', he did not articulate the word 'pledge' properly, so he kept repeating the word trying to pronounce it correctly. It was then that he heard a voice from the coffin pronouncing this word correctly twice or three times. The senses of the man who was reciting the Qur'an were shaken, for how could a deceased person who had been dead for days to articulate this word like that?'

"Hujjatul-Islam wal Muslimin Sayyid Tehrani, one of the students of this sheikh, wrote this incident to me like this: 'I remember that the professor (Sheikh Bahjat) used to narrate this incident to us from time to time as follows: 'They were bearing the coffin of one of the scholars of al-Najaf al-Ashraf. When they reached a house on the way [to the cemetery], they placed the coffin in an unsuitable place. One of the persons who attended the funeral said, 'I saw the place was not suitable for the coffin, so I moved it somewhere else and sat beside it and started reciting Surat Yasin. When I reached this verse: 'Did I not take your pledge, O descendants of Adam, ... etc.', I could not pronounce the word 'pledge' properly because I am not an Arab. As I was reciting this verse, I heard a voice from inside the coffin articulating this word twice in a clear voice and in a sound Arabic pronunciation.'"

Sayyid Quddas also says this: "During the time of the Czar, a person had a room in one of the science schools in Tehran. This person was well known for his *karamat*, but he was restricted so he could not do anything that would indicate his status. One day, it was circulated among the students that the man could die of his own will whenever he wanted. Some people went to him and said, 'We came today to you so we could see one *karama* [temporal miracle] performed by you.' He tried his best to be excused from having to do that, but they did not accept his excuse, so he felt forced to accept (and I do not remember whether or not he took a pledge from them never to talk about this matter as long as he was

alive) and said to them, 'I am going to sleep; so, do not pronounce my name and leave me alone.' He slept facing the Qibla, articulated the Shahada, then his soul departed from his body. They turned his body from one side to the other, but he really was dead. They burnt his foot with a match so he would make sure he was dead. He was, indeed, dead. A few minutes later, the man breathed again and woke up, sitting. He said to them, 'Did I not tell you to leave me alone?'"

14. Cultivating the Nafs: a Condition to Earn Serving the Imam of the Time (aj)

Hujjatul-Islam wal Muslimin Quddas says that the sheikh one day said, "In Tehran, there was a scholar teaching the 'two lam`as'.

One day, this scholar heard that one of his ordinary students was undertaking supernatural deeds. The knife of the professor which he used to use quite often for writing (they used to write at that time with reeds for which they needed a knife to arrange their pens) was lost, so he was angry with his sons and family members thinking they were the ones who took it away from his pocket then lost it somewhere. Several days passed by and the knife could not be located.

The professor did not forget about his knife even after the passage of this period. One day that student said to the professor after the end of the class, 'O Sheikh! You forgot your knife in the pocket of your old vest; so, what sin did your children commit?' The professor remembered that he actually had put the knife in the pocket of his vest, but he wondered about the student and how he came to know about it. He realized that the student was connected with the friends of Allah, so he said this to him one day, 'I have some work with you after the class.' After the students had gone out, he said to him, 'I am sure you are connected with the Imams (as); so, can you meet the Imam of the Time (aj)?' He kept insisting on him to answer this question, so the student had to admit that he was connected with the Imam of the Time (aj), whereupon the professor said to him, 'If you see the Imam again, convey my Salam to him and tell him that I am eager to see him, and I request him that we meet even if it is for just few minutes.'

"Several days passed by and the student said nothing. The professor did not dare to ask him because he was concerned lest the Imam (as) should have refused to accept to meet him, but he found himself forced to ask him after his patience had run out: 'Did you convey my message to the Imam (as), and what was his answer?' The student tried to dodge the answer but the professor said to him, 'Tell me and do not be shy, for you are only a go-between messenger ("And the Messenger has only to convey the clear notification"). The student said, 'The Imam said, 'It is not necessary that we should appoint a time for him to meet; so, let him cultivate himself, and I shall go to him myself.'"

15. Result of Seeking Nearness to Allah Through the Medium of

Imam Al-Riḍā (as)

Sayyid Quddas also says, “One day the sheikh told us that one of the scholars of al-Najaf al-Ashraf came from Tehran for medical treatment after being afflicted with a serious illness. Having visited the doctors and undergone complete tests, he was told he had to undergo a brain surgery. The sheikh, therefore, was very sad and asked the doctors to permit him to travel to holy Mashhad. After receiving this honor and pleading to Allah through the medium of Imam al-Riḍā (as), he saw in a vision one night that a gracious man came to him and said, ‘Why are you sad like that?’

We saw it is right that you should be treated by only medicine, and you do not need the operation.’ He woke up and said to those in his company, ‘I have obtained the result; so, let us go to Tehran.’ When they went back to Tehran, the doctor said to him, ‘Do not grieve, for we have seen we should treat you with medicine only, and you do not need the surgical operation.’ He, hence, became more convinced, having seen how this statement which he heard when awake was similar to that which he had heard in the vision. He was healed from his sickness after having thus sought help from Allah through the medium of pleading to Imam al-Riḍā (as).”

16. Real Ziyara

Sayyid Quddas also says that one day the sheikh said, “People in the past used to travel to the holy city of Mashhad on backs of camels and mules. Once, some farmers of the Chasib area of holy Qum went to visit the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (as). After their return, they saw on the road a man from their village carrying a large bundle of animal feed. They reprimanded him saying, ‘O old man, leave working for this world, for it will not avail you, and go to Mashhad at least once,’ and they kept chiding and speaking ill of him. The sheikh said to them, ‘You went to visit the Imam; did the Imam answer your greeting?’ They said, “What is this you are talking about? Can a dead Imam respond to the greeting?’ The sheikh said, ‘What is the meaning of a dead or a living person? The Imam sees and hears our speech, and what is the use of a visit if it is undertaken by one side?’ They said to him, ‘Can you do that yourself?’ He said, ‘Yes.’ Then he stood in the direction of Mashhad and said, ‘Peace be with you, O Eighth Imam!’ An answer was heard saying, ‘And peace be with you, so-and-so!’ The farmers, thereupon, regretted what they had said to the old man and felt ashamed of themselves.”

17. Satisfaction of Sheikh Ansari

Sayyid Quddas also says this: “The sheikh was talking one day about the conviction of Sheikh Ansari, may Allah elevate his station, saying, ‘The mother and grandmother of the sheikh by his daughter were living with the sheikh in the same house. One day, the sheikh wanted to discipline his grandmother, so she sought shelter with her grandmother. The mother of the sheikh asked him, ‘What has she done?’ The sheikh said, ‘I gave her bread, but she cries and insists on getting food other than bread; does fresh bread need any other sort of food with it?’”

18. Seeing the Lights of the Qur'anic Verses

Ayatullah Tehrani says that Grand Ayatullah Bahjat had said, "During the time of our youth, there used to be a blind man who would open the Qur'an and put his finger on any verse he is asked about. I wanted to tease him one day, so I asked him, 'Where is such-and-such verse?' He opened the Qur'an and put his finger on the verse. I said to him, 'No it is some other verse!' He said to me, 'Are *you* blind?! Do you not see the verse?!'"

19. Significance of Student Culturing

Ayatullah Sayyid Musa Shubairi Zanjani says that Ayatullah Bahjat transmits this incident: "When Sheikh Mahmoud al-Hilli went to Najaf, we went to welcome him, then he came to our house to reciprocate the visit. When Ayatullah al-Khu'i heard about the sheikh coming to our house, he came to visit him so people may have more regard for the sheikh. But Sheikh Mahmoud was one hour late from the time, and Sayyid al-Khu'i kept waiting till he came to the house. Sayyid al-Khu'i said to him, 'I wished you had told us something about Agha Hasan Ali Nakhudki Isfahani so we may not depend on Qur'anic verses and narratives alone to prove the highest world but benefit from some individuals and their spiritual statuses, too.'

Sheikh Mahmoud al-Hilli said, 'Sheikh Hasan Ali used to enjoy an abridged record of pursuits and worlds, and if you continue this branch of knowledge (culturing the students) with a generous amount of care, you will serve Islam better. Moreover, Sheikh Hasan Ali was the pioneer of one of you.' Sayyid Bahjat said, 'He meant Sayyid Burujardi.'"

20. Contemplation is Better than a year's Adoration

Sayyid Quddas says that Sheikh Bahjat said the following once: "One day, a scholar in al-Najaf al-Ashraf woke up during the *sahar* (pre-dawn) time to perform the night prayer. He called upon his son who was sleeping in his room to rise and perform the night prayer. The son said, 'Alright, I will rise.' The sheikh busied himself with the prayer, but the son did not leave his bed, so the sheikh called upon him once more to rise and pray. The son said, 'Alright, I will rise right now, father.' The sheikh rose to complete his prayer, but the son did not move from his place, so the sheikh called upon him for the third time, whereupon the son said, 'Father! I was thinking about the same thought about which Imam al-Sadiq (as) said, 'One hour's meditation is better than a year of adoration.' Ayatullah Bahjat yelled at him and said..., well, Sheikh Bahjat did not articulate that word, but we understood it from the tone of his statement, that is, he said to him, 'You son of...! The thought which is better than a year of adoration (or better than sixty years according to some narratives) is the one that calls upon one to perform the night prayer, not to lie down on his bed till (morning) prayer time due to this excuse.'"

21. Success Coming from Protection against Sinning

Sayyid Quddas also says, “One day, the sheikh talked about the scholars and the righteous committing no sins, not even before they reach adolescence and said, ‘One of the great scholars of Najaf used to say: ‘During my childhood, I was safeguarded from sinning in an obligatory, not optional, way. Whenever I wanted to do something prohibitive, something happened to me and prevented me from doing it.’”

22. Impact of the “Wahsha” Prayer on the Dead

Sayyid Quddas also says that one day Sheikh Bahjat talked about the impact of the righteous deed and the acceptance of the pure deed. He said, ‘The late Ayatullah Hajj Sheikh Fath Ali Kadhimi (one of the grand Ayatullahs who combined in them the knowledge of *fiqh*, *Usul* and *irfan*) was teaching in the holy precincts of the Jawad Imams (as). People used to quite often bring a coffin during his class, so it became customary for him to perform the “wahsha” prayer during the night for each coffin that he saw. One night he saw in his vision one of the dead dignitaries of al-Kadhimiyya from among his kinsfolk, so he asked him about his condition. He said, ‘My condition was bad, but the prayer of the sheikh came to my rescue and eased my condition.’”

23. Role of Obligations in the Lifestyles of Great Men

Sayyid Quddas also says that one day the sheikh [Sheikh Bahjat] said, “Some Tehran merchants came once to al-Najaf al-Ashraf and went to Sheikh Ansari to pay the *khums* of their wealth to him. When they saw the life of the sheikh and the simplicity of his house, they kept whispering to each other saying, ‘This is the meaning of imam and leader: living simply and humbly like the way Imam Ali (as) used to live, not the life of Mulla Ali Kunni who lives in a mansion.’ The sheikh over-heard them thus talking as he was busy writing, so he yelled at them saying, ‘What are you saying?! I deal and live with some students, and I do not need a life more complicate than this one. But the Akhund Mulla Ali Kunni lives with the likes of King Nasir ad-Deen. If he does not commend a life such as this, Nasir ad-Deen would not go to his house, for the Mulla is living his life in order to protect the creed.’”

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