Although this book is in the form of supplications, it also contains many Islamic teachings mentioned alongside the supplications. In this book, topics surrounding different issues are explained in the form of supplications such as, theology, ideology, anthropology, the Unseen world, angels, the Prophet's missions, the position of the Prophet (s) and the Ahl al-Bayt (a), Imamate, moral virtues and vices, honoring Eids, social and economic issues, historical points, different blessings of God, manners of supplication, recitation, Dhikr, prayer, worship, etc. The most famous supplication of Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah is Makarim al-Akhlaq.

Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah does not only contain supplications to God and stating one's needs before God; rather, it is a collection of Islamic sciences and teachings in which ideological, cultural, social, political and some natural rules and religious rulings are in the form of supplication.

Supplications of Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah have different names and many Islamic teachings are stated in them.. The most famous supplication of Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah is Makarim al-Akhlaq.

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Ethics and Moral Behavior

For citizens, as a general principle, morality and integrity are important characteristics to demonstrate. We instinctively know that it is good to be moral and act with integrity, but by coming to an understanding of the reasons for morality and integrity, we will be motivated to champion such behaviour. Among the reasons to be moral and integral, regardless of occupation are to:

- **Make society better.** When we help make society better, we are rewarded with also making better own lives and the lives of our families and friends. Without moral conduct, society would be a miserable place.

- **Treat everyone equally.** Equality is a cornerstone of most Western democracies, where all individuals are afforded the same rights. This is not possible without the majority of citizens behaving in a moral manner.

- **Lessen stress.** When we make immoral decisions, we tend to feel uncomfortable and concerned about our decision making. Making the right moral decision, or taking a principled perspective on an issue, reduces stress.

Ultimately, ethics is important not so that “we can understand” philosophically, but rather so we can “improve how we live” (Lafollette, 2007). By being moral, we enrich our lives and the lives of those around us. It is especially important to live a moral life when we are young, as it is helpful to exercise and practice these

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concepts before being confronted with more complex issues. Lafollette (2007) theorizes that ethics is like most everything else that we strive to be good at; it requires practice and effort. Practicing and making an effort to make moral decisions throughout life will pay dividends when we are faced with serious moral dilemmas. Furthermore, having insight into "…historical, political, economic, sociological and psychological insights…" (Lafollette, 2007, p.7) allows us, as decision makers, to make more informed decisions, which will likely result in moral decisions. In sum, the practice of being moral, allows us to work on these skills, so when we are faced with real situations that impact others, we are ready

Lafollette (2007) also emphasizes the need to understand and develop our virtues. Knowing that we ought to behave in a certain way, yet missing an opportunity to exercise moral behavior, is an indication of the need to "sharpen moral vision." For example we know that we ought to stay in good physical shape but often do not. This illustrates the need to be mindful of a virtue (in this case perseverance) that is important and must be developed. If, as people aspiring to become law enforcement officers, we develop the virtue of perseverance by staying in shape, we are more likely to hone that skill when we are working in law enforcement. We will be able to draw on that virtue when needed for even more serious situations, not only in law enforcement, but in other challenges that we may face in life. (1)

- **Religious Approach To Moral Behavior**

A longstanding debate has been whether ethics plays a role in religion. Most religions have an ethical component. Ethics, which is a major branch of philosophy, encompasses right conduct and good life. It is significantly broader than the common conception of analyzing right and wrong. Ethics deals with ideas such as Right, Good and Duty and these concepts were discussed in ancient Greece by Plato and Aristotle in the 3rd and 4th Century B.C.

A central aspect of ethics is "the good life", the life worth living or life that is simply satisfying, which is held by many philosophers to be more important than traditional moral codes. The ancient Greeks called it *eudaimonia* or happiness. The ancient Greeks believed happiness was brought about by living one's life in accordance with *virtue* – positive traits of character. Virtue in the highest sense, in an adult who has been brought up well, will not just involve good personal habits such as courage and temperance, but also friendship and justice and intellectual virtue. The essence of virtue is in the wholeness of the person brought about by *integrity*. (2)

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The relationship between religion and ethics is about the relationship between revelation and reason. Religion is based in some measure on the idea that God (or some deity) reveals insights about life and its true meaning. These insights are collected in texts (the Bible, the Torah, the Koran, etc.) and presented as “revelation.” Ethics, from a strictly humanistic perspective, is based on the tenets of reason: Anything that is not rationally verifiable cannot be considered justifiable.

From this perspective, ethical principles need not derive their authority from religious doctrine. Instead, these principles are upheld for their value in promoting independent and responsible individuals—people who are capable of making decisions that maximize their own well-being while respecting the well-being of others. (3)

As the context for any human interaction is examined, the importance of respect and recognition never lessens in importance. Consider a family, a tennis doubles team, a softball team, a football team, a work group. As a number of individuals seek to share a social experience or work toward a common goal, the respect and recognition will establish a firm foundation for those efforts.

Having identified what is probably the most important aspect of human interaction, next consider the various problems in contemporary economics. At the start of the 3rd millennium, corporate ethics and morality are often in the news, including executive misdeeds and their excessively expensive compensation packages. Some social columnists remark that there is a lack of morality and they have differing ideas on what that 'new' morality can be based on. Some look religious world view as setting the standard for human behavior.

Our behaviors must be portrayed within our communities, local and beyond. People who lie, cheat and steal are still very bad for the health of a community. However, people who take advantage of others to develop their own wealth are also very bad for the community.

We need a new basis for ethics and moral behavior. That basis must come from the knowledge that we are all part of a human society. The basis is not in ancient writings for an illiterate people.

The religious view teaches that God brought guidance to humanity. There are consequences from the belief in a life after death. The hope for a life after death leads to the perception that this life as a human being is like a 'one-night stand' - where the one-night experience is just a transient, perhaps meaningless, event within the bigger picture of life. The life after death expectation leads to the human existence

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having little meaning relative to a subsequent eternity as a spirit.

With this religious perspective, what is the guide for moral behavior? The reward for some is the afterlife. That results in a search for behavior that does not offend God. Some people try to live for the city of God not the city of Man - so the implication is their human culture is not as important as their perception of God's wishes. Unfortunately, for the many that doubt the God-dictator figure and the accompanying heaven/hell alternatives but are still burdened with the after-life belief, there is not a good guideline. (4)

- **Basic Principles in Islamic Morality**

The Islamic moral system stems from its primary creed of belief in One God as the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe. Islam considers the human race to be a part of God's creation, and as His subjects.

From an Islamic perspective, the purpose of human life is to worship God, by leading this worldly life in harmony with the Divine Will, and thereby achieve peace in this world, and everlasting success in the life of the hereafter. Muslims look to the Glorious Qur'an and the Traditions of the Prophet as their moral guides.

The Glorious Qur'an says:

"It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces Towards east or West; but it is righteousness- to believe in Allah and the Last Day, and the Angels, and the Book, and the Messengers; to spend of your substance, out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity; to fulfill the contracts which ye have made; and to be firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the Allah-fearing." [Al-Qur'an 2:177]

This verse underscores the Islamic belief that righteousness and piety is based, before all else on a true and sincere faith. The key to virtue and good conduct is a strong relation with God, who sees all, at all times and everywhere. He knows the secrets of the hearts and the intentions behind all actions. Therefore, Islam enjoins moral behavior in all circumstances; God is aware of each one when no one else is. It may be possible to deceive the world, but it's not possible to deceive the Creator.

The love and continuous awareness of God and the Day of Judgment enables man to be moral in conduct and sincere in intentions, with devotion and dedication.

The Glorious Qur'an also says:

Say: the things that my Lord hath indeed forbidden are: shameful deeds, whether open or secret; sins and trespasses against truth or reason; assigning of partners to

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Allah, for which He hath given no authority; and saying things about Allah of which ye have no knowledge. [Al-Qur'an 7:33]

It is interesting that the Qur'an refers to "sins and trespasses against truth or reason". It is an indication of God's blessing to every human being, of an innate moral sense. Such a moral sense, when uncorrupted by family or society, is what leads people to commendable acts of virtue. Islam aims to enhance and amplify the moral sense in every human being and adorn the individual's character with the noblest of virtues.

The Islamic moral principles therefore, appeal naturally to the human intellect, while elevating the pursuit of morality to the level of worship. This is because Islam holds every action that is done with the goal of attaining of God's pleasure to be worship.

The guiding principle for the behavior of a Muslim is what the Qur'an refers to as Al `Amal Assalih or virtuous deeds. This term covers all deeds, not just the outward acts of worship.

Some of the most primary character traits expected of a Muslim are piety, humility and a profound sense of accountability to God. A Muslim is expected to be humble before God and with other people. Islam also enjoins upon every Muslim to exercise control of their passions and desires.

Islam warns against vanity and excessive attachment to the ephemeral pleasures of this world. While it is easy to allow the material world to fill our hearts, Islam calls upon human beings to keep God in their hearts and to use the material world in moderation and in accordance with God's guidance. The Glorious Qur'an says:

"The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, but only he (will prosper) that brings to Allah a sound heart" [Al-Quran: 26:88-89]

Charity is one of the most commendable acts in Islam. In fact, Zakah, the annual charity that is obligatory on every Muslim who has accrued wealth above a certain level, is one of the pillars of Islam.

Gratitude in prosperity, patience in adversity, and the courage to uphold the truth, even when inconvenient to oneself, are just some of the qualities that every Muslim is encouraged to cultivate.

For an individual as well as a society, morality is one of the fundamental sources of strength, just as immorality is one of the main causes of decline. While respecting the rights of the individual within a broad Islamic framework, Islam is also concerned with the moral health of the society.

Thus, everything that leads to the welfare of the individual and the society is morally good in Islam, and whatever is harmful is morally bad.

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Given its importance to a healthy and just society, Islam supports morality and matters that lead to the enhancement of morality, and stands in the way of corruption and matters that lead to the spreading of corruption. The injunctions and prohibitions in Islam are to be seen in this light. (5)

- **An Outstanding Islamic/Religious Book, Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah**

The title Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah means simply 'The Book of al-Sajjad'. Al-Sajjad is one of the titles given to Zain al-Abidin (a.s.) and signifies 'the one who constantly prostrates himself in prayer'. The book is often called Al-Saheefat al-Kamelat al- al-ajjadiyah, that is, 'The "Perfect", or "Complete", Book of al-Sajjad'. According to its commentator Sayyid Alikhan Shirazi, the word kamila refers to the perfection of the style and content; some sources state that the adjective was added to differentiate it from another, incomplete version of the work, which is known among the Zaydis, but this seems less likely, given the manner in which the title is employed in the preface (verse 20). (6)

According to Shia tradition, Zain al-Abidin (a.s.) had collected his supplications and taught them to his children, especially Muhammad al- Baqir (a.s.) and Zeyd. In later times the text became widely disseminated among Shias of all persuasions. The specialists in the science of Hadith maintain that the text is Mutawatir (frequently narrated). (7) .

Nevertheless, the arrangement of the text allows us to draw a certain distinction between the fifty-four supplications which make the main body of the text and the additional supplications which make up the fourteen addenda (including the prayers for the days of the week) and the fifteen munajat or 'whispered prayers'. The original fifty-four supplications show an undeniable freshness and unity of theme and style, while the latter, especially the munajat, add a certain orderliness and self-conscious artistry which may suggest the hand of an editor. The addenda are said to have been collected and added to the text by Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Makki, known as al-Shaheed al-Awwal (the 'first martyr'), the famous author of Al-Lum'at al-Dimashqiyya in jurisprudence (fiqh) who was killed in Aleppo in 786/1384.(8) The fifteen munajat have been added to several modern editions of the Saheefa and seem to have been brought to the attention of the main body of Shias by Allama Muhammad Baqir Majlisi (d. 1110/1689-9 or a year later), author of the monumental compilation of Shia hadees, Bihar Al-Anwar. (9)

Many supplications have been handed down from Imam Zain al-Abidin (a.s.) in addition to those recorded in the text of the Saheefa as given here, and various scholars

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have collected these together in a series of works known as the 'second Saheefa' the 'third Saheefa' and so on. The second Saheefa which is about as long as the Saheefa itself, was compiled as the 'sister' of the Saheefa by Muhammad ibn al- Hasan al-Hurr al-'Amili (d. 1104/l692-3), author of the famous Wasa'il al-Shia in the year 1053/1643. (10)

- **Morality and Ethics In Al- Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah**

Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah, known as the Psalms of Islam and the Sister of Quran, is the oldest prayer manual in Islamic sources and one of the most seminal works of Islamic spirituality of the early period. It was composed by the Prophet's great grandson, Imam Ali ibn al- Husayn, known as Zain al-Abidin (the adornment of the worshippers), and has been cherished in Shia sources from earliest times.

The book contains 54 supplications (plus some addenda), which are known to be taught by Imam Zain al-Abidin (a.s.) to his children, especially Muhammad al- Baqir (a.s.) and Zeyd. Although Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah is known as a 'prayer manual', its contents are far from the conventional concept of prayer, as we know it today.

The supplications (or Du'as) of Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah contain numerous references to the fundamental concepts in Islamic ideology, spirituality and ethics, which make it one of the crucial resources in understanding Islamic thoughts. It is therefore, not only a book of prayer, but also a source of knowledge and morality in Islamic tradition.

It can be understood easily that the significance of Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah is that it can help to have a broader view of Islamic and Shia thoughts, and help to explore one of the fundamental Islamic concepts, morality; by reviewing some of the most important supplications in Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah.(11)

The following is the titles of the supplications in Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah: (12)

1.In Praise of God

2.Blessing upon Muhammad (s)

3.Archangels

4.Attesters to the Messengers

5.Himself and the People under his Guardianship

6.Morning and Evening

7.Worrisome Tasks

8.Blameworthy Acts

9.Yearning for Forgiveness

10.Seeking Asylum with God

11.Good Outcomes

12.Confession

13.Seeking Needs

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14.When Hostility was Shown

15.When Sick

16.Asking for Release from Sins

17.Against Satan

18.When Perils were Repelled

19.Asking for Rain During a Drought

20.Noble Moral Traits (Makarim al-Akhlaq)

21.In Sorrow

22.In Hardship

23.For Well-Being

24.For his Parents

25.For his Children

26.For his Neighbors and Friends

27.For the People of the Frontiers (Thugoor)

28.In Fleeing to God

29.When his Provision was Stinted

30.For Help in Repaying Debts

31.In Repentance

32.In the Night Prayer

33.In Asking for the Best

34.When Afflicted

35.In Satisfaction with the Decree

36.Upon Hearing Thunder

37.In Giving Thanks

38.In Asking Pardon

39.In Seeking Pardon and Mercy

40.When Death was Mentioned

41.In Asking for Covering and Protection

42.Upon Completing a Reading of the Qur'an

43.When he Looked at the New Crescent Moon

44.For the Coming of the Month of Ramadhan

45.In Bidding Farewell to the Month of Ramadhan

46.On the Eid of Fitr [Fast-Breaking] and on Friday

47.On the Day of 'Arafa

48.On the Eid of Qurban [Sacrifice] and on Friday

49.In Repelling Enemies

50.In Fear from God

51.Pleading and Abasement Before God

52.Imploring God

53.In Abasing himself Before God

54.For the Removal of Worries

As it can be seen, of 54 supplications in Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah, there are numerous ones which are directly related to ethics and moral behaviour such as: *Noble Moral Traits (*Makarim al-Akhlaq), *For his Parents,*

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For his Children, *For his Neighbors and Friends*; and *For the People of the Frontiers (Thugoor).*

- **Makarim al-Akhlaq, The most Famous Supplication In Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah**

The followings are just brief extracts of the 20th supplication *Noble Moral Traits (*Makarim al-Akhlaq, which is its most famous supplication: *(13)*

The 3rd part reads:

O God!
bless Muhammad and his Household,
spare me the concerns which distract me,
employ me in that about which Thou wilt ask me tomorrow,
and let me pass my days
in that for which Thou hast created me!
Free me from need,
expand Thy provision toward me,
and tempt me not with ingratitude!
Exalt me and afflict me not with pride!
Make me worship Thee
and corrupt not my worship with self-admiration!
Let good flow out from my hands upon the people
and efface it not by my making them feel obliged!
Give me the highest moral traits
and preserve me from vainglory!

And the 10th part reads:

O God!
bless Muhammad and his Household,
adorn me with the adornment of the righteous,
and clothe me in the ornaments of the god fearing, through
spreading justice, restraining rage,
quenching the flame of hate, bringing together the people of separation,
correcting discord,
spreading about good behaviour,
covering faults, mildness of temper,
lowering the wing,2
beauty of conduct, gravity of bearing,
agreeableness in comportment,
precedence in reaching excellence,
preferring bounteousness,
refraining from condemnation,
bestowing bounty on the undeserving,
speaking the truth, though it be painful,
making little of the good in my words and deeds,
though it be much,
and making much of the evil in my words and deeds,
though it be little!

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Perfect this for me through
lasting obedience,
holding fast to the community,
and rejecting
the people of innovation
and those who act in accordance with
original opinions!

Such trend can be seen directly and in directly in other supplications. A hadith is related concerning Imam Zayn al-'Abidin which is worth recounting because it is so completely in character with the Sahifa's emphasis upon God's mercy and forgiveness. One day he was told that Hasan al-Basri (d. 110/728), the famous ascetic, had said: `It is not strange if a person perishes as he perishes. It is only strange that a person is saved as he is saved.' The Imam replied, `But I say that it is not strange if a person is saved as he is saved; it is only strange that a person perishes as he perishes, given the scope of God's mercy.'

The supplicant who responds to the God of the Qur'an never forgets the wrath of God, but he remains confident that God's essential nature will show itself, in spite of his own weaknesses. Padwick was so struck with the devaluation of human sins that seems to result from this attitude that she displays a rare instance of Christian bias, objecting that it `leads to a certain moral shallowness in some forgiveness-seeking prayers' and is unable `to attribute any moral cost to God's forgiveness', alluding here and in the rest of the passage to the Christian doctrine of atonement. Among three examples of `moral shallowness' she cites the following lines from Imam Zayn al-'Abidin, found in Al-Sahifat al-khamisa:

My God my sins do not harm Thee and Thy pardon does not impoverish Thee.

Then forgive me what does not harm Thee and give me what Thou wilt not miss.

In order to understand the attitude expressed here, one needs to put it into its larger context.

The specific attitude expressed by the Imam corresponds precisely to the reality of God's infinite mercy and forgiveness as revealed in various Qur'anic verses.

Many passages from the Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah present the same point of view. Moreover, when the Imam says:

`Thou art the Generous Lord for whom the forgiveness of great sins is nothing great' (31.10), or

`Pardoning great sin is nothing great for Thee, overlooking enormous misdeeds is not difficult for Thee, putting up with indecent crimes does not trouble Thee' (12.13)

He is merely echoing the command of the Prophet mentioned above: *The worshiper*

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`should be firm and make his desire great, for what God gives is nothing great for Him.'

In any case, the context of these prayers shows that the accompanying moral attitude is hardly shallow, since it demands *`refraining from arrogance, pulling aside from persistence [in sin], and holding fast to praying forgiveness' (12.13).*

Moral shallowness could only follow if the worshiper remembered God's mercy and forgot His wrath, but both are always kept in view. (14)

- **Conclusion:**

Overall, the Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah exhibits a simple and direct spirituality that stands in contrast with the elaborate and esoteric imamology that is usually considered a hallmark of Shiite piety. While there are occasional references to the merits (*fażāel*) of the Imam (supplication nos. 46: lines 60-63) and condemnation of his enemies (nos. 48: lines 9-10), the Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah reflects a minimalist Shiite spirituality in which the significance of Imamate is acknowledged but not belabored.

Its style and contents are highly reminiscent of the Quran, and there are either direct or indirect references to the scripture of Islam in every *doā*. The constant remembrance of God (*Zekr Allāh*) and gratitude for his blessings, the humble seeking of every kind of mundane and spiritual need from God (nos. 7, 13, 15, 18, 19, 20, 22, 29, 30, 49, 50), the enumerating of the virtues of the prophets (no. 2) and angels (no. 3), and prayers for the believers and close relations (nos. 23-25) are its major themes. Also encountered frequently in the Sahifah Sajjadiyah are intense expressions of remorse for sins and admission of wrongdoings that are accompanied by imploring God for his pardon and forgiveness (nos. 12, 14, 16, 31, 38, 39).

As is the case with other Shiite prayer manuals, Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah is rarely read from cover to cover; rather, in practice certain *doās* are recited for specific occasions or read upon the relevant circumstances. One of the most frequently recited supplications is *Makārem al-akhlāq* (no. 20), a detailed and elegant piece concerning the cultivation of noble religio-ethical traits.

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The Karbala International Conference on Translation of Shiite Texts: A Short Report

Dr. Muhammad-Reza Fakhr-Rohani

Quite recently, on 16 and 17 December 2016, al- Abbas 's holy shrine in Karbala launched a two-day international symposium and a workshop on spotting and solving problems associated with translating Shiite texts (from mainly Arabic) into English for global audience. Interestingly, the language of this academic event was English.

As for the audience, a great majority of them came from Iraqi universities. Besides, there were guests from Egypt to Oman. From amongst Iranian academics, only the present writer was invited, plus Dr. Mardani, a high school teacher of philosophy from the Golestan Province, was also invited .

There was a British female academic, plus a UK-based Pakistani researcher; both of them were Shiites .

The papers read and discussed were mainly concerned with linguistic, mainly pragmatic, issues that typical Arab translators find difficult to tackle. Also of interest was that it proved necessary to develop the right bilingual translation dictionaries to facilitate the tasks of future translators in the field.

Given this academic event was planned and held by al- Abbas 's holy shrine, it is promising that such a movement has already been initiated, it is a blessed indication that in the future the shrine will shoulder greater, more global projects to represent the truly Shiite worldview and values .

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