

Chapter 10: The Stars

[The First Star: The Superiority Of Supplication](#)

A superior way of prayer and an easy method to achieve nearness to Allah is through supplication. The method of supplication, as prescribed by the Infallible Imams (as), is that after offering the mandatory prayers, one must recite supplications depending on the time that can be taken out from the other duties.

The Creator of the Universe Himself says, “Call Me (*through supplication*) and I shall respond! Those who don't believe in supplication are conceited people. Their place will be the Hell in the Hereafter. If man wants to call Allah and wishes the prayers to be answered, then he has to implicitly follow the Commandments of Allah.”

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) said to Ma'Isar, “O Ma'Isar! Offer prayer to Allah and don't say that what is destined will happen. You should remember that Allah has absolute control over the destinies and supplication can change the fate of persons.”

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) said, “The best prayer is supplication and the worst enemy of Allah is a person who, in his pride, refuses to do supplication and invocation. To the contrary one who supplicates to Allah with due humility will get his prayers answered. It is like the door opening for a person who keeps knocking at it!”

Amir'ul-Mu'mineen 'Ali (as) says, “Supplication is the dearest act of the creature in the consideration of Allah.”

The Prophet of Allah (S) has said, “Supplication is the sword of the *mu'min* to subdue his adversaries. It is a pillar of the Faith that makes the structure of the Faith stronger. It illumines the Firmament and the earth.”

Imam Ar-Ridha' (as) has said, “Supplication is sharper than the spear and the arrow. It wards away

calamities. Supplicate, and supplicate the more! Supplication is the key to Allah's Blessings. It is the cure for all pains and aches."

Amir'ul-Mu'mineen 'Ali (as) has said that for warding out the wave of calamities one should have access to supplication even before the calamitous situation arises. He also said that calamities visit the *mu'mins* fast like the water falling down the hill. In such situation the only alternative for the person will be prayer and supplication.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) says that three things are there for a person's protection: 1. Prayer when a calamity comes. 2. Repentance after committing a sin. 3. Thanking Allah for the Bounties.

[The Second Star: The Etiquette Of Supplication](#)

Supplication is petitioning Allah for fulfillment of one's legitimate desires. It is therefore necessary that the supplicant should be conversant with the meaning of the prayer and the etiquette of reciting the prayer. He must recite the supplication with dedication of heart and his attitude should be equally submissive if not more than what he adopts for asking a favor from a fellow human being.

First Condition: When a person approaches another person for a favor, he keeps in mind certain things. Firstly, whatever he says, he says with full understanding. Whatever he plans in his mind to say, he communicates to the person verbatim. While supplicating to Allah, a person should have his specific purpose in his mind.

Amir'ul-Mu'mineen 'Ali (as) has said, "Allah doesn't answer the prayer of a person whose prayer doesn't come from his heart." Therefore, one should pray from the depths of his heart and should have a conviction that Allah will fulfill his wish.

Second Condition: When a person seeks help from another in time of difficulty, it is necessary that the person has to be known to him. It is an added advantage if the two have been acquainted with each other in the past. Similarly when one has to approach Allah for the grant of a wish, it is necessary that the person should have been offering thanks to the Almighty for His Bounties!

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) has said that when a person wants Allah to help him in times of difficulty, he must make it a habit to supplicate to Allah before any such difficulty arises. He should not present himself to Allah as a total stranger when he needs help.

One person asked Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) that Allah exhorts people to ask for things and he would grant them. But he said that he keeps praying but the prayers remain unanswered. The Imam (as) replied, "Have you fulfilled the covenants you made with Allah? Have you observed the do's and don'ts prescribed for you. If not, then how can you expect Him to grant your wishes?"

Third Condition: When we expect favors from a person, we serve him meticulously to

keep him in good cheer. Similarly those who are more particular in offering prayers to Allah, generally get their wishes granted.

Therefore the prayers of those who are closer to Allah get answered. For this one has to be pious, honest and truthful.

Fourth Condition: Another condition for the effectiveness of supplication is the state of understanding of the Almighty. Firmer the Faith of the supplicant, better the chance of his prayers getting answered.

Imam Musa al-Kadhim (as) was asked by someone, “O son of the Prophet (S)! We pray, but our prayers are not answered.” The Imam replied, “Do you know Him whom you approach for granting your wishes?”

Fifth Condition: Beseeching and lamentation during supplication is very effective for acceptance of the prayers. The more humility a supplicant manifests, the more there will be the chance of Allah granting his wish. It is common knowledge that even in mundane affairs, the persons in power respond to those who appeal to them for help with humility and beseeching.

Sixth Condition: The etiquette of supplication demands that the supplicant doesn't reveal the purpose his prayer. The belief is that Allah prefers the individual prayer of a suppliant over that of a group. However, if the suppliant feels that he is a sinner, he can join a group of persons of piety to make a supplication. Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) has said in this regard that if forty persons supplicate as a group on Friday, their prayers will definitely be answered. The Imam (as) also said, “Whenever my revered father did supplication, he used to call all the members of the family to join in. He would recite the supplication and the rest would say, *‘Amen!’*”

Seventh Condition: The timing of a supplication too is very vital for the effectiveness of the prayers. Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) has said that four times are most suitable for prayer: 1. When there is a sandstorm. 2. When it rains. 3. At the time when a battle is going on. 4. When a *mu'min* is martyred and the first drop of his blood falls to the ground.

Amir'ul-Mu'mineen 'Ali (as) has said that four timings are specific for supplications: 1. While reciting the Holy Qur'an. 2. When one hears the call for prayer- *Adhaan.* 3. When it rains. 4. When a battle is raging and *mu'mins* get martyred.

The Prophet of Allah (S) has said that the best time for supplication is near dawn (*Sahar.*)

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) has said “Do your supplication before sun-rise. This is the time when the rivers of the Firmament are opened, sustenance is distributed and prayers are answered.”

Amir'ul-Mu'mineen 'Ali (as) has said, “If one wants to supplicate to Allah, three timings are the most suitable: 1. On Fridays before the congregational sermon is delivered. 2. At the time of sunset. 3. Before

sunrise (every day).”

Imam Zain-ul-’Abidin (as) narrates that Lady Fatima Zahra (as) heard the Prophet of Allah (S) say that there is a particular time on Fridays when prayers are generally answered. When asked, what is that timing, the Prophet (S) said that it is the time when the sun is halfway to set.

Amir’ul-Mu’mineen ‘Ali (as) said on Friday there will be a wind of Allah’s Blessing around sunset. The doors of the Heaven are open at that time. This is the best time for supplicating to Allah.

Eighth Condition: Crying and beseeching makes the supplication effective. If tears flow from the supplicant’s eye while he prays, or even one drop of tear comes out of the eye, the prayer will definitely be answered.

Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (as) has said the creature nearest to Allah is one who, while prostrating in prayer, cries and if he has lost hope of his prayer getting answered he should raise his hands towards the Heaven as if importuning Allah for granting his wish.

Ninth Condition: The supplicant should give alms to poor and needy because these are the servants of Allah. They are like the janitors at a king’s palace. To reach the king, one has to please the janitors.

Tenth Condition: One should make others needs the medium of conveying his own prayers for acceptance. If one approaches a munificent person and places the needs of others ahead of his own requirement, the donor will be pleased with the concern of the person for others and fulfils his demand.

Therefore, the Prophet of Allah (S) has said that when one prays, he should pray not only for himself but pray for others as well. Such prayers will be answered.

Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (as) says that a person remembers forty *mu’mins* in his prayers, his own prayer too will be accepted.

The Prophet of Islam (S) has said that a person’s prayer may not be accepted as soon as the prayer for the one who is away, and the person prays for him, from a distance.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) has said that the most acceptable prayer is one that is offered for a *mu’min* who is not present at the place.

The Prophet of Islam (S) has said that when a person prays in general for the *mu’mins*, Allah will keep in mind the numbers of *mu’mins* past and those yet to come and fulfils his wishes accordingly. If the person’s actions qualify him for going to Hell, the spirits of the *mu’mins* would plead with Allah for his pardon that he used to pray for them. Then Allah would pardon him and send him to Heaven

Imam Musa al-Kadhim (as) has said when a *mu'min* prays for another who is not present, Allah will reward him a hundred times for this act.

Eleventh Condition: For acceptance of the prayers, one should thank Allah for His Bounties before supplicating. This is the same way, when a person of status is approached for help, his past munificence is mentioned with profuse thanks.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) has said: If you wish your prayers to be answered, you should first praise Allah, then say *durood* (*benediction*) for the Prophet and his Holy Progeny (S) that your prayers are answered soon. It is like when one wants to approach a king, he makes presents to those who are close to him. Therefore it is essential that one offers benediction to the Prophet (S) and his family. This benediction should always be repeated before and after any prayer is made. It is natural that when what is accepted before and after the prayer, the prayer too will be accepted!

The Prophet of Allah (S) has said, "Say benediction on me and my *Ahl-ul-Bayt* so that the angels will say benediction for you. Benediction removes dissensions amongst people."

It is said: When you hear the Prophet (S)'s name, offer benediction again and again. Because when a person says the benediction once, all the creatures would praise the person. Ignorant and unfortunate is the person who is not aware of this requirement. Allah, the Prophet (S) and the *Ahl-ul-Bayt* will be annoyed with such persons.

It is mentioned in a tradition that in the balance of actions, no act has so much weight as the benediction of the Prophet (S) and the *Ahl-ul-Bayt*. On the Day of Judgment, the actions of the men would be put in the balance, but since they will be light, the scale would tilt to the other side. Then the Prophet (S) would put the benedictions uttered by the person on the side of the scale where his actions are there. Thus the balance will tilt in favor of the person!

There is another tradition that if one wishes to save his face from the Hellfire, then say the benediction (*Salawat*) a hundred times after the morning prayer.

A person who says the benediction a hundred times after the Friday prayer, Allah will fulfill his sixty wishes--- thirty in this life and thirty in the Hereafter.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) says that on the eve of Friday the angels descend from the firmament and their number is equivalent to the particles in the atmosphere or the ants on the earth. These angels will have golden pens and tablets in their hands. They will not record the actions of the persons who were not attended by the benediction to the Prophet till Saturday of the week. It is therefore advised that on the eve and the day of Friday, the benediction is repeatedly uttered. The Imam (as) also said that it was the Prophet (S)'s exhortation (*Sunna Mu'akkadah or emphasized*) that one should repeat the benediction a thousand times on Fridays and a hundred times on the weekdays.

Imam Ar-Ridha' (as) has said, "If a person doesn't have the means to pay expiation (Kaffarah) for his sins, he should utter benediction to the Prophet and his Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) that it will reduce the burden of his sins."

Imam 'Ali Naqi (as) says, "Allah has deemed Prophet Ibrahim (as) His friend because he used to excessively utter benediction to Muhammad (S) and his Ahl-ul-Bayt."

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) says that one who says the benediction like this,

<blockquote class="rtl">صَلَوَاتُ اللَّهِ وَصَلَوَاتُ مَلَائِكَتِهِ وَأَنْبِيَائِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَجَمِيعِ خَلْقِهِ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيْهِ، وَعَلَيْهِمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ.</blockquote>May Allah send His blessings and His angels, His prophets, His messengers, and all of His creatures send their blessings upon Mohammad and the progeny of Mohammad, and salutations, Allah's blessings and mercy upon Mohammad and the progeny of Mohammad?

His sins would be obliterated and he would be as clean as he was at his birth.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) is quoted by an authentic source as having said: When one gets a sneeze, he should say:

<blockquote class="rtl">أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَأَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ.</blockquote><div class="center">Praise to Allah the Lord of the worlds and may Allah send his blessings upon Mohammad and the progeny of Mohammad?</div>

In another tradition it is said that when one hears the sound of sneezing by someone else, he should say the benediction mentioned above. He will never, then, get pain of the teeth or the eyes.

The Prophet of Islam (S) has said: One who does not say benediction on me and my progeny, will never get the fragrance of the Heaven although this smell reaches as far as the distance that can be traveled over a period of five hundred years.

Then the Prophet (S) said, "One who says the benediction on me and my Ahl-ul-Bayt, the doors to the Heaven will open for him and the angels say benediction on him a seventy times. If he has sinned, the sins will be obliterated like the leaves in the season of fall. Allah says, 'O creature! Sadaika—I have accepted your prayers and I shall give you succor!' Then Allah will order the angels to say benediction for the person a seventy times." Then the Prophet (S) says, "If someone sends benediction for me and not for my Ahl-ul-Bayt, then seven curtains will obstruct it in the Firmament and Allah says, 'La labbaik wa la sadaika—neither your prayer is acceptable nor shall succor come to you'"

Allah further says, 'O My angels! Don't allow his prayers to reach the sky. Till he includes the Ahl-ul-Bayt in his benediction for the Prophet (S)'

In another tradition of the Prophet (S) it is recorded, "When I am mentioned before a person, and he doesn't say benediction for me and my *Ahl-ul-Bayt,* his sins will not be pardoned and he will be denied Allah's Rewards."

At another place the Prophet (S) has said, "The most miserly and evil is the person who has not uttered my benediction when my name is mentioned to him." Then the Prophet (S) added, "One who forgets to send benediction for me has forgotten the way to the Heaven."

Malik Jehni narrates that he presented a flower to Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as). The Imam (as) took it, smelled it, touched it to his eyes and said, "When a person smells a flower, touches it with his eyes and says benediction to Muhammad (S) and his *Ahl-ul-Bayt,* before the flower leaves his hands, his deliverance would have been granted!"

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) has said, "A person who says the benediction a hundred times, his wishes will definitely be fulfilled!"

The Prophet of Allah (S) has said, "Whosoever says the benediction on me a hundred times on Fridays, Allah will fulfill sixty of his wishes, thirty in this life and the other thirty in the Hereafter!" It is a *Sunna Mu'akkadah* that a believer should say the benediction a thousand times on the eve and the day of Friday.

Imam Ar-Ridha' (as) has said that if a person is unable to pay reparations for his sins, should say repeatedly the benediction for the Prophet (S) and his *Ahl-ul-Bayt* that his sins are pardoned by Allah. A person who says the benediction when he gets a sneeze, will never suffer from any ailment of the eyes or the teeth.

[The Third Star: Non-Acceptance Of Prayers](#)

Although the Almighty has promised the creatures that their supplications would be answered, there are certain reasons for non-acceptance of some prayers.

Since He is Omnipotent and Omniscient, His will is dominant over all that happens. If the wishes of the people are in accord with His will, their prayers would most certainly be answered. For example, can a generous person, if asked, put a venomous snake in the hand of another person or give a bottle of poison that the other desires of consuming?

The generous person knows the consequences of such actions and his denying acquiescence would be in the best interest of the prospective recipient. Similarly, some people pray to Allah for grant of such wishes that, if fulfilled, they might harmful for them. But these people are ignorant of the harmful consequences of what they wish to have. Allah is all-knowing and has the best interest of the creatures in view. Someone might say, if Allah decides what is in the best interest of an individual, then what is the need of supplicating to Him. They think that we might as well leave everything to the wish of Allah.

The reply to such doubts is that there are three types of wishes of the people that come to the consideration of Allah:

There are certain wishes that are granted by Allah without ever asking for.

There are certain wishes that are not granted despite repeated supplications.

There are certain other wishes for granting of which one has to make supplications.

Since man, in most cases, cannot categorize the wishes, he has to pray and supplicate to Allah for fulfillment of all his desires and wishes. Men should know that supplication itself is a very superior prayer.

The other reason for supplication is that everything is governed by certain norms. For example, offering mandatory prayers is a means of one's salvation. True! But prayer too is subject to certain norms. If someone offers prayer without the mandatory ablution, his prayer would not be accepted although, as mentioned earlier, prayer is a means of salvation of the person. Similarly for supplication there are certain norms to be observed.

Unless a person supplicates with humility, tears (*Giria*), knowledge of Allah, regularity in prayers, abstention from bad deeds, fair means of sustenance, truthfulness in words and actions etc his wishes may not be granted. Therefore, for Allah to keep His promise to answer the prayers of his creatures, they have to abide by certain conditions.

The third reason is that Allah wants that the prayers are answered with some delay. Perhaps, immediate acceptance of the prayers of people is not in their best interests. Or perhaps Allah wants the creature to supplicate again, and again, in a tone of submission and capitulation so that his status in piety enhances. Certain other times the prayer is answered but there is delay in its taking effect. Prophet Musa (as)'s prayer for the destruction of Pharaoh took thirty years to fruition.

[Reasons For Delayed Acceptance Of Prayers](#)

It is narrated through authentic sources that Ahmed bin Abi Nasr told to Imam Ar-Ridha' (as), "O Imam! Several years passed that I have been supplicating, but my wish has not been granted till now. I am getting doubts in my mind because of this delay!"

The Imam (as) said: O Ahmed! Keep your heart free of the Satanic doubts! It is the Satan who makes you doubt Allah's Munificence. My ancestor, Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as), said, 'It is necessary for a *mu'min* to pray the same way during times of hardship as he does when times are good. When the wishes are granted, he should not stop supplication. He should not tire of supplicating. In the eyes of Allah, prayer has a superior status. It is necessary that you remain calm and patient in difficult times.

Ask for legitimate things from Allah. Don't delay helping your kith and kin. Abstain from people's differences and fights. Remember! We Ahl al Bayt keep cordial relations even with those who mean harm to us. By Allah! We pray for their welfare too! You should know that if a rich person gives some help to a needy person, the recipient becomes hopeful of getting more help from him. When Allah grants bounties to a person, he should remember that in return Allah wants him to meet certain norms.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) has said that the prayers of a mu'min are answered with some delay because Allah wants to hear His sincere creature again and again! The Imam (as) asked a person if he would believe if he (the Imam) made a promise to him? The man said, "O son of the Prophet (S)! How could it be that I don't believe you!" The Imam (as) said, "You are ready to trust the word of a creature like you, will you not believe in the promises that Allah has made to you?" Then the Imam (as) added, "It is necessary that you believe in Allah's promises. He has promised:

<blockquote class="rtl">﴿وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِي إِذَا دَعَانِي﴾</blockquote><div class="center">My creatures ask you questions about me; tell them I am near them. I accept the prayer of one who prays. (2: 186)</div></div>

Then Allah says, "Don't lose hope in Allah's Mercies." And said, "Allah promises you of great rewards and lots of bounties" It is imperative for you that you trust in Allah more than you can trust anyone else. When you have good thoughts in your heart, don't give way to other doubts. Thus your sins will be pardoned."

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) has said, "Many a time Allah accepts people's prayers but the benefits take time in reaching the supplicant. Allah instructs the two angels guardian over the person that the supplication has been accepted but he should not be given the benefits immediately that he continues to be suppliant for some more time. Allah will also mention to the angels that he likes the way the person supplicates."

In another tradition the Imam (as) has said, "Man is always in a good state and rightly keeps expecting Allah's bounties unless he loses faith in the Munificence of Allah and stop praying for His mercy. He should not be in a hurry to get his prayers answered!" The narrator asked, "O Imam (as)! What do you mean by the supplicant making hurry?" The Imam (as) replied, "When a supplicant complains that lot of time has elapsed ever since he initiated his supplication and the wish remains unfulfilled, then he is trying to hurry in the matter."

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) has narrated that one day Prophet Ibrahim (as) was surveying the environs of Mount Bait al Maqdis for a pasture. He heard the voice of a person calling. He proceeded in the direction of the sound. He found a person in the process of offering his prayers. The height of the person was about twelve yards. When the person was through with the prayer, Prophet Ibrahim (as) asked him, "To whom were you offering the prayers?"

The man replied, "I was offering my prayers to the Creator of the land and the skies."

Prophet Ibrahim (as) asked, "Where be your dwelling?"

The man pointed to a hill in reply.

Prophet Ibrahim(as) said, "I too wish to visit your abode."

He replied, "There is a river enroute that you cannot cross."

Prophet Ibrahim (as) asked, "Then how do you go across?"

He said, "I can walk on the water."

Prophet Ibrahim (as) said, "Perhaps Allah might endow to me the capability to walk on the water."

Consequently both of them walked across the girth of the river.

Prophet Ibrahim (as) asked, "Tell me which is the greatest of all days?"

The man said, "The Day of Reckoning!"

Prophet Ibrahim (as) said, "Come! Let us both pray to Allah for Deliverance on that fateful day."

The pious man said, "Why do you make me a partner in your prayer? I have been supplicating for the last three years and my wish has not been granted so far!"

Prophet Ibrahim (as) asked, "What is your wish?"

The man said, "One day I found a handsome lad grazing a flock. I asked him who owned the flock. The lad replied that the owner was *Ibrahim Khalil-ur-Rahman.* I prayed to Allah that if He had a *Khalil* (*friend*) on the earth, then He must give me the honor of setting eye on that revered personality. But my prayer has remained unanswered."

Prophet Ibrahim (as) said, "Your wish has been fulfilled. I am *Ibrahim Khalil Allah!* The reason for the delay in answering your prayers was that Allah appreciated the way you modulated your supplication and He wanted to hear you making the call again and again. Your repeated supplication enhanced your status in the consideration of Allah."

The fourth reason for Allah not answering the prayers of a supplicant is that the wish that granting the wish might be against the person's own interest. Allah has the intention of rewarding him with something more useful. As, for example, someone approaches a generous person for a pecuniary help of a certain amount. The generous person, after due consideration, which might take some time, helps him with an amount ten times more than the man expected! Therefore it is not the rejection of the prayer but, in fact, it is an enhancement in the generosity.

[The Advantages Of Prayer](#advantages-prayer)

There are several benefits accruing from prayer. All the time spent in preparing for the nearness to Allah and supplication is a part of one's prayer.

Dear reader! You must have observed that Allah attracts the ignorant creatures towards Himself by making innumerable promises. This can be explained by the simile of a king making the hawk sit on his arm with affection to train it to hunt. He gives a variety of food to the bird to befriend it. When the hawk is fully trained, he lets it go hunting and to return and perch on his arm. Another example is of parents training and educating their children and, in the process, informing them the myriad uses of learning and skills. When the child is not attentive, they give him pretty dresses and other goodies to attract him towards learning. When the child gets motivated, he himself tries to excel in the skills that the parents wanted him to acquire. Then, whatever comes in the way, the child continues making progress. Similar is the disposition of man.

Man doesn't understand the pleasures and the successes of the Hereafter. Therefore, the Almighty, with His kindness and indulgence invites men towards Himself thus:

“O my creatures! Come. Whatever you ask for, I shall give you! I have everything that can bring you closer to Me! They can thus accomplish their wants in the world and also in the Hereafter. What degree of Munificence that, notwithstanding the Omnipotence, I have, I am calling you closer to Me. But the ignorant creatures are worrying futilely that their prayers have remained unanswered!”

Therefore Allah says:

﴿إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنُودٌ﴾
Truly man manifests ungratefulness to his Creator (100:6)

Man wonders why his prayer remained unanswered. He doesn't think that supplication is a part of the prayer required of him. When he made entreaty to Allah, he came closer to Him! He communicated his feelings and wishes to the Creator and the Sustainer! He heard Allah's *labbaik* (thy beck? and call)! O supplicant! If you realize the true happiness of prayer and supplication, and the eyes of your heart fathom the mysteries of the attention Allah gives to your lamentations, you would sacrifice your own self not to talk of your mundane wishes! Imagine, a person gets the opportunity with a man in authority, say, a king! And that monarch looks with some attention at the visitor. In his wonderment the man might forget to make his submission to the worthy!

What a pity that when people supplicate before the Almighty Allah, they forget that they have an opportunity to address Allah who has the control of everything in the Universe.

Allah says, “O My creature! Pray and trust Me for your welfare!” And man in his ignorance behaves stubbornly. If he hadn't a screen of negligence over his mind, he could understand the truth. Allah says: O angels! Delay fulfilling his wishes! I like the voice in which he is supplicating. If man realizes this, he

will submit himself totally to the wish of Allah and shun praying for mundane wishes.

[Those Whose Prayers Are Answered](#those-whose-prayers-are-answered)

Authentic sources quote that Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) has said: There are three types of persons whose prayers are answered:

Those who go on the holy pilgrimage of Hajj, their prayers are answered. It is advisable that people at home are taken good care of.

Those who do Jihad in the way of Allah. His family and children must be provided support in his absence.

The prayers of the sick are also answered. People should, therefore take care of the sick and should not upset them in any way.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) said that five prayers are such that Allah will certainly accept them:

- Prayer by the Just Imam.
- Prayer of the oppressed (*mathloom*).
- The prayer of a pious son for his parents.
- The prayer of pious parents for their son.
- The prayer of a *mu'min* for his brother *mu'min* in his absence.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) has said: Allah shall definitely accept six types of prayer:

- Prayer of a pious father for his son.
- Curse of a father for his disinherited (*Aaq*) son.
- .Curse of an oppressed person against a tyrant.
- The prayer of one *mu'min* for another.
- The prayer of an oppressed when he receives a consideration from a cruel person.
- Prayer for the pleasure of the *Ahl-ul-Bayt*.

[Beware Of The Curse Of The Oppressed](#beware-curse-oppressed)

The Prophet of Allah (S) says, "Beware of the curse of the oppressed that it goes beyond the skies and

Allah looks at him with kindness and says, 'Raise his prayer, I shall accept it!'"

The Prophet (S) also said, "Prevent yourself from your father's curse. It is sharper than the spear!"

It has come in the traditions that four types of prayer are not rejected by Allah:: 1. A father's prayer for his son. 2. Prayer of the oppressed against the oppressor. 3. Prayer of the person who is on the minor pilgrimage (Umrah). 4. The prayer of a person who is fasting.

It is said that the prayers of five types of persons are not answered:

1. A husband, despite being capable of divorcing a nagging spouse by giving her the mehr (alimony), bears with her and doesn't divorce her, but prays against her.
2. A person whose slave had escaped from his custody thrice but he doesn't sell him and just curses him.
3. A person who doesn't walk hurriedly away from a wall precariously about to fall and prays, 'O Allah! May the wall not fall on my head!'
4. A person who advances a loan to someone without taking any witnesses and then prays, 'O Allah! Get back my money to me!'
5. An able bodied person capable of earning his livelihood, but doesn't exert himself to earn, prays ' O Allah! Give me livelihood!'

The Prophet of Allah (S) has said, O Abu Dharr! If in a town only disobedient sinners are there with only three pious persons, Allah will not send curse to that place.

O Abu Dharr! Allah is proud and appreciative of three persons. The first: One who says the Adhaan (call for prayer) and Iqamah (the call to rise for prayer) while alone in a forest and offers his mandatory prayer. Allah asks the angels with pride to look at his sincere creature who has not forgotten the Creator even in the loneliness of the jungle. The second: One who does the Namaz al-Shab (the night prayers) and prostrates in the loneliness of the night despite being overwhelmed by sleep. Allah tells to the angels that the spirit of the sincere creature is with Him while he is in prostration. The third: A person on the battlefield steadfast fighting the enemies while his own comrades have fled with fear in their hearts!:

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) narrates that offering mandatory prayers in the view of the people is preferable. Praying in the mosque is preferable to praying in the loneliness of the home. Similarly giving Zakat in the precincts of the mosque is better as it would encourage others to follow suit. The non-mandatory prayers and charity and alms to poor and needy is better given in privacy. This will preclude the chance of giving a feeling to the people that the person is proud of his status and the recipients of the help might also feel embarrassed if the help is preferred in public.

Then the Imam (as) said, “Offering *namaz al-shab* was the practice of the Prophet (S) and the pious persons followed suit. It removes pains and makes the faces radiant. One who offers these nightly prayers becomes good-natured and presentable. It boosts the means of livelihood of the person. The eight *rakaat* (genuflections) of *namaz al-shab* are the adornment of the Hereafter for one who offers these prayers. It gives light to the eyes and expels sadness.”

It is mentioned in the traditions that *namaz al-shab* enhances the radiance of the face and the fragrance of the body. It gives boost to the person’s livelihood. The person who offers these prayers finds means of discharging his debts.

In another tradition it is said that a household where the Qur’an is recited and the *namaz al-shab* is offered, the house appears to the people of the Firmament as if it is a shining star.

It is recorded that the Prophet of Allah (S) said while making a commentary on the verse:

﴿إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ﴾
No doubt virtues obliterate the sins (11: 114)

said that the verse means that when a mu’min offers the *namaz al-shab*, his sins committed during the day are obliterated.

The Prophet of Islam (S) has said, “Whosoever is given the privilege of offering *namaz al-shab* by Allah, remains awake in the nights and with total dedication offers the prayer duly purifying himself with ablution, Allah will arrange nine rows of angels to join the prayer behind him. Only Allah will know the number of angels in each of the nine rows. One end of each row of the angels will be in the North and the other in the South. When the person completes the prayer, virtues will be added to his list (inventory of acts) according to the number of angels who had offered prayers behind him.”

It is narrated also from the Prophet that Allah will infuse light in the heart of the pious person who stands in prayer during the late hours of the night. When the person utters, “*Ya Rab, Ya Rab!*”, Allah responds with “*Labbaik, Labbaik!*” and says, “O My creature! Ask for what you want from Me! Depend on Me that I am sufficient for the solution of your problems!” Then Allah tells to the angels, “Look! How My creature stands in My Presence in the dead of the night! That is the time when the thoughtless persons will be in their slumbers. You must bear witness that I have obliterated the record of all his sins!”

It is narrated in the traditions that the Prophet of Allah (S) has said, “Jibrael always exhorts me about the *Namaz al-Shab* so much that I worried perhaps the people in my *Ummah* might not get any sleep in the thought of this prayer.”

It is narrated from Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) that one who has faith in the Day of Reckoning and

Allah will not let a night go when he has not performed the *Namaz al-Shab.*

It is narrated that a person approached *Amir al Mumineen (as)* and said, “O Imam! I am unable to offer the *Namaz al-Shab!*” *Amir’ul-Mu’mineen ‘Ali(as)* said, *“Your sins are preventing you from doing so.”* And added, “Prophet Sulaiman (as)’s mother advised him, O son! Don’t sleep much in the nights! Such a habit will render a person a beggar (*faqir*) on the Day of Reckoning!”

It is also narrated from *Amir’ul-Mu’mineen ‘Ali (as)* that a person asked him to tell about the superiority and significance of the *Namaz al-Shab.*” *The Imam (as)* replied: Be informed that when a person spends a tenth of the night in sincere supplication Allah would tell to the angels, “Write virtues in the name of My creature equivalent to the leaves and flowers in the trees that grow on the banks of the Nile.”

In another tradition it is mentioned that Allah orders the angels to write virtues in the record of a supplicant equal to the leaves in all the trees in the universe. The Imam (as) said, “One who spends a ninth part of the night in prayer, his *Nama al-Aamaal* will be placed in his right hand on the Day of Judgement!” “A person who spends an eighth part of the night in supplication, Allah will give him the status of a martyr who fought valiantly in the way of Allah and met with death.” “One who spends a seventh part of the night in prayer, would rise from his grave with the face as radiant as the full moon and will cross the *Bridge of Siraat* with great ease!”

“One who spends a sixth of the night in supplication will get pardon of his sins from Allah and would be counted in the group of repentant people.” “One who spends a fifth of the night in prayer will find a place in the neighborhood of Prophet Ibraheem (as) in the Heaven.” “One who spends a fourth of the night in supplication will rise with the group of successful people on the Day of Judgement and will cross the *Bridge of Siraat* like a breeze and enter the precincts of the Heaven.” “One who spends a third of the night in prayer Allah will endow him with such a status that every angel wishes to attain it. On the Day of Reckoning there will be Orders that he should have freedom to enter the Heaven through any of the gates he wished to use!”

“One who spent half the night in prayer will get so much reward that if the entire surface of the earth is made of gold and offered to that *Mu’min* in place of the Reward, *he would refuse to accept it.* This act of the person will be more valuable in the consideration of Allah than freeing seventy slaves from the progeny of Prophet Ismail (as).” “One who supplicates two thirds of the night, Allah will write virtues in his name equal to the grains of sand in a desert. The lowest number of virtues for such a person would be equal to ten times the size of the *Mount Uhud.*”

“One who supplicates the whole night, sometimes in prostration and at other in genuflection, sometimes reciting the Holy Qur’an and then uttering Allah’s names, Allah will reward him so much that all his sins would be pardoned and would be as innocent as a just born baby. The virtues written in the

name of such a person will be equal to the creatures in the world. The grave of the person would be filled with light. Jealousy and greed would be obliterated from his heart.

He will be freed from the prosecution that takes place in the grave after death. He will be exempt from the Hellfire. He will be raised from the grave on the Day of Judgement who will be free of any fear of Retribution. Allah would say to the angels, 'Look at my creature who spent the full night in My Remembrance. Give him a place in the *Jannat al Firdous* and give him a hundred thousand cities in the Heaven and every city should be adorned with what he wishes to have! Give him much more than what has already been endowed on him!"

O Abu Dharr! Every spot of land where one puts his head down in prostration will bear witness on the Day of Judgement. There is no resting place where travellers tarry for rest that will not pray for their safety if they had offered their prayers in that place. The place will curse a person if he had committed any act contrary to the dictates of Allah while tarrying there.

O Abu Dharr! There is no dawn or dusk when places do not call each other: "O my neighbor! Did any passerby talk of Allah while staying with you!? Did any traveller put his forehead down in prostration?" Some places would affirm that the travellers did prostrate in prayer and the others would own that they just rested and went their way. The place confirming about the visitors offering prayers while visiting it would proudly feel that it had the privilege of people offering prayers to Allah while being its guests.

Remember! Forgetfulness has so much engulfed the human race that the inanimate things are more adept at praying to Allah. The inanimate things, although in possession of very feeble senses, busy themselves in prayer.

Someone asked Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) whether one should offer optional (*Naafila*) prayers at one place or at different places. The Imam (as) replied that it is better to offer these prayers at different places that these places will bear witness to the act on the Day of Reckoning.

It is narrated that when people assemble at a place and don't praise the Prophet and his Holy Progeny (as), such assembly will be the harbinger of retribution of the concourse on the Day of Reckoning

O Abu Dharr! When Allah created the land and trees grew on it, there was no tree from which the progeny of Adam had not derived benefit. The land and its flora kept providing benefits to man that he praised Allah for His Bounties. But the misguided said, "God has a son!" When this happened, the earth had a cataclysm and the benefits that the trees provided to man faded away. The Quraish believed that the angels are God's daughters. The Jews thought that Aziz (*of Egypt*) was God's son. The Christians said, "Jesus is the son of God."

It is narrated from authentic sources that Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) has said: Allah has not created any tree that did not give fruits. But when people started saying that God has a son, half the flora went barren of fruits. And when people started being polytheist, many a tree grew thorns.

It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam (as): Allah deputed a messenger to a nation. He preached with them for forty year. He invited them to have faith in Allah, but none of the people agreed. The people of the place used to congregate on a festive occasion at a ground. On one such occasion the Messenger too went to the assemblage and said, “O people! Have faith in Allah! He is one and only and has no partners!”

The people said, “O person! If you are the messenger of Allah, ask Him to give us fruits of the color of our robes!” That day the people were wearing orange colored dresses. The Messenger went a little distance from there and brought back a dried branch of a tree. He offered prayer and the dried branch became fresh and green. It put on orange fruits. The people saw and ate the fruits. Those who got convinced of the existence of Allah found that the stone of the fruit was sweet. But the others who still had doubts, found the stones bitter.

The Prophet of Islam (as) has said, “O ‘Ali (as)! There are three things that sooth the hearts of the *Mu’mins*: 1. Meeting brother *Mu’mins*. 2. Breaking of the fasts. 3. Offering the late night prayers (*Tahajjud*)” The Prophet (S) added, “O ‘Ali (as)! In my view offering two *Rakaat* of the night prayers is better than everything in the world. O ‘Ali (as)! A *Mu’min* has an elevated status! When he dies, the angels lament in the Heaven because he was like a rampart for a city for the other *Mu’mins* against the evil intent of the Satan, the innovators and the infidels.”

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) said, “We are incapable of praising Allah that He is beyond our comprehension! Similarly we cannot enumerate the qualities of the Prophet of Islam (as) because Allah says, ‘His praise is My praise, his injunction is My injunction, his obedience is My obedience!’ Similarly we *Ahl-ul-Bayt* cannot be praised that Allah has kept us free of all defects and rendered us pure. Also *Mu’mins* cannot be praised that when a *Mu’min* meets another, his sins fall away as do the leaves in autumn!”

[The Benefits Of Mu’anaqah Or Embrace](#)

Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (as) says, “When two *Mu’mins* embrace each other, the Allah’s Blessing will be on them! When they embrace each other only to please Allah, without any worldly motives, the angels say, ‘all your sins have been pardoned! Repeat the act of embrasure!’ When two *Mu’mins* start speaking, the angels responsible for recording the deeds of the people ask one other to stay away from them that perhaps they desire to exchange secrets and Allah wishes to keep them from others hearing!” The narrator asked: Do the angels not record these exchanges despite Allah observing,

﴿مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ﴾

No person utters a word which our chroniclers don’t record.

(50: 18)

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The Imam (as) took a sigh and said: Allah has ordered the angels to keep away from them in reverence to their greatness. Although the angels don't hear their conversation Allah (Alam as sir wal khaffiyat) knows their acts and hears their talk!

Amir'ul-Mu'mineen 'Ali (as) says, "A Mu'min moves amidst five lights (anwaar). In congregations (majalis) and matters of religion his entry and exit are both accompanied by light. His knowledge is light and his talk has an aura of light. On the Day of Judgement a Mu'min's glance towards the bounties of Allah too is accompanied with light."

It is evident from the traditions that the actions and the morals of a person are a reflection of his faith. Shunning the mandatory acts and perpetration of major sins ostracises a person from the faith. Sometimes a pious person is termed a Mu'min, sometimes a Shi'a and at others a wali. A person is called a Mu'min or Shi'a when his actions are upright. But one should not become proud and conceited learning about these traditions that define a Shi'a and Mu'min. One should understand that persons fitting the description of a Mu'min are hard to come by.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) says, "Allah has endowed a Mu'min with three traits: 1. Respect in the world. 2. Deliverance in the Hereafter. 3. Fear in the hearts of the tyrants."

Some companions of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) approached him on a moonlit night. Impressed with the serene ambience, one of the companions told to the Imam (as), "How brilliant is the night with the moonlight and the stars. The attractiveness of the sky is enhancing with the passage of time." The Imam (as) said, "When you say this about the sky, Jibrael and Mekael are waxing eloquent praising the brightness of the earth and the Mu'mineen living on it. Izrael and Israfeel too have a similar opinion about the earth."

The Prophet of Allah (S) has said that a Mu'min is so important in the consideration of the Almighty that the angels in the Heaven know him well. The Prophet (S) also added that a Mu'min sees with the light provided by Allah.

It is narrated from the Prophet of Allah (S) that a Mu'min should have the following qualities He should be calm and collected in times of accidents and calamities, in penury he should be patient and forbearing, he should be thankful and grateful in affluence, he should be contented with whatever Allah provides to him, he should not be harsh with his adversaries, he should not unjustly support his friends, he should be ready to bear hardship for the purpose of prayer and he should be considerate and caring of others. Knowledge is a friend and companion of a Mu'min. Patience and tolerance are the viziers of a Mu'min and fortitude the chief of his forces. Camaraderie and capability are a Mu'min's brothers and good behaviour and manners are like his father.

<h3>The Qualities of A Mu'min</h3>

Imam Zain-ul-'Abidin (as) says: A *Mu'min* remains silent that he desires to protect himself from sinning. He speaks with a purpose of getting reward from Allah. Whatever is told to him in confidence he never reveals to his best of friends. What he bears witness to, he doesn't hide from his friends. Whatever good deed a *Mu'min* does has no element of stealth in it. He is never ashamed of performing an act of prayer and obedience. If people praise him for his good qualities, he expresses fear that the praises might go to his head. At such time he does *istighfar* seeking Allah's protection from the Satan that the person praising him is not aware of his faults. He doesn't remain oblivious of his own faults not to get carried away by the talk of others. A *Mu'min* is always conscious of the the record keepers of his deeds (*the karamain Katibain*)

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) says: A *Mu'min* is steadfast in his affairs of religion. Every moment he has the thought of the Hereafter in his mind. He behaves softly and affably with others. In faith he will be in the stage of firm belief. He will be always seeking knowledge on facts and the understanding of Allah (*Maarifath*). He enjoys tasks that help to enhance his knowledge. He performs good deeds with patience and justice.

Despite possessing vast knowledge, he is humble in his behaviour with others. Although intellectually superior, he never makes a show of this trait to others. In the cause of truth he is bold and just. Even if he is rich, he adopts an equanimous way of life. If he is poor, he takes pride in his poverty. He is generous to a fault and forgives when others cause him some harm. Revenge is not in his nature. He considers goodwill for other Muslims as obedience to Allah. He controls evil desires with great courage.

Despite the pleasures of sin, he keeps himself away from such acts. He has great desire for Jihad. While at prayer, his mind is totally dedicated to Allah. In times of great difficulty he is patient. He is never overwhelmed with the worldly hardships. He is thankful to Allah for the comforts and blessings available to him. He never does backbiting about others. He always thinks well of his kinsmen and friends. He is never tardy in doing a good deed. He is never short tempered and rude in his behaviour with others. He controls his eyes and whenever he views anything Allah's goodwill is always in his mind.

To satisfy his palate he never does taboo things. Carnal desires never overwhelm him. He is free of all desire of jealousy. He is not a spendthrift but is always ready to help others to the extent possible. For making others comfortable, he is ready to bear some hardship. He doesn't run after worldly fame and pomp. He is never scared of the hardships that confront him. He can never be faulted for any act of his. When asked for his advice, he gives a considered opinion on matters. The poor and impecunious always look forward to his help. He abstains from foolish, bawdy and useless talk.

Someone asked the Prophet of Islam (S), "Kindly tell me about the qualities of a *Mu'min*." He said, "A *Mu'min* has twenty qualities. A person is not a *Mu'min* if he doesn't have these traits, his faith (*Iman*) will not be perfect. These traits are: A *Mu'min* prays regularly, gives *Zakat*, feeds the hungry, is kind to orphans, wears neat and clean clothes, does supplication to Allah with great fervor, never tells lies, he always keeps his promises, shows great

integrity, always upholds the truth, supplicates during the nights, lives boldly during the days, makes sincere effort in the way of truth, remains awake in the nights and fasts during the day, is kind to his neighbors, is helpful to widows, joins the funeral processions, takes part in Jihad and walks on the land with humility. May Allah help us to acquire the traits of a *Mu'min*.”

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) narrates that someone asked the Prophet of Islam (S) to give a description of good people. The Prophet (S) replied: A good person is one from whose hands and tongue people are safe. A good person is one who thanks Allah for the bounties endowed on him. In times of difficulty he should be patient and equanimous. When someone inflicts hardship on him unnecessarily, he should bear it patiently and forgive the person. When he commits a sin, he should seek Allah's forgiveness (*Astaghfar*)

[The Shi'as Of 'Ali](#)

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) says, “The Shi'as of 'Ali (as) are the people whose stomachs touch their backs as an effect of hunger. Their lips will be parched dry with fasting. They are kind of disposition and serious of demeanour. They are intelligent people and well known for intensity in their prayers. Therefore friends! Assume piety and help us intercede on your behalf on the Day of Reckoning! Busy yourselves in prayer and obedience to Allah.”

It is narrated from Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) that one day Amir'ul-Mu'mineen (as) was one day offering his morning prayer in Iraq. After the prayer he delivered a sermon. Talking of the fear of Allah the Imam (as) cried. The others too cried a lot. Then he said, “By Allah's Greatness! I have seen a group of *Mu'mins* in the time of the Prophet of Islam (S). They used to be unkempt, dusty and of emaciated bodies. Their stomachs used to cling to their backs. The foreheads of these *Mu'mins* were calloused because of perpetual prostration. These calluses were like the ones that are found on the flanks of the camels. Offering prayers and prostrations in the nights they used to see the dusk in this act. They used to cry inconsolably seeking protection of Allah from the Hellfire. When Allah's name was mentioned before them, they used to shiver like the tree in times of strong winds. This used to be their condition whenever they thought of Allah's Retribution. And when I see the people now I find them in a state of oblivion and forgetfulness. After delivering this sermon Amir'ul-Mu'mineen 'Ali (as) went to *Bayt al Sharaf* and never ever laughed till the day he was martyred.”

It is narrated from Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) that someone inquired of the Prophet of Islam (S), “Ya Prophet! Who are the good and noble creatures of Allah?” The Prophet (S) said, “These are the people who perpetrate good deeds and if ever they commit any sin they seek Allah's forgiveness by doing *Astaghfar*. When Allah bestows a bounty on them, they thank Him profusely. When confronted with any calamity, they are patient and forbearing. When angry on others, they generously forgive.”

One night Amir'ul-Mu'mineen (as) was proceeding from the mosque towards the wilderness of Najaf. It was a moonlit night. He noticed some persons following behind him. He tarried and asked them, “Who

are you?” They said, “Ya Imam! We are your Shi'as.” The Imam (as) looked at them and said, “Your appearances are not those of Shi'as!” The men said, “Ya Amir'ul-Mu'mineen ! How do your Shi'as look?” He replied, “With sleepless nights in prayer their faces will be flushed. As a result of excessive crying, their eyes look like the eyes of blind persons. Their backs will be hunched because of excessive genuflection in prayer. Because of spending most of the days in fasting their stomachs touch their backs. Because of constant prayer the lips of these persons will be dry and parched. Their fear of Allah (Khushu wa Khuzu) is reflected from their faces.”

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) says: A Mu'min cannot be a possessor of faith unless he has perfect intelligence. The intelligence cannot be perfect unless the person has the following ten traits:

- People expect good treatment from him.
- People do not expect ill treatment from him.
- He rates his good deeds as very little.
- He considers others' small good turns of great value.
- He considers his small fault as major and rates others major faults as trivial.
- He never tires of giving ear to the seekers of help.
- He tirelessly works in search of knowledge.
- He prefers ignominy over worldly fame.
- He prefers penury over riches and remains contented with small worldly comforts.

The tenth trait is the most difficult. Whenever he meets anyone, he rates the person more pious and better than himself.

The Imam (as) further said, “There are two types of men. There are some who consider all others better and more pious than themselves. The other type is of people who consider others inferior to themselves. The best attitude is that when one finds a person better than himself, he should interact with him humbly and try to emulate his good qualities. When he finds a person who appears inferior to himself, he should think that the person might have some latent qualities worthy of emulation.” The Imam (as) also added, “Adopting this attitude you will acquire respect and eminence.”

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) narrates that one day the Prophet (S) met Haritha bin Noman Ansari and said, “O Haritha! How was your morning today?” Haritha said, “Ya Imam! I started the morning with perfect faith and firm belief!” The Prophet (S) said, “Every-thing needs a proof. What is the proof that your faith is perfect?” Haritha said, “Ya Imam! My heart is dejected with the world. I have no interest in the world. This belief has encouraged me to pray during the nights and fast during the days. This is

tantamount to say that I see the accounting of deeds in Allah's Firmament. I perceive that the people of the Heaven interact with each other happily and the people of the Hell are undergoing the Retribution." The Prophet (S) said, "No doubt! You are a *Mu'min*. Allah has illumined your heart with faith. Remain steadfast in this condition. May Allah help you in your endeavour!" Haritha said, "Ya Imam! I have fear of nothing that can involve me in sins other than my eyes." The Prophet (S) prayed for him and Haritha went blind that the cause of his fear of sinning was removed.

It is narrated from Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) that the Prophet of Islam (S) came across a group of riders. He inquired of them, "Who are you?" They replied that they were *Mu'mins*. The Prophet (S) asked them to give a proof of being *Mu'mins*. They said, "Ya Imam! We are committed to Allah's wish. We obey His Commandments. We entrust all our affairs to Allah and only trust in Him." The Prophet (S) said, "These persons are wise and sagacious. With their wisdom and sagacity they have come quite close to the status of prophethood!" Then the Prophet (S) added, "If you wish to befriend Allah, don't make an abode in this world that it is transient. Don't amass wealth that you will not be able to consume it. Beware of Allah's adversary that soon you will have to return to Him (Allah)!"

[The Reward For Adhan and Iqamat](#)

The Prophet of Allah (S) has said, "O Abu Dharr! When a *Mu'min*, alone in the wilderness, can do *Tayyamum* (dry ablution) if water is not handy, say the *Adhan* and the *Iqaamah* and offer his prayer. Allah orders His angels to join in prayer with this *Mu'min* in large numbers. The angels are ordered to form rows behind the *Mu'min* that nothing else is visible to the extent a human eye could see. When the *Mu'min* does genuflection, the angels too follow suit as people do in a congregational prayer. Likewise when the *Mu'min* prostrates, the angels too prostrate. In the end when the *Mu'min* supplicates, the angels say *Aameen*." The Prophet (S) added, "O Abu Dharr! If this *Mu'min* only says *iqamah*, at the mandatory time of a compulsory prayer, and not the *Adhaan*, then only the two angels who are always in attendance with the person will join him in the prayer."

Some jurists deem it compulsory to say the *Adhaan* and *Iqamah* for every mandatory prayer while others say that *Iqamah* is sufficient. Some say that both *Adhaan* and *Iqamah* are compulsory for the morning and evening prayers. The latter is a better practice.

Adhaan and *Iqamah* are prescribed only for the mandatory prayers. The optional prayers can be offered without saying the *Adhaan* and *Iqamah*. Those who say these for the optional prayers are committing a *bidaa* (an innovation).

It is narrated in a tradition of the Prophet (S) that one who says the *Adhaan* with true spirit will get Reward from Allah equivalent to that for forty thousand martyrs and forty thousand men of piety

(*siddiqoon*). On the intercession of this person Allah will admit forty thousand sinners into the Heaven. Remember, when the *meuezzin* says '*Ash-haduan la ilaha il Allah*' ninety thousand angels say *Durood* (Invoke Allah's Blessings) for him. They also seek Allah's forgiveness (*Astaghfar*) for him. On the Day of Reckoning this person will be under the shadow of Allah's Firmament till he is through with the process of accounting.

When the *Meuezzin* says '*Ash-haduanna Muhammedan Rasool Allah*' forty thousand angels record blessings for him. Any person who takes precedence to join the first row of a prayer congregation, and listens to the first *Takbeer* (announcement of commencement of the prayer) he will be getting reward equivalent to that of many *meuezzins*. But there is a proviso that this person has never been the cause of harm to any *muslim*.

It is narrated from Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) that a person who says the *Adhaan* for ten years in the cause of Allah, his sins, as far as he can think of having perpetrated, will be pardoned. The voice of such a person would reach the very Firmament. All the animate and inanimate objects in the vicinity of the place where he recited the *Adhaan* would bear witness to the fact. He would also get a share of the reward of the persons who pray in the congregation at the mosque in response to his calling the *Adhaan*. As the numbers of worshippers swell at the mosque in response to his *Adhaan*, his account of good deeds too will swell accordingly.

Bilal(r.a.) narrates from the Prophet of Islam (S) that the *meuezzins* are the keepers of the believers. They are also the keepers of their mandatory fasts and prayers. Whatever they ask in return for this service, Allah would grant them. On whosoever's behalf they intercede, Allah would accept the intercession. The Prophet (S) also said that when a person continuously says the *Adhaan* in the name of Allah for forty years, Allah will give to him the reward equivalent to that for forty truthful ones (*Siddeeqoon*). One who says the *Adhaan* for ten years will get a place in the accommodation (*Qubba*) of Prophet Ibrahim (as). One who says the *Adhaan* for one year, his sins, as heavy as the mountains, would be forgiven on the Day of Judgement. If a person says the *Adhaan* only once at the prescribed time of prayer, Allah will forgive all his past sins and protect him from committing any more sins. He will be given the status of martyrs in the Heaven.

It is narrated from the Prophet of Allah (S), "The *Muezzin*, in the interregnum between the *Adhaan* and the *Iqamat*, gets the reward equivalent to that of a martyr who flails his limbs in a gory condition and dies in the cause of Allah. A person who is not getting off-springs should recite the *Adhaan* within the four walls of his house."

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) narrates that the Prophet of Allah (S) has said, "When you come across evil spirits (*Ghouls*) on the way, recite the *Adhaan* aloud and they would flee." "When a person says the *Adhaan* and *Iqamat* before praying, two rows of angels join in the prayer behind him. If he says only the *Iqamat*, only one row of angels joins him in the prayer. The row of angels behind the person will be equal to the distance between the east and the west.

And equal to the distance between the earth and the sky.”

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) says that three types of persons would be sent to the Heaven in large numbers: 1. The just Imams. 2. The honest traders. 3. The old person who spends his life in obedience of Allah.”

It is narrated from the Prophet of Allah (S) that seven type of person will be under the shade of the *Firmament* on the Day of Judgement. On that fateful day, there won't be any other shade for the multitudes than this. These seven categories of persons will be: 1. The just Imams. 2. The youth who spent his time in the worship of Allah. 3. A person who comes out of the mosque but his heart is in the mosque. 4. The two companions who were together while going for the congregations. 5. The person who thinks of Allah while alone and gets tears in his eyes with His fear. 6. A person who is tempted by a beautiful damsel to sin, but out of fear of Allah he abstains. 7. A person who does charity in secret that his right hand gives and the left hand is not aware of the act.

[The Reward of Reciting The Qur'an](#)

It is narrated from Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) that when a young *Mu'min* recites the Holy Qur'an, the Qur'an will become a part of his flesh and blood. Allah will raise him on the Day of Reckoning with the Prophets (as) and angels. The *Holy Qur'an* will express its love for him and say, 'O Allah! Every person expects reward for his good acts! Therefore I demand rewards for the persons who used to recite me!' Then Allah would bestow two *Hillas* (Heavenly Raiment) to the youth. The crown of excellence would be placed on his head. Then Allah would ask the Holy Qur'an, 'Are you happy now?' The Holy Book would then respond, 'O Allah! I expected much more than this! Your reward is far less than the person deserves!' Then Allah would award to the person the permit to enter the Heaven in his right hand and the permit not to enter the Hell in his left hand. The person will then be admitted to the Heaven and asked to recite one verse from the Qur'an and enter the higher echelons of the Heaven. Now Allah will ask the Qur'an, 'Are you happy now?' The Qur'an would respond, 'No doubt! I am happy now!'

The Imam (as) also said, “When a person recites the Holy Qur'an to learn it by-heart, Allah will double the reward for the person.”

A person who recites the Qur'an for the benefit of the unlettered, it will be like doing the Jihad. Heaven will be mandatory for such a person.

The Prophet of Allah (S) said, “O Abu Dharr! Don't adopt the company of any other person than a *Mu'min*. Share your repast with none other than the pious. Don't share the table with hypocrites and evil persons. O Abu Dharr! You share your food with those whom you consider your friends and share the food with those who keep your friendship for the sake of Allah!”

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) says, “My revered father, Imam Zain-ul-'Abidin (as), has said, 'O son!

Don't meet, converse or befriend five types of persons: 1. Don't sit in the company of a liar. He will be like a mirage that distant things seem near to you and nearer objects as distant. 2. Don't keep the company of a hypocrite that he can sell you for a morsel or less. 3. Don't befriend a parsimonious person who will value his money more than you in time of your need. 4. Don't be friends with a fool that with all good intentions he might put you to harm in his foolishness. 5. Don't befriend a person who deprives the rights of his kin (*Qateh al-Rahem*). In the Holy Qur'an Allah curses such a person thrice."

Amir'ul-Mu'mineen 'Ali (as), in one of his sermons, said, "O Believers! It is necessary that you refrain from the company of three types of persons: 1. The shameless sinners and hypocrites. 2. Foolish idiots. 3. The liars." He added, "The hypocrite will present to you the bad deeds as good and try to make you follow in his footsteps. He will not guide you properly in the matters of faith. His company will be the cause of shame for you. The company of a foolish person will not help to take the right path. Don't expect him to come to your succor in times of difficulty, however much he tries to do it. Don't expect any happiness from the company of a liar. He will tell lies to others about you. To uphold one falsehood, he will invent many lies. Even if such a person tells a truth, people wouldn't believe him. He might create enmities amidst people by telling lies. You must always seriously consider whose friendship you should cultivate."

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) says, "Be friends with a person who makes you cry with the fear of Allah and is your wellwisher. Don't follow one who makes you laugh and tricks you into faults. Soon you will have to go before Allah for accounting of your deeds!"

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) says, "Amongst my brothers the best friend is one who points out my faults to me." And added, "There are limits to friendship and truthfulness. Those who don't recognise these limits, they don't realise the value of truthfulness. A true friend is one who: 1. Keeps the same attitude with you openly and in secret. 2. Who considers what is good for him as good for you, and what is bad for himself he considers bad for you. 3. If he acquires high station in society, does not change his behaviour towards you. 4. He doesn't deny you what he has control over. 5. He doesn't cold shoulder you if you are confronted with any worldly hardship."

It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam (S) that the most felicitous person is one who keeps the company of good persons. Prophet 'Isa (as) was once asked by his companions, "O Prophet of Allah (S)! What sort of person we should befriend?" He said, "Looking at whom you remember Allah! Their talk enhances your knowledge! Their deeds make you seek the rewards of the Hereafter!"

Amir'ul-Mu'mineen 'Ali (as) says, "One who sits in a place of ill-repute should not complain against persons pointing fingers at him!"

The Imam (as) said, "When a person keeps his own counsel, he keeps control over himself. If he reveals his matter to two persons, it becomes public property!"

He also said, "Think well of the actions of your brother *Mu'min* and whatever he utters accept

as the truth. Try to cultivate virtuous friends as far as possible. Such friends are the ornaments in good times and the shields during the times of hardship.”

“If you need to consult someone in difficult matters, seek the counsel of the God Fearing persons.”

“Keep friendship with your brothers to the extent that they are God Fearing.”

“Abstain from the company of women of ill-repute and maintain distance from women of good character too! Even if the women encourage you to do something good, abstain from it that you don't don't get embroiled in any evil deed.”

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) says, “A person who cannot give you benefit in your faith, never trust his friendship! Don't crave his company because an action that is not in the way of Allah its end is never good!”

It is narrated from the Prophet of Allah (S), “There are three types of persons whose friendship extinguishes the heart! Mean and timid persons. 2. Women. 3. Rich persons.

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) says, “There are four things that become useless and vanish: 1. Friendship with an unfaithful person. 2. Good turn done to an ungrateful person. 3. Advice and precept to persons who don't give a ear to such talk. 4. Secrets that are revealed to irresolute persons.”

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) says: The company of rich persons should be avoided. One who sits near them feels in the beginning that he has been endowed with every bounty, but with passage of time he starts thinking that he has received nothing.

The Prophet of Allah (S) has said, “Four things kill one's heart: 1. Sinning repeatedly. 2. Talking a lot with women. 3. Arguing with a foolish person. 4. Sitting near the dead.” The companions asked him, “O Prophet of Allah (S)! Who are the dead?” The Prophet (S) replied, “The dead are the rich persons who have become headstrong with possession of extreme wealth!”

The Prophet of Allah (S) said, “Feeding the *Mu'mins* is a very good deed. Always feed others that some of them might qualify as *Mu'mins* and become the cause of reward for you”

A person who feeds a hungry *Mu'min* Allah will satiate him with the fruits of the Heaven. Whoever gives a draught of water to a *Mu'min* Allah will provide him with sealed beverages in the Heaven. Whoever clothes a *Mu'min* will get raiment of silk and satin (*Hareer wa istabraq*) in the Heaven. As long as a thread of the garment given to a *Mu'min* remains, the angels keep praising the benefactor. Whoever helps a *Mu'min* in his time of need, Allah will give him a place in the shadow of the Firmament on the Day of Judgement. At that time others will be facing extreme heat in the Ground of Resurrection.

It is authentically narrated that Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) has said, “Three things elevate a

Mu'min: Greeting everyone. 2. Feeding people. 3. Praying at the time while others are lulled by sleep.”

Feeding The Muslim Brothers</h3>

The Prophet of Allah (S) said: Whoever feeds three Muslims, Allah will give him three meals in the Heaven! 1. The meal from Malakoot al Samawat in Jannat al Firdous. 2. The meal from Jannat al-Aden. 3. The meal from Tooba which is a tree in the Heaven. This tree has been planted by Allah in the Garden of Eden.

The acts that earn Allah's forgiveness include feeding of the hungry Muslims to their satiation.

Whoever quenches the thirst of a Muslim in a place where water is scarce, against every gulp of water seventy thousand good deeds will be entered in his account of deeds. He will get reward equal to freeing ten persons from the progeny of Prophet Ismail (as). When a guest enters a home, he sends away the sins of the inmates of the house.

At one place the Prophet (S) said, “When guests come, they come with many hopes and when they depart they go as a cause of your Deliverance.”

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) says, “Whoever entertains a rich person over a meal, he will get reward equal to saving a progeny of Prophet Ismail (as) from getting executed. One who feeds a poor Mu'min, his reward will be equal to saving a hundred persons from the progeny of Prophet Ismail (as).”

Feeding a Mu'min once is better than releasing ten slaves and performing Haj ten times.

The Prophet of Islam (S) has prohibited people from accepting invitation of the hypocrites.

The Prophet (S) said, “O Abu Dharr! Refrain from irrelevant talk. It is enough for you to talk as much as it is necessary!”

He added, “O Abu Dharr! It is sufficient to make a person a liar if he keeps repeating to persons what he has heard from others!” Remember, there is none more deserving of locking up than the tongue. While repeating any talk it is better to reveal the name of the person who originally talked about it. If the narrator is pious and truthful, he will get the reward. If it is a falsehood, the original narrator will get the punishment.

The Prophet (S) said: O Abu Dharr! Respect the following types of persons: 1. The persons who follow the precepts of the Holy Qur'an. 2. Respecting the just and kind ruler.

Jabir Jaufi narrates that Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (as) said, “O Jabir! For a person who claims to be a Shi'a, it is sufficient only to proclaim his love for us, the Ahl-ul-Bayt? By Allah! Our Shi'a is only the person who is afraid and obedient of Allah. Our Shi'as are recognised by their hospitable

natures and kind hearts, they are men of integrity and busy in the thoughts of Allah. They are regular at their prayers and fasting, they treat their parents well, they care for their neighbors, poor, needy and the orphans. They are truthful and regularly recite the Holy Qur'an. They keep their mouths shut about others except in the matters of *Amr bil maroof nahi an il munkar* (the matters of dos and don'ts according to *Shariah*), they are accepted as trustworthy in their family circles."

Jabir Jaufi said, "These days I don't find anyone fitting this description!" The Imam (as) replied, "O Jabir! Beware! Lest the different routes take you astray! People thought it sufficient to merely claim the love for Amir'ul-Mu'mineen 'Ali (as) and to express acceptance his *Wilaya* (Supremacy) without trying to be righteous and practicing the precepts of Islam.

Therefore, if a person says that he has love for the Prophet of Islam (as) who is better than Amir'ul-Mu'mineen 'Ali (as) and he does not follow the *seerat* (example) and the *Sunna* (the traditions) of the Prophet (S) then he will not get any benefit for his shallow expression of love for the Prophet (S). Therefore, have fear of Allah and participate in the good deeds prescribed by Him. Remember! There is no relationship between Allah and anyone else. The dearest person in the view of Allah is one who is pious and obedient to Him. O Jabir! Nearness of Allah is possible only for the person who is obedient to Him! We don't have any permit for exclusion from the Hellfire! Whosoever is obedient to Allah, he is from our friends. Whoever is sinning against Allah, he is our enemy. Our *Wilaya* reaches only those who are practicing piety and good deeds."

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) said, "Our Shi'a is one who guards against two things: One is the thing that lies between the two cheeks and the other that lies between the two loins."

The Prophet of Islam (S) said, "Two persons will have the shade of the Firmament over their heads when even the virtuous would fend only for themselves: The first is the one: who prays and laments in loneliness and the second is one who is in company of a young and strange damsel but is not attracted towards her."

Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (as) said, "A perfect *Mu'min* is one who has ten qualities: 1. People expect good from him. 2. The people are not afraid of any harm from him. 3. Who considers his own good deeds as trivial. 4. Who considers his small mistakes as big sins. 5. He considers others' small good deeds as big. 6. He considers others' big sins as trivial. 7. He keeps himself busy in acquiring knowledge throughout his life. 8. He considers a poor person better than the rich. 9. He is contented with the sustenance he gets. 10. He rates everyone he meets better than himself."

One companion asked Amir'ul-Mu'mineen 'Ali (as), "O Maula! Please describe a *Mu'min* to me!" The Imam (as) pointed towards the wall in front of them and said, "A *Mu'min* is one who can order the wall to turn to gold and it would turn to gold! "When the companion looked towards the wall, he found that it had turned to gold! He was astonished and asked, "O Maula! You didn't order the wall to turn to gold and had just told me as an example of the trait of a *Mu'min*. Even then

the wall turned to gold!” The Imam (as) replied, “This is the difference between a *Mu’min* and the *Amir al Mu’mineen!*”

Amir’ul-Mu’mineen ‘Ali (as) said that charity (*Sadaqa*) is a big form of piety. What your right hand gives as charity, your left should not know about!

The Prophet of Islam (S) has said, “O Abu Dharr! Don’t seek the company of anyone other than a *Mu’min*. Share your fare with a *Mu’min*. O Abu Dharr! Invite one to the meal who is a friend of Allah and he befriends you because of Allah! Abstain from the company of bad people lest they turn you bad. A good person too appears bad in the company of the evil!”

Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (as) said, “Four things are a waste: 1. Friendship of a disloyal person. 2. Doing a good turn to an ungrateful person. 3. Moralising an inattentive person. 4. Revealing one’s own secret to a foolish person.”

It is narrated that the Amir’ul-Mu’mineen (as) was coming out of the mosque one night. He went towards the wilderness of Najaf. He had gone some distance when he noticed some persons were coming behind him. When the persons came near him, he asked who they were. They said that they were his *Shi’as*. The Imam (as) looked cursorily at their faces and said, “I find that your foreheads are not those of my Shi’as!”

They asked, “O Amir’ul-Mu’mineen (as)! How are the foreheads of your Shi’as?” He replied, “Their faces are yellow. Their eyes look like the eyes of blind persons due to spending late nights in prayer. They have hunched backs because of excess of prayers and their tummies almost touch their backs because of excessive fasting. Their lips are parched because of excessive supplication and they give the appearance of persons in fear.”

Husayn bin Naam narrates that Imam Ja’far As-Sadiq (as) asked him if he loved a brother *Mu’min*? He affirmed that he did love *Mu’mins*. The Imam (as) asked did he ever share his meals with *Mu’mins*? He said that generally one or more guests are there to share his food. The Imam (as) said, “They are more generous to you in this act than you are in feeding them!” He asked, “How is it! It is I who shares the sumptuous fare with them?” The Imam (as) replied, “When they enter your threshold the sins of all the members of your family are pardoned. When they depart they take away all the sins of the inmates.”

The Prophet of Islam (S) said that repeating hearsay too is tantamount to lying.

Amir’ul-Mu’mineen ‘Ali (as) said, “If ever you repeat the hearsay, tell the name of the person who narrated the story to you. Then you will get rewarded if the matter is true and if it is a falsehood, the punishment will go to the one who told you the lie.”

The Prophet of Islam (S) said: O Abu Dharr! Respect the grey bearded Muslim. Respect those who

follow the precepts set by the Holy Qur'an. Respect the just ruler. All these acts are akin to showing respect to Allah. We are describing these as three *Yanabeeh* or streams in the following chapter.

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