Analysis of Structure of statements asking for Repentance In The Quranic Verses And Imam Sajjad's (A.S) Words In Sahifah Sajjadiyah

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Article acceptance date: Dec. 2016

Abstract

In this research, our goal is to explain lingual structure of repentance in the Quran and theological texts, in particular imam Sajjad's (A.S) word. The language of Quran and theological texts is the very method of divine messaging to the people which intends to explain a collection of beliefs, ethical codes and laws, which the Almighty God sent through His prophets and divine books for managing human's individual and social life; This language should be understandable for everyone. It is because of the fact that the Holy Quran is a guidance book for all human beings and prophets' only aim, which was commanded by God, was to guide

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human beings to salvation.

Key words

Sahifah Sajjadiyah, Lisan, repentance

Introduction:

Before discussing the language structure of the Holy Quran and Sahifah Sajjadiyah about repentance, it is essential to discuss the word "Lis
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n" [
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, which has two meanings: language the means to speak
[i]
or tongue a member of body and its power.
[ii]
Also it is literally defined as a movable organ inside mouth and the most important tool for speech. And also it is used to refer to the language spoken by a nation, for English.

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[iii]
Language is one of the mental abilities of human being's mind to communicate and convey messages. Speech is the vocal realization and a manifestation of this ability.

Application of the word "lisan" in Quran:

Ability to speak is one of the mysterious aspects of human being's existence, in a way that even when he is alone, thinking, he has this ability without producing a word.

So it is better to note that language is an ability of creating signs, a kind of special talent spread among all. But speech has a kind of individual aspect. Observation of Quranic applications of this word indicates that the word "Lisan" and its equivalents have been used in these meanings:

1- It is a fleshy organ in mouth. It helps human being to speak by its soft strings of muscles: " ***And a tongue and pair of lips"***
(the holy Quran; 90:9)

2- It means "language" which each a nation has: "***And we send all prophets to their nation by the language of their own nation*** " (the holy Quran; 14/ 4)

Or

"***We know that they will say just a human being teaches the Quran to him. The language of the person to whom they refer is not Arabic and the language of this word is clear Arabic*** (the holy Quran; 16/103).

And "***We made this Quran fluent for you (you can recite it fluently) in order to give glad tiding to the pious and to frighten the hard-headed by it*** ." (the holy Quran;19/ 97)

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3- In Quran, the third meaning used for the word "Lisan" is "speech" : "***And my brother Haroon is more eloquent. Send him with me in order to confirm me. I am afraid of their denial*** (the holy Quran;19/97).

Or the verse: ***"And make me Eloquent"*** (the holy Quran; 20: 27)

and "***David and Jesus cursed the people from the Bani Isreal who became infidel."*** (the holy Quran; 5: 78)

After clarifying the meanings of the word(s) "lisan", now it is proper to study the structure of language which God in Quran (which presents us a comprehensive program named religion) and Imam Sajjad (A.S) in Sahifah Sajjadiyah have used talking about repentance? In other word, one should observe that whether "The language of religion" is the same as "religious language"? Or they are different meaning-wise? Answering these questions, it should be said that some scholars believe that they are different. They say that "the language of religion" is the language by which the religion has been transferred to people; whereas "religious language" is something beyond that; This is the language by which one speaks about religion, its concepts or spiritual experiences. It also includes people's prays and supplications. According to this explanation, the quality of the language of praying and speaking to God should be noticed.

Lingual structure of Quran about repentance:

In holy Quran, "repentance" has been used in numerous situations. In holy Quran for many times, God has invited human being to repent. He discussed some issues including the concept of repentance, its position, the process of its fulfillment, its reasons, obstacles ahead of it, etc. in Quran. But the style of speaking in Quran is not similar to philosophers', mystics' and logicians'. In fact, the style of the language of Quran regarding repentance is the way of explanation which wise and ordinary people use in their communications. To convey His message, God has used the common lingual system, vocabularies and correct grammatical structures, which are common in people's daily conversations. It is because of the fact that the language of Quran is the language of (human's) nature which is manifested in ordinary language.

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As Quran is an eternal miracle for all people in all times, and all of its messages are to guide people aiming at assisting human beings to get to salvation, it used the language common among people to talk about repentance. It is because of the fact that God knows the best that, although people's language and regional and tribal culture have less in common, their natures have common unchangeable tendencies.

Quran addresses this very nature of people and its mission is to flourish natures. Due to this, its language is familiar to all human beings and its comprehension is easy for all. [iv] . Therefore, God states: "***O' believers! All of you repent to God***." (the holy Quran; 24:31). We know that going through right path (divine path) and doing good deeds is in nature of human beings. However, sometimes, some satanic elements deviate human beings from divine path, and encourage human beings to commit sins. This is called rebellion. In fact, rebellion is standing up against God obedience and freeing oneself from God's obedience. It is a type of an alteration in nature. It is originated from deviation first nature human beings are created with; the fact is any disobedience of God is neglecting the need of our soul. To repent, first human beings should have a real return to his pure nature; the very nature on which God has created all people.
"So, turn to monotheistic religion, which is in accordance with the nature on which God created human being. And there is no alteration in God's creation"
. (The holy Quran; 30:30).

Lingual structure of repentance from imam Sajjad's viewpoint:

After noticing God's high position and necessity of obeying Him and be afraid of the outcomes of sins and side effects of sins in our life while being hopeful about God's Kindness and Mercy, the spiritual feeling of asking God for repentance will form in human beings. In this situation, one should know how to speak to his God if he desires his prayer be accepted by God. The verse eight of sura Tahrim and other verses in which God universally invites all of His servants towards Himself, indicate that if a sinner returns towards his God in anyhow, He will accept him.

"***O' believers! Repent to your Lord purely. In this way, perhaps your Lord cover your sins and enter you in heavens under whose trees stream flow. All of these will happen in a day that your Lord would not make the prophet and his believers abject. Their lights are moving ahead of them. Their lights move by their sides. They say: O' Lord perfect our light and bless us. You are able to do everything."*** (the holy Quran; 66:8). "***So, ask your***

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lord's forgiveness and then, return to Him. My Lord is merciful and loving (about the servants who repent)
." (the holy Quran;11: 90).

Although God is awaiting His servants and is eager to give them great reward for their little effort of returning to Him, the repentance code necessitates that one uses "supplicatory" language when speaking to God as it is observed in Imam Sajjad's (A.S) prayers; this language has its own special characteristic and it is formed based on human's understanding of his inability, natural poverty and his intense need to Almighty God. This comprehension paves the way for receiving divine mercy. It is proved that all creatures including human beings are absolute need towards the Absolute rich.
[v]
This poverty is not something extrinsic and temporary. It is something, which exists in his nature. This issue has been stipulated and explained in holy Quran thoroughly. God states: "
O' people! You are in need of God and He is the only existence who is free from need and is glorified.
" (the holy Quran; 35:15).

It is obvious that repenting to God is a sort of prayer. It is a prayer which is done in order to wipe out sins. It causes the sinful servants turn into one who is blessed by God's Grace. In fact, the language of a sinful person is the language of prayer, even if he is not aware of this fact. In addition to this, when God created every creatures, He set a natural force in them. By the use of this natural force, the creature answers Lord's call. Like other creatures, human always answers this call. But because man is not able to have perfect understanding of God's essence and attributes, in his relation with Him, he has to negate imperfections from these attributes and then attribute them to God. To understand (divine issues), speaking to God and repenting, we have to use those limited concepts. These concepts do not convey the reality of divine attributes.

By explaining the fact that concepts which we use to speak to God are made by our limited and incomplete mind and cannot indicate the reality of God's essence and attributes, imam Baqir (A.S) stated: "
whatever (about God's Essence and Attributes) you have perceived by the help of your thought in their most correct meaning is a creature just like yourself which will be returned to you."
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In fact, it should be said that the language of prayer, repentance and speaking to God is not a set of signs that convey some concepts, but it is an explanation of the states of human beings; in the language of repentance the addressee (indeed) is Transcendent God, so the words are not important. In prayers of Sahifah Sajjadiyah, Imam Sajjad (A.S) has pointed to this fact many times. He introduced it as essential impact of God's Grace: "
O' my lord! And before offering their devotion to you, you have been controlling their affairs, you have prepared their reward, before they start obeying you. It is because of the fact that your (God's) manner is to forgive and expand grace."
[vii]

"O' my Lord! Praise belongs to you. You have hide many of my defects (from people) and you did not disgraced me (about people). You have covered many of my sins and not made me notorious. And you have not defamed me in public eye". ***[viii]***

It is important to mention that asking God for repentance orally and its verbalization are more effective. Therefore, the divine leaders of Islam recommended us to verbalize our needs, repent orally, and decide not to commit sins after repentance. Anyway, this type of speaking, "supplicatory" language, is special way of speaking between sinful servants and Forgiving God. Infallible imams (A.S), in general, and imam Sajjad (A.S), in particular, taught this form of praying to people in order to be able to attract God's Grace. Speaking with supplicatory language is an art, which attracts people's heart to God. God's Grace will result in giving one the opportunity of worshipping God with deep love. It also takes the obstacles away from the course of human's life. Therefore, a servant who committed many sins is also capable of being surrounded by God's Grace. And by hope of being blessed, he speaks with God by the use of supplicatory language. He would say: O' my Lord! You have forgiven many sinners. My sins are not more than theirs are, but they acted more fearless (towards God) and their sins were more
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This kind of repentance and confessing to sins will result in God's Grace. Thus, this sinner servant says: "This forgiveness and those sins show that your criteria, in forgiving, are not that I am worthy of your forgiveness, but it is because you are able to do anything. People expect you nothing but bounty and forgiveness. So, O' Bountiful God! I know that I do not deserve it, but your Great Grace gives this hope to me." There are many of these themes in infallibles' prayers which are handed down to us. Indeed, one would be surprised by the strong supplication of imams (A.S), particularly imam Sajjad (A.S). In fact, what is the secret of this repentance and supplication? They (imams) repented, whereas they did not have any sin and they had the highest level in the world. Maybe the secret of this matter is that they are indeed the people who pray and their prayer was a true one. Therefore, the language of such person is full of

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supplication, repentance and crying. When a person understands his poverty -it means that when he understands that in comparison with Absolutely Rich God, he does not have anything, which belongs to himself, and he has many defects, he becomes frightened. This fear results in tears. After that, the fear will go away and the supplication and repentance will be expanded. Therefore the innate characteristic of supplicatory language is repentance and crying. And it is concluded that a person who prays without repentance lacks prayer language. So, in this case, he just prays with his physical tongue: this person and his prayer are not sincere.

Imam Sajjad's and other imams' (A.S) prayers are full of continuous repentance, crying, confession to poverty and deficiencies, ignorance, inabilities and shortcomings. However no wise person allows himself to assume that those holy imams had sins or deficiency. Their levels are so high that even Loyal Gabriel cannot reach the world of their perfection and nearness to God. In a part of his prayer, imam Sajj ad (A.S) stated: "*this is the position of the one who has been played by sins and the harness of faults brought him forward and the one to whom Satan became dominated, so, because of negligence he did not perform your commands properly. And because he was deceived, he performed what you had forbidden"* ***[ix]***
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"O' Lord! I apologize you because of my ignorance and my bad behavior. [x]

"*O' Lord! I ask you (whatever I want) like the one who is in intense need and whose power is weakened and who has many sins. I ask you like the one who does not know anyone for fulfilling his needs, empowering him and forgiving his sins, but you"* . [xi]

"and just crying about you set me free (from your torture". [xii] Imam Sadiq (A.S) also stated: whenever God's servant prays to Him, He knows what the servant wants. But He likes it when the servant verbalizes his prayers and supplications. Therefore, whenever you pray, verbalize what you want. [xiii]

In this regard, infallible imam (A.S) stated:

"O' my Lord! If I do not deserve your Grace, You deserve to be generous." ***[xiv]*** *In book Bihar Al-Anw*

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a
r, the repentance with its special language, is mentioned: "O' Lord! I ask you forgiveness for an ashamed person (who is I)[and also true for the followings). And I ask you forgiveness for a hopeful person. And I ask you forgiveness for a returning person (towards you). And I ask you forgiveness for an enthusiastic person (towards you). And I ask you forgiveness for a frightened person (from your anger). And I ask you forgiveness for an obedient person. And I ask you forgiveness for a faithful person. And I ask you forgiveness for a person who acknowledges (his sins). And I ask you forgiveness for a devoted person. And I ask you forgiveness for an abject person (about you). And I ask you forgiveness for a pious person. And I ask you forgiveness for a person who trusts you. And I ask you forgiveness for a person who is abject (about you). And I ask you forgiveness for a person who performs good deeds and does not do bad deeds because of you, the person who escapes from you to you. Then, praise to Mohammad and his progeny."
[xv]

So, taking a look at the language used by imam Sajjad (A.S), we understand that for repentance and obtaining endless divine blessing, a sinner servant should ask Transcendent God for the opportunity of praying and speaking to Him. He should also ask God to bestow him purity of intention in his prayers. It is because of the fact that many of those who pray whom ask for the opportunity of repentance, are not true prayers. It means a person who does not pray from the depth of his hearth his prayer is not true prayer. And we know that untrue prayers would not be accepted. It is the reason of why many people's prayers are not accepted. Prophet (A.S) believed that this kind of pray is the prayer of negligent. Imam
Sa
diq (A.S) Also called it in the same way and stated that this type of prayer, does not deserve to be accepted;
"And know that the Almighty God would not accept prayer of a negligent heart.
"
[xvi]
Imam
Sa
diq (A.S) stated:
"indeed, God would not accept a prayer of a person who prays with a forgetful hearth. Therefore, whenever you call Him(pray to him), turn to Him with your heart. Then, be sure that it would be accepted."
[xvii]
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Finally, the sinner servant should know this: if he goes towards God one-step while have a good intention and pray God in true way, God moves towards him two steps. And if he goes towards Him slowly, He moves towards him quickly. In a narration from Almighty God, it is stated: *If the people who turns away from me, knew how much I am enthusiastic to see them return, they*

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would die of delight
. Thus, one should turn his face to God and tell Him: O' God! You yourself have called us and promised your forgiveness to us. You have told us: "
And your Lord stated: call me, I will answer you. Indeed, the people who disobeyed me will soon be brought to the Hell and they are abject at that time.
" (the holy Quran;40:60). "How could it be possible that God calls his servant and wants him to repent in order to be blessed, but He does not keep His promise?"
[xviii]
Undoubtedly, having such belief about transcendent God is not right. If He called us towards Himself and promised to include us in His blessing, surely He will keep His promise. At the time of praying and supplicating, we should verbalize this belief. We should say: O' God, we are sure that you will accept our repentance and forgive us. It is impossible for you not to keep your promise and also impossible to disappoint us from yourself and send us to the Hell because of your Wrath.

This fact is manifested in the leader of the pious ones, imam 'Ali's word: "*O' my Lord! Will you torture and burn faces which bow down about you? And will you torture the tongues which praise you, thank you and acknowledge your uniqueness truly? And will you torture the hearts which believe that you are God, or the sprits that have true gnosis of you and as a result they became humble about you? Or will you torture those body parts which go to the places for worshipping you enthusiastically? And will you torture these parts which ask your forgiveness by true belief? one can never has the idea that you burn such servants. And as we know that you are generous, we do not believe in torturing these servants*
(the servants who are described in this prayer)."
[xix]

("O' Lord of the universe! Amen! You have great grace and you are able to do everything." (the holy Quran; 66: 8))
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Conclusion:

1-the language of pray is a common language among human beings. It is rooted in nature (fitrah) and it can be the common pivot of human beings' unification. It also can be ground of talks between religions.

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2- The language of pray is something different from physical tongue. This tongue is a body part which verbalizes something about human's existence. So, in prayer language, no special rule of physical language is involved. But physical tongue can translate the language of prayer.

3- In true prayer, there is a special language. And if the person does not pray by making use of it, he does not pray truly and his prayer is not true prayer. Not only is not his prayer enjoyable, but also it does deserve of being accepted though God promised to accept true prayers.

4- Religious leaders' prayers, in particular Islam's religious leaders, specially mentioned prayers of imam Sajjad in Sahifah Sajjadiyah and analysis of their characteristics inform us of the (true) characteristics of prayer language. These characteristics pave the path for more familiarity with the truth of the language of pray.

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[xii] ibid

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