Sincere Love in Obedience and Divine Management: A Comprehensive Analysis of a Sacred Hadith

Introduction

The sacred utterance attributed to Allah (SWT) through Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) encapsulates the essence of divine interaction with a sincere believer. It highlights the immense spiritual value of pure intention and the pursuit of Allah's satisfaction, promising divine care and management in return.

The saying states:

رسول اللهۜ (صلي الله عليه و آله) : قال اللهۜ عزوجل : لا أطلع على قلب عبد فأعلم منه حب الإخلاص لطاعتي لوجهي وابتغاء مرضاتي إلا توليت تقويمه وسياسته

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: '**Allah said,** '**No sooner do I look into a servant's heart and find that he has sincere love for My sole obedience and he seeks My pleasure than I take charge of his plans and affairs**.'

— Bihar al-Anwar, v. 85, p. 136, no. 16

This sacred utterance reveals the core principles of genuine devotion and its transformative effect on a believer's life, explaining what it means to be sincere in obedience, to seek Allah's pleasure, and the benevolent consequences of such a state.

A related hadith from Man La Yahduruh al-Faqih further elaborates on this divine principle:

و قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و آله : قال الله جل جلاله أيما عبد أطاعني لم أكله إلى غيري و أيما عبد عصاني وكلته إلى نفسه ثم لم أبال في أي واد هلك .

Messenger of Allah (swt), peace and blessings be upon him and his family, said: Allah (swt), the Glorified and Exalted, said:

'**Whoever of My (swt) servants obeys Me (swt), I will not entrust him to anyone other than Myself (swt). And whoever disobeys Me (swt), I will leave him to himself, and I will not care in which valley he perishes**.'

— Man La Yahduruh al-Faqih (Vol. 4) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 175, Hadith #5869

I. The Meaning of Sincere Love in Obedience (Ikhlas fi al-Ta'ah)

"The love of sincerity to obey Me (SWT) for My (SWT) Face" signifies a state of complete purity in one's devotion and actions, free from any element of polytheism, showing off, or worldly aspirations. It means dedicating one's entire being and every action to Allah alone, rooted in a profound love and singular focus on Him.

In Islam, "sincere love in obedience" (Ikhlas fi al-Ta'ah) represents the purest form of devotion, where a believer's actions, intentions, and entire being are dedicated solely to Allah (SWT) out of profound love and a singular desire for His pleasure. This concept is foundational to true faith and spiritual elevation.

I.A. The Essence of Sincerity (Ikhlas)

Ikhlas, or sincerity, in the context of obedience to Allah, is described as the highest station of love and servitude to God. It means being entirely truthful and authentic in one's intentions and actions, ensuring they are free from any corruption or impurities that contradict faith and monotheism.

Key aspects of Ikhlas include:

Purity of Intention: Sincerity requires that all actions and decisions are made solely for the pleasure of Allah, without any ulterior motives, such as seeking human praise, recognition, or worldly gain. It is "without any showing off or reputation, and without any aspect of the world influencing one's actions." This guards against hidden polytheism, where one might subtly associate partners with Allah in their intentions.

Freedom from Polytheism: To be sincere to Allah means that one's faith and obedience are free from any form of hidden or apparent polytheism, and no partner is associated with Allah. If someone worships anything else or adores someone/something other than God Almighty, they are considered an unbeliever.

Devotion and Honesty: Ikhlas means truly meaning what one says, genuinely feeling for something with the heart, and being authentic. It signifies a heart and thoughts solely focused on Allah and the performance of duties towards Him.

Avoidance of Forbidden Acts: Sincerity also means to avoid all divinely forbidden things and actions, ensuring one's life aligns with Allah's commandments.

Purification for Religion: A sincere servant is purified for Allah's religion, desiring Allah in their supplications after having sincerely submitted to Him. The term "al-Mukhlasin" refers to those who are sincere in their religion and worship, free from impurities that contradict faith and monotheism, or those purified by Allah with guidance and faith.

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (peace be upon him), when explaining the Quranic verse, " **[He] who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed - and He is the Exalted in Might, the Forgiving**" (Quran 67:2), clarified that it does not mean deeds more numerous, but rather those more rightful in conduct, rooted in fear of God and sincerity of intention (niyyah). He further added:

بالسند المتصل إلى الشيخ الثقة الجليل محمد بن يعقوب عن علي بن إبراهيم، عن أبيه، عن القاسم بن محمد، عن المنقري، عن سفيان بن عيينة، عن أبي عبدالله عليه السلام في قول الله عز وجل: (ليبلوكم أيكم أحسن عملا.) قال: ليس يعني أكثر عملا ولكن أصوبكم عملا. وإنما الإصابة خشية الله والنية الصادقة والحسنة. ثم قال: الإبقاء على العمل حتى يخلص أشد من العمل. والعمل الخالص: الذي لا تريد أن يحمدك عليه أحد إلا الله عز وجل. والنية أفضل من العمل. ألا وإن النية هي العمل. - ثم تلا قوله عز وجل - (قل كل يعمل على شاكلته.) يعني على نيته

With my isnad reaching back to the venerable and trustworthy shaykh Muhammad ibn Ya’qub al-Kulayni (Q) from Ali ibn Ibrahim, from his father, from al-Qasim ibn Muhammad, from al-Minqari, from Sufyan ibn ‘Uyaynah, from Abu ‘Abd Allah (peace be upon him), who, explaining the utterance of God Almighty: That He might try you (to see) which of you is fairest in works. (Quran 67:2), said, “**It does not mean one of you whose deeds are more numerous but one who is more rightful in his conduct, and this rightness is nothing but the fear of God and sincerity of intention (niyyah) and fear**.” Then he (peace be upon him) added, “**To persevere in an action until it becomes sincere is more difficult than (performing) the action itself, and sincerity of action lies in this that you should not desire anyone to praise you for it except God Almighty, and intention supersedes action. Lo, verily, intention is action itself**.” Then he recited the Quranic verse, “**Say, everyone acts in accordance with his character** –shakilatihi- (Quran 17:84), adding, “That shakilah means niyyah.”

— "Forty Hadiths" by Ayatullah Sayyid Imam Ruhallah Musawi Khomeini

عن أبي عبد هللا)عليه السالم(: والنية أفضل من العمل، أال وإن النية هي العمل، ثم تال. قوله تعالى: قل .كل يعمل عل شاكلته, يعنى عل نيته

From Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him): **And intention is better than action, indeed intention is the action**. Then he recited Allah's words: "**Say: Everyone acts according to his manner**" [Quran 17:84], meaning according to his intention.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 1, Section 2, Chapter 6, Hadith 97

The honourable arif Khwajah Abd Allah al-Ansari (qs) defined Ikhlas as "purging action of all impurities," which include the desire to please oneself and other creatures. Shaykh al-Baha'i (ra) states that "Ikhlas means keeping action free from other-than-God having a role in it and that the performer of an action should not desire any reward for it in the world and the Hereafter."

I.B. The Reality of Obedience (Ta'ah)

Obedience to Allah, in this context, is not merely a set of ritualistic actions but a comprehensive submission to His will and commands, stemming from an internal state of love and devotion.

Elements of Ta'ah include:

Compliance with Divine Commands: Obedience means following Allah's commands and prohibitions in all aspects of life, accepting whatever comes from Him, whether creative or legislative.

Submission and Acceptance: It involves being pleased and content with Allah's judgment and accepting it submissively, demonstrating commitment to servitude.

Monotheism in Obedience: Monotheism in obedience means that the only object of obedience in essence is God. The necessity of obeying others, such as the Prophet, Imams, or parents, is something enjoined by Him and occurs by His will.

I.C. The Intertwined Nature of Sincere Love and Obedience

The Islamic teachings strongly emphasize that genuine love for Allah is intrinsically linked with obedience to Him. One cannot claim true love for Allah without demonstrating it through submission to His will.

Love as the Basis of Servitude: To be sincere to Allah in one's servitude means to truly base one's servitude on love for Allah. This is achieved by following the shari'ah, which is presented as the path of sincerity and love, embodying submission and drawing one closer to Allah.

Obedience as Proof of Love: Narrations explicitly state this connection: If your love was sincere, you would be obedient to Him. Surely the loving one is obedient to the one he loves. Similarly, Imam al-Hassan (peace be upon him) stated, "**if your love for God is sincere, you will obey Him. Certainly, the lover obeys the one he loves**." Abu 'Abdillah also affirmed, "**Is religion anything other than love? Verily Allah, the Mighty, the Great, says: Say: If you love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love**

you.'" This is further supported by the Quranic verse (3:31), which ties loving Allah directly to following teachings.

حدثنا أبي رضي الله عنه قال: حدثنا علي بن إبراهيم بن هاشم، عن أبيه،عن ابن أبي عمير، عن محمد بن حمران، عن سعيد بن يسار قال: قال لي أبوعبد الله عليه السلام: هل الدين إلا الحب؟ إن الله عز وجل يقول: قل إن كنتم تحبون الله فاتبعوني يحببكم الله ويغفر لكم ذنوبكم والله غفور رحيم

(The compiler of the book narrated) that his father - may God be pleased with him - narrated that Ali ibn Ibrahim ibn Hashim quoted on theauthority of his father, on the authority of Ibn Abi Umayr, on the authority of Muhammad ibn Himran, on the authority of Sa'id ibn Yasar who said: Imam Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) said to me: "**Is there anything in religion except love? Indeed, Allah, the Almighty, says: 'Say, if you love Allah, then follow me, and Allah will love you and forgive you your sins, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful**.'" (Surah Al-Imran, Quran 3:31)

— Al-KhiSal by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 2, Chapter 65, Hadith #1

عن أبي عبيدة زايد الحذاء، عن أبي جعفر)عليه السالم(ـ في حديث ـ أنه اقل له: اي زايد ويحك وهل الدين إال الحب؟ أال ترى إلى قوله:)قل إن كنتم تحبون هللا افتبعوني يحببكم هللا ويغفر لكم ذنوبكم(أوال ترى قول هللا لمحمد)صل هللا عليه .وآله(:)حبب إليكم االيمان وزينه في قلوبكم(واقل:)يحبون من هاجر إليهم(فقال: الدين هو الحب، والحب هو الدين

From Abu Ubaidah Ziyad Al-Hadha, from Abu Ja'far (peace be upon him) in a hadith that he said to him: O Ziyad, woe to you! Is religion anything but love? Do you not see His saying: "**Say, if you love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you and forgive you your sins**" [Quran 3:31]. Do you not see Allah's words to Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family): "**He has endeared to you the faith and has made it pleasing in your hearts**" [Quran 49:7], and He said: "**They love those who emigrated to them**" [Quran 59:9]. Then he said: Religion is love, and love is religion.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 16, Section 2, Chapter 15, Hadith 21265

حدثنا محمد بن موسى بن المتوكل (رحمه الله)، قال: حدثنا علي بن إبراهيم، عن أبيه إبراهيم بن هاشم، عن محمد بن أبي عمير، قال: حدثني من سمع أبا عبد الله الصادق (عليه السلام) يقول: ما أحب الله عز وجل من عصاه، ثم تمثل فقال: تعصي الاله وأنت تظهر حبه * * هذا محال في الفعال بديع لو كان حبك صادقا لاطعته * * إن المحب لمن يحب مطيع (2)

Muhammad b. Musa b. al-Mutawakkil (rh) narrated to us. He said: `Ali b. Ibrahim narrated to us from his father Ibrahim b. Hashim from Muhammad b. Abi `Umayr. He said: One who heard Aba `Abdillah al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) heard him saying: **One who disobeys Allah does not love him**. Then, he recited: **You disobey God yet you manifest your love for Him. This is impossible. Had you loved Him, you would have obeyed Him. Surely, the lover obeys the one he loves**.

— Al-Amali by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 74, Hadith #3

The Worship of Free Men: Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) categorized worshippers into three groups, with the highest being "Those who worship Allah out of love and affection for Him; this is the worship of free men." This highlights that sincere love is the noblest motivation for obedience.

الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): من أطاع رجلا في معصية فقد عبده

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) said, '**Worshippers are of three types: people who worship Allah, Mighty and Exalted, out of fear, and that is the worship of a slave; people who worship Allah, Blessed and most High, seeking to be rewarded thereof, and that is the worship of an employee; and people who worship Allah, Mighty and Exalted, out of love for Him, and that is the worship of free men and is the best type of worship**.'

— al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 84, no. 5

العباد ثلثة: قوم عبدوا الله خوفا فتلك عبادة العبيد، و قوم عبدوا الله طلب الثواب فتلك عبادة الأجراء، و قوم عبدوا الله حبا له فتلك عبادة الأحرار

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) said:

Worshippers fall into three groups:

Those who worship Allah for the fear of hell; this is the worship of slaves.

Those who worship Allah for his reward; this is the worship of mercenaries.

Those who worship Allah out of love and affection for Him; this is the worship of free men

— 1. Wasa il 'ush-Shi'a

5 - حدثنا محمد بن أحمد السناني المكتب، قال: حدثنا محمد بن هارون الصوفي، قال: حدثنا عبيد الله بن موسى الحبال الطبري، قال: حدثنا محمد بن الحسين الخشاب، قال: حدثنا محمد بن محصن، عن يونس بن ظبيان، قال: قال الصادق جعفر بن محمد (عليهما السلام): إن الناس يعبدون الله عزوجل على ثلاثة أوجه: فطبقة يعبدونه رغبة في ثوابه، فتلك عبادة الحرصاء وهو الطمع، وآخرون يعبدونه خوفا (4) من النار فتلك عبادة العبيد، وهي رهبة، ولكني أعبده حبا له عزوجل فتلك عبادة الكرام، وهو الامن، لقوله عزوجل: (وهم من فزع يومئذ ءامنون) (1)، ولقوله عز وجل: (قل إن كنتم تحبون الله فاتبعوني يحببكم الله ويغفر لكم ذنوبكم) (2) فمن أحب الله أحبه الله، ومن أحبه الله عزوجل كان من الآمنين (3).

Muhammad b. Ahmad al-Sinani al-Mukattib narrated to us. He said: Muhammad b. Harun al-Sufi narrated to us. He said: `Ubaydallah b. Musa al-Habbal al-Tabari narrated to us. He said: Muhammad b. al-Husayn al-Khashab narrated to us. He said:

Muhammad b. Muhsan narrated to us from Yunus b. Thibyan. He said: Al-Sadiq Ja`far b. Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: **Surely, the people worship Allah for three reasons. (1) One group worship Him out of desire for His reward – that is the worship of the possessive, and it is of greed. (2) Others who worship out of fear of the Fire – that is the worship of the slaves, and it is of fright. (3) But, I worship Him out of love for Him – that is the worship of the nobles, and it is of safety, as He says, "and they will be safe from the horror of that day" (27:89), and as He says, "Say: If you love Allah, then follow me; and Allah will love you and forgive your sins." (3:31) Whoever loves Allah, Allah will love him; and whoever Allah loves, he will be of the safe ones**.

— Al-Amali by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 10, Hadith #5

حدثنا أبي رضي الله عنه قال: حدثنا علي بن إبراهيم بن هاشم، عن أبيه،عن ابن أبي عمير، عن محمد بن حمران، عن سعيد بن يسار قال: قال لي أبوعبد الله عليه السلام: هل الدين إلا الحب؟ إن الله عز وجل يقول: قل إن كنتم تحبون الله فاتبعوني يحببكم الله ويغفر لكم ذنوبكم والله غفور رحيم

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— Al-KhiSal by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 2, Chapter 65, Hadith #1

Avoiding Disobedience: One cannot claim to love Allah while disobeying Him. Disobeying Allah while showing love for Him is considered impossible and strange.

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): من تلذذ بمعاصي الله أورثه الله ذلا

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: '**Whoever takes pleasure in committing acts of disobedience to Allah, Allah will bring disgrace down upon him**.'

— Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 8823

The Role of Fear and Love: One who obeys Allah will fear Him, and one who fears Him will love Him. Consequently, one who loves Him will follow His commands and be granted His paradise and pleasure.

Spiritual Perfection: Islam is based on pure love for Allah, which drives mankind towards human perfection and purifies hearts. This immense love from Allah makes human behavior immaculate, ensuring that a believer's actions and decisions align with His will and commandments.

In summary, sincere love in obedience (Ikhlas fi al-Ta'ah) means that a believer's entire spiritual life—their intentions, actions, and very devotion—is purified for Allah alone, fueled by a profound love for Him, and manifested through unwavering obedience to His commands. This state signifies the highest form of servitude and is essential for gaining divine love and success.

I.D. Characteristics of Sincere Obedience

1. Purity of Intention and Action

Sincere obedience transcends the mere outward performance of religious acts. It means that the act is free from any independent role for other than Allah. The intention must be directed to Allah alone, ensuring that personal desires and worldly ambitions do not become the purpose of worship. Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) defined worship as a good intention in obedience, stemming from the aspect through which Allah is obeyed and as He commanded.

سأل أاب عبد هللا)عليه السالم(: ما العبادة؟ فقال: حسن النية ابلطاعة من الوجه الذي يطاع هللا منه. وفي .حد آخر: اقل: حسن النية ابلطاعة من الوجه الذي أمر به

He asked Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him): What is worship? He said: **Good intention in obedience from the aspect through which Allah is obeyed. And in another definition: He said: Good intention in obedience from the aspect which He commanded**.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 1, Section 2, Chapter 6, Hadith 105

أبي - رحمه الله - قال: حدثنا سعد بن عبد الله: عن أحمد بن محمد، عن أبيه، عمن ذكره، عن خيثمة بن عبد الرحمن الجعفي قال: سأل عيسى بن عبد الله القمي أبا عبد الله عليه السلام وأنا حاضر فقال: ما العبادة؟ قال: حسن النية بالطاعة من الوجه الذي يطاع الله منه.

My father, may Allah grant him mercy, said: We were told by Sa’d bin Abdullah, from Ahmad bin Muhammed, from his father, from the one he mentioned, from Khaithama bin Abdul-Rahman al-Ju’fi, that he said: Isa bin Abdullah al-Qommi asked Abu Abdillah, peace be upon him, while I was present. He said: What is worship? He said: **A good intention of obedience from the aspect from which Allah is obeyed**.

— Ma ani al- Akhbar by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 259, Hadith #1

الإمام علي (عليه السلام) : الإخلاص ملاك العبادة

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: ‘**Sincerity is the criterion for worship**.’

— Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 859

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): من حسنت نيته ، زيد في رزقه

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: '**He who is sincere in his intention receives an increase in sustenance**.'

— Bihar al-Anwar, v. 103, p. 21, no. 18

اقل: إن هللا بكرمه وفضله يدخل العبد بصدق النية والسريرة الصالحة- في حديث- (عن أمير المؤمنين)عليهم السالم .الجنة

From Amir al-Muminin (peace be upon them) - in a hadith - he said: **Indeed Allah, through His generosity and grace, admits a servant into Paradise due to sincere intention and righteous inner thoughts. Recommendation Of Good Intention And Determination Upon It**

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 1, Section 2, Chapter 6, Hadith 117

2. Absence of Shirk and Ostentation (Riyaʾ)

Sincerity strictly excludes both shirk (associating another with Allah in worship or obedience) and riyaʾ (showing off).

Avoiding Shirk: Worship performed for people's attention, approval, popularity, or praise is not purely for God and becomes spiritually invalid or deficient. If one worships or obeys anything other than Allah, they are considered to have committed shirk, which can be of two types: shirk of worship (shirk ibada) and shirk of obedience (shirk tayat). Sincere devotion is due only to Allah, as stated in the Quran: "**Say: I am commanded that I should serve Allah, being sincere to Him in obedience**" (Surah Zumar Quran 39:11). The penetration of shirk in human actions is described as more subtle than the movement of an ant on a dark night on a black rock.

Avoiding Riyaʾ: An act of worship performed with ostentation, or with the expectation of praise from anyone other than God, is tantamount to shirk and is unlawful (haram), rendering the worship invalid. Sincerity means that the act is not performed to be seen, admired, or praised by others.

رسول الله (صلي الله عليه و آله): إن الله◌ لا يقبل عملا فيه مثقال ذرة من رياء

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: '**Verily Allah does not accept a deed that is performed with even an atom's weight of showing off in it**.'

— Tanbih al-Khawatir, v. 1, p. 187

اقل أبو عبد هللا)عليه السالم(: كل رايء شرك، إنه من عمل للناس كان ثوابه عىل الناس، ومن . عمل هلل كان ثوابه عىل هللا

Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) said: All showing off is polytheism. **Indeed whoever performs deeds for people, his reward is upon the people, and whoever performs deeds for Allah, his reward is upon Allah**.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 1, Section 2, Chapter 12, Hadith 157

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): اعلموا أن يسير الرياء شرك

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: '**Know that even the slightest showing off is tantamount to polytheism**.'

— Tuhaf al-'Uqul, no. 151

عن أبي جعفر)عليه السالم(اقل: سئل رسول هللا)صىل هللا عليه وآله وسلم(عن تفسير قول هللا عز وجل: فمن كان يرجو ومن عمل- إلى أن اقل- لقاء ربه فليعمل عمال صالحا وال يشرك بعبادة ربه أحدا فقال: من صىل مراءاة الناس فهو مشرك .عمال مما أمر هللا به مراءاة الناس فهو مشرك، وال يقبل هللا عمل مراء

From Abu Ja'far (peace be upon him) who said: **The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) was asked about the interpretation of Allah's words: "So whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous work and not associate anyone in the worship of his Lord" [Quran, 18:110], so he said: Whoever prays to show off to people is a polytheist - until he said - and whoever does any deed from what Allah has commanded to show off to people is a polytheist, and Allah does not accept the deed of one who shows off**.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 1, Section 2, Chapter 11, Hadith 150

بالسند المتصل إلى محمد بن يعقوب عن علي بن إبراهيم، عن أبيه، عن ابن أبي عمير، عن أبي المغرا عن يزيد بن خليفة قال: قال أبو عبدالله عليه السلام: كل رياء شرك. إنه من عمل للناس كان ثوابه على الناس، ومن عمل لله كان ثوابه على الله

Imam Jaffar Sadiq (peace be upon him): (On the authority of the above-mentioned narrators), Yazid ibn Khalifah reports from Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) that he said, "**Riya in any of its forms amounts to shirk, (polytheism); verily, one who works for the people, his reward lies with them, and one who works for God his reward lies with God**."

— "Forty Hadiths" by Ayatullah Sayyid Imam Ruhallah Musawi Khomeini

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): آفة العبادة الرياء (غرر الحكم: 3921)

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: '**The bane of worship is showing-off.**'

— Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 3921

3. Love as the Sole Motivation

Sincere love is not merely an emotional claim; it manifests in one's choices: a person loves what Allah loves and dislikes what Allah dislikes. Other forms of love are acceptable only when they are extensions of love for Allah.

Seeking Divine Pleasure: The phrase "for My Face" signifies seeking Allah's pleasure and nearness as the true aim of obedience. A sincere servant obeys Allah not for reputation, social acceptance, or personal advantage, but because Allah alone is worthy of worship and obedience. Imam as-Sadiq (peace be upon him) categorized worshippers into three groups, identifying those who worship Allah out of pure love and affection for Him as the "worship of free men," which is the highest form. True love for Allah is demonstrated through obedience; as a narration states, "If your love was sincere, you would be obedient to Him. Surely the loving one is obedient to the one he loves."

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): رضا الله◌ سبحانه مقرون بطاعته

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: '**Allah's pleasure is linked to His obedience**.'

— Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 5410

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): علامة رضا الله◌ سبحانه عن العبد ، رضاه بما قضى به سبحانه له وعليه

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: '**The sign of Allah's pleasure with His servant is the satisfaction found in the servant himself with all that Allah decrees, be it in his favour or not**.'

— Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 6344

4. The Inward Standard of the Heart

Complete sincerity requires the heart to be freed from dependence on other than Allah while performing any act. Sincere worship means the servant does not focus on the worshipper, the act, or the opinion of other people, but turns the heart toward God alone. This underscores the deeply personal and internal nature of sincerity.

رسول هللا)صل هللا عليه وآله وسلم(سئل: فيما النجاة غدا؟ فقال: إنما عن آابئه)عليهم السالم(أن ويخلع منه االيمان ونفسه يخدع لو ،النجاة في أن ال تخادع هللا فيخدعكم إفنه من يخادع هللا يخدعه يشعر. * قيل له فكيف يخادع هللا؟ اقل: يعمل بما أمره هللا ثم يريد به غيره، افتقوا هللا في الرايء، إفنه ،الشرك ابهلل، إن المرائي يدعى يوم القيامة أبربعة أسماء: اي كافر، اي افجر، اي غادر، اي خاسر، حبط عملك .وبطل أجرك، فال خالص لك اليوم، افلتمس أجرك ممن كنت تعمل له

Prohibition Of Intending Ostentation And Seeking Fame Through Ibadaah From his forefathers (peace be upon them) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) was asked: "In what lies salvation tomorrow?" He said: "**Indeed, salvation lies in not deceiving Allah lest He deceive you, for whoever deceives Allah, He will deceive him and strip faith from him, and he deceives himself if only he perceives**." He was asked: "How does one deceive Allah?" He said: "**By doing what Allah has commanded while intending other than Him. So fear Allah regarding showing off, for it is associating partners with Allah (shirk). Indeed, the show-off will be called on the Day of Resurrection by four names: O disbeliever, O immoral one, O betrayer, O loser. Your deeds have been nullified, and your reward has been invalidated. There is no salvation for you today, so seek your reward from the one for whom you used to work**."

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 1, Section 2, Chapter 11, Hadith 153

الإمام علي (عليه السلام) : الإخلاص عبادة المقربين

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: '**Sincerity is the worship of those brought near [to Allah].**'

— Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 667

في حديث اقل: اإلبقاء عىل العمل حتى يخلص أشد من العمل، والعمل الخالص الذي ال- (عن أبي عبد هللا)عليه السالم .تريد أن يحمدك عليه أحد إال هللا عز وجل

From Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) - in a hadith he said: **Maintaining sincerity in deeds is harder than the deed itself, and the sincere deed is that which you don't want anyone to praise you for except Allah, the Mighty and Majestic.**

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 1, Section 2, Chapter 8, Hadith 126

5. Intellectual Purity in Understanding God (Tawhid)

The concept of ikhlas also extends to the purity of one's belief in Allah. IkhlaS means considering God to be devoid of any limitations like a body or an accident, and it refers to the negation of attributes from God that are extra to His essence. This theological understanding of ikhlas relates to the correct profession of divine Unity (Tawhid), which involves negating any "Associationism" or attributing human-like qualities to the divine. The highest level of believing in God and achieving full ikhlas, according to Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him), is to deny Him attributes, meaning to purify the concept of God from any anthropomorphic or created characteristics.

I.E. The Significance and Attainment of Sincerity

IkhlaS fi al-Ṭaʿah is the complete purification of intention, love, and action. It involves obeying Allah with a heart free from polytheistic association, ostentation, self-glorification, and worldly purpose, while seeking only His pleasure. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) provided numerous aphorisms on the significance of sincerity, stating: "Pure intention is the ideal end and final aim," "Sincerity is righteousness," "Faith means purification of one's work," "Purity is the highest stage of faith," "All efforts are naught except that which has sincerity," "The fruit of knowledge is purity of action," "The acceptance and exaltation of deeds depends on sincerity," "If intentions are pure, actions acquire loftiness and exaltation," and "He who is sincere (in his work) shall realize his aspirations."

Sincerity is also crucial for the validity of actions; if one performs an act of worship for show or to gain fame, it is considered invalid. The shari'ah itself is the path of sincerity and love, leading to drawing closer to Allah. The term al-Mukhlasin refers to those who are sincere in their religion and worship, free from any impurities that contradict faith and monotheism, or those purified by Allah with guidance and faith. This station of sincerity is a necessary component of the station of sanctity (wilayah).

II. The Meaning of Seeking Allah's Pleasure (Ibtigha' Mardat Allah)

"Seeking My (SWT) Satisfaction" is intrinsically linked with sincere devotion and acts as the ultimate motivation behind all actions. It means striving to do what Allah has commanded, with the sole desire to attain His approval and contentment.

This encompasses:

Compliance with Divine Commands: Seeking Allah's pleasure means doing what Allah has ordered His servant to do. When a servant obeys Allah's command, Allah turns towards them with pleasure and mercy, just as a master is pleased when a servant complies with an order.

Pure Motivation in Deeds: When performing a good deed, seeking Allah's pleasure means that the doer's intention should not be contaminated with showiness or any other motivations that are not pure, but solely for the sake of Allah. This includes acts of charity, where one feeds others "for the Face of Allah," seeking no recompense or appreciation from people.

Sacrifice and Submission: The Quran describes individuals "who sell themselves to seek the pleasure of Allah," implying a willingness to sacrifice for Allah's sake. To "sell one's self" means to submit oneself entirely to the Will and Pleasure of Allah, working

in obedience to Him, and prioritizing His pleasure above one's own desires, exerting oneself in His path.

Preferring Allah's Pleasure over Desires: Allah (SWT) states that if a servant prefers His pleasure over their own desires in any worldly matter, He will take care of their affairs, place contentment in their soul, make their concern for the hereafter, and guarantee their sustenance. This indicates a deep trust and surrender to the divine will.

يا هشام من أراد الغنى بلامال ،وراحة القلب من الحسد،والسلامة في الدين، فليتضرع إلى الله عزوجل فى مسألته بأن يكمل عقله، فمن عقل قنع بما يكفيه، ومن قنع بما يكفيه استغنى، ومن لم يغنع بمايكفيه لم يدرک الغنى أبدا. (اصول الكافي ج1 ص18)

Imam Musa Kazim (peace be upon him): **Oh Hisham! The one who intends. to achieve self-sufficiency and needlessness short of wealth, and the comfort of heart from jealousy, and the security of religion, so he must humbly supplicate to Allah to complete and mature his mind and intellect, for, the one who becomes intellectual and witful gets contented upon what (sustenance) suffices him. And the one who gets contented upon what is sufficient for him becomes needless and self-sufficient.**

The one who does not get contented upon what suffices him can definitely and absolutely not reach the (state of) needlessness and self-sufficiency

— Usool e Kafi. Vol. 1, P 18

اقل: واقل النبي)صىل هللا عليه وآله(: من سألنا أعطيناه، ومن استغنى أغناه هللا.

He said: **And the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) said: Whoever asks us, we give him, and whoever seeks self-sufficiency, Allah will make him self-sufficient**.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 9, Section 8, Chapter 32, Hadith 12453

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): من وثق بأن ما قدر الله◌ له لن يفوته استراح قلبه

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: **'He who has confidence in the fact that whatever sustenance Allah has apportioned for him will definitely reach him has secured comfort for his heart**.'

— Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 8763

فأما حق الله الأكبر فإنك تعبده لا تشرك به شيئا، فإذا فعلت ذلك بإخلاص جعل لك على نفسه أن يكفيك أمر الدنيا والآخرة ويحفظ لك ما تحب منهما.

The greatest right of God against you is that you worship Him without associating anything with Him. When you do that with sincerity (ikhlas), He has made it binding upon Himself to give you sufficiency in the affair of this world and the next.

— Risalat al-Huquq by Imam Zayn al-ʿAbidin (peace be upon him), Book 1, Chapter 2, Hadith #1

حدثني أحمد بن محمد عن أبيه عن الحسن بن إسحاق عن علي بن مهزيار عن محمد بن أبي عمير و عن منصور بن يونس عن أبي حمزة الثمالي عن زين العابدين ع يقول إن الله عز و جل يقول عزتي و عظمتي و جلالي و بهائي و علوي و ارتفاع مكاني لا يؤثر عبد هواي على هواه إلا جعلت همه في آخرته و غناه في قلبه و كففت عليه صنيعته و ضمنت السماوات و الأرض رزقه و آتيه الدنيا و هي راغمة [أتته].

It is narrated that Imam Zainul Abideen (peace be upon him) said that **Allah, the Mighty and Sublime says, "(I swear) by My Honor, Greatness, Beauty, Strength and high-rank, one who gives preference to My pleasure over his desires I will fulfill the aim of his hereafter. I will make his heart self-sufficient, earth and heavens are guarantors of his sustenance and he will get worldly wealth even without desiring it**."

— Thawab al-Aʿmal wa ʿiqab al-Aʿmal by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Volume 1, Page 168

رأس طاعة هللا، ومن صبر ورضي عن هللا عن عيل بن الحسين)عليها السالم(اقل: الصبر والرضا عن هللا .فيما قضى عليه فيما أحب أو كره لم يقض هللا عز وجل له فيما أحب أو كره إال ما هو خير له

From Ali bin Al-Hussein (peace be upon them) who said: **Patience and contentment with Allah are the pinnacle of obedience to Allah, and whoever is patient and content with Allah in what He has decreed for him, whether he likes it or dislikes it, Allah Mighty and Majestic will not decree for him anything he likes or dislikes except what is better for him**.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 3, Section 3, Chapter 75, Hadith 3547

رأس طاعة هللا الرضا بما صنع هللا فيما :عن إسحاق بن عمار اقل: سمعت أاب عبد هللا)عليه السالم(يقول .رضي بما صنع هللا فيما أحب وفيما كره(إال وهو خير له) أحب العبد وفيما كره ولم يصنع هللا بعبد شيئا

From Ishaq ibn Ammar who said: I heard Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) saying: **The peak of obedience to Allah is being content with what Allah has decreed, in what the servant likes and in what he dislikes, and Allah has not decreed anything for a servant (who is content with what Allah has decreed in what he likes and what he dislikes) except that it is better for him**.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 3, Section 3, Chapter 75, Hadith 3559

عن أبي جعفر عليه السلام قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم: يقول الله عز وجل: وعزتي وجلالي وكبريائي ونوري وعلوي وارتفاع مكاني لا يؤثر عبد هواه على هواي إلا شتت عليه أمره، ولبست عليه دنياه، وشغلت قلبه بها، ولم آته منها إلا ما قدرت له، وعزتي وجلالي وعظمتي ونوري وعلوي وارتفاع مكاني لا يؤثر عبد هواي على هواه إلا استحفظته ملائكتي، وكفلت السماوات والأرضين رزقه، وكنت له من وراء تجارة كل تاجر، وأتته الدنيا وهي راغمة.

Narrated by Abu Ja‘far (peace be upon him), who said: **The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) said: Allah—Mighty and Majestic is He—says: "By My Might, My Majesty, My Grandeur, My Light, My Exaltedness, and the Loftiness of My Station: No servant prefers his own desire over Mine without Me scattering his affairs, confounding his worldly life, and preoccupying his heart with it—while granting him nothing of it beyond what I had already decreed for him. And by My Might, My Majesty, My Greatness, My Light, My Exaltedness, and the Loftiness of My Station: No servant prefers My desire over his own without Me commanding My angels to safeguard him, making the heavens and the earths responsible for his sustenance, standing behind him in every trade he undertakes, and causing the world to come to him—submissive and compelled.**"

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 11 Page 221

Source of Reward: Seeking Allah's pleasure is the only way to truly please God and earn reward, leading to being "well-pleased" and rewarded in the Hereafter. Allah is affectionate towards those who seek His pleasure.

II.A. Encompassing Aspects of Seeking Allah's Pleasure

Seeking Allah's pleasure is not limited to specific acts of worship but pervades all dimensions of a Muslim's life:

Purity of Intention and Absence of Ostentation: The most crucial aspect is ensuring that the intention behind any action is unblemished by showiness, false display, or a desire for recognition from others. The deed must be performed purely for Allah's sake.

Obedience to Divine Commands: This means actively doing what Allah has commanded His servants to do. This includes fulfilling religious obligations, following His guidance in all affairs, and avoiding acts of disobedience. Obedience to Allah, His Messengers, and the Masters of Command from the Progeny of Muhammad is a prerequisite for achieving His pleasure.

قال: أخبرني أبو القاسم جعفر بن محمد بن قولويه، عن محمد بن يعقوب الكليني، عن علي بن إبراهيم، عن أبيه، عن حماد بن عيسى، عن حريز، عن زرارة بن أعين، عن أبي جعفر محمد بن علي بن الحسين عليهم السلام قال: ذروة الأمر وسنامه، ومفتاحة، وباب الأشياء ورضا الرحمن تعالى: طاعة الإمام بعد معرفته، ثم قال: إن الله تعالى يقول: " من يطع الرسول فقد أطاع الله ومن تولى فما أرسلناك عليهم حفيظا " .

He said: "Abul Qasim Ja’far ibn Muhammad ibn Qawlawayh reported to me from Muhammad ibn Yaqoob al-Kulayni, from ‘Ali ibn Ibrahim, from his father, from Hammad ibn Isa from Huraiz, from Zurarah ibn A’ayan, who reported that: Abu Ja’far Muhammad ibn ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn (peace be upon them all) said: "**The most important matter, the best, the key, the entrance to all affairs and the pleasure of the Gracious Lord lie in obedience to the Imam after have recognized him**." Then he said: **Allah, Most High, says (in the Quran): "whoever obeys the messenger, has obeyed Allah. But, whoever turns away: ’We have not sent you (Muhammad) as a keeper over them**.’ (Al-Nisa, Quran 4: 80)"

— Al-Amali by Shaykh Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Mufid, Book 8, Chapter 4, Hadith #4

ـ علي بن إبراهيم عن أبيه عن حماد بن عيسى عن حريز عن زرارة عن ابي جعفر (عليه السلام) قال ذروة الامر وسنامه ومفتاحه وباب الاشياء ورضا الرحمن تبارك وتعالى الطاعة للامام بعد معرفته ثم قال إن الله تبارك وتعالى يقول من يطع الرسول فقد أطاع الله ومن تولى فما أرسلناك عليهم حفيظا.

Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated from his father from Hammad ibn ‘Isa from Hariz from Zurara from abu Ja’far (peace be upon him) who has said the following. “**The top most matter (in religion) the most noble, the key issue, the gateway to all affairs and the pleasure of the Most Beneficent , the Most Holy, the Most High, is obedience to the Imam after finding out who the Imam is.**” The Imam (peace be upon him) then said, “**Allah, the Most Holy, the Most High, has said, ‘One who obeys the Messenger has certainly obeyed God. You have not been sent to watch over those who turn away from you** (Quran 4:80)’”

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 1) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ya qub al-Kulayni, Book 4, Chapter 8, Hadith #1

Acceptance of Divine Decree (Rida bi al-Qada'): A significant aspect is being satisfied with Allah's decree and destiny. This involves trusting in Allah's plan, accepting His will even when circumstances are not as hoped, and refraining from anger or discontent with His decisions. As Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) was inspired, Allah's pleasure lies in His servant being pleased with what He has destined for them.

الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): من رضي القضاء أتى عليه القضاء وهو مأجور ومن سخط القضاء أتى عليه القضاء وأحبط الله أجره

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) said, **'The one who is satisfied with Allah's decree will experience His decree and be rewarded [on account of his satisfaction], whereas the one who is displeased with the decree, not only will he continue to experience the same decree, but Allah will do away with his reward too.**'

— Bihar al-Anwar, v. 71, p. 139, no. 26

الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): من لم يرض بما قسم الله◌ عزوجل ، اتهم الله◌ تعالى في قضائه

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) said, **'He who is dissatisfied with what Allah has apportioned him accuses Allah with regards to His decree**.'

— Bihar al-Anwar, v. 78, p. 202, no. 33

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): علامة رضا الله◌ سبحانه عن العبد ، رضاه بما قضى به سبحانه له وعليه

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: **'The sign of Allah's pleasure with His servant is the satisfaction found in the servant himself with all that Allah decrees, be it in his favour or not.**'

— Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 6344

Prioritizing Allah's Pleasure Over All Else: A sincere seeker of Allah's pleasure places His approval above the pleasure of other people and even their own soul's desires. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) stated that "Whoever seeks people's pleasure with what angers Allah... those who praised him among people will become his critics." Conversely, if one seeks Allah's pleasure despite people's displeasure, Allah will make them needless of people.

وبهذا االسناد اقل: اقل رسول هللا)صل هللا عليه وآله(: من طلب مرضاة الناس بما يسخط هللا عز وجل كان حامده من .الناس ذاما

With this chain of narration, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) said: **Whoever seeks people's pleasure with what angers Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, (will find that) those who praised him among people will become his critics.**

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 16, Section 2, Chapter 11, Hadith 21224

الإمام الحسين (عليه السلام): من طلب رضا الله◌ بسخط الناس كفاه الله◌ امور الناس ، ومن طلب رضا الناس بسخط الله◌، وكله الله◌ إلى الناس

Imam Hasan (peace be upon him): Imam al-Hasan (peace be upon him) said, '**He who seeks to please Allah at the expense of displeasing people, Allah suffices**

him in everything including his affairs with people. But the one who seeks to please people at the expense of Allah's displeasure, Allah relegates him to those very people.'

— Bihar al-Anwar, v. 71, p. 208, no. 17

من طلب رضا الناس بسخط الله وكله الله إلى الناس. (بحارالانوار ج78 ص118)

Imam Hussain(peace be upon him): **One who seeks the pleasure of people by displeasing Allah (SWT). Allah makes him over to the people**

— Bihar ul-Anwar Vol. 78. P 126

14 - حدثنا محمد بن موسى بن المتوكل (رحمه الله)، قال: حدثنا محمد بن أبي عبد الله الكوفي، عن موسى بن عمران النخعي، عن عمه الحسين بن يزيد، عن الحسن بن علي بن أبي حمزة، عن أبيه، عن يحيى بن أبي القاسم، عن الصادق جعفر ابن محمد، عن أبيه، عن جده (عليهم السلام)، قال: كتب رجل إلى الحسين بن علي (عليه السلام): يا سيدي، أخبرني بخير الدنيا والآخرة. فكتب إليه: بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، أما بعد فإنه من طلب رضا الله بسخط الناس كفاه الله أمور الناس، ومن طلب رضا الناس بسخط الله وكله الله إلى الناس، والسلام (4).

Muhammad b. Musa b. al-Mutawakkil (rh) narrated to us. He said: Muhammad b. Abi `Abdullah al-Kufi narrated to us from Musa b. `Imran al-Nakha`I from his uncle al-Husayn b. Yazid from al-Hasan b. `Ali b. Abi Hamza from his father from Yahya b. Abi'l Qasim from al-Sadiq Ja`far b. Muhammad from his father from his grandfather (peace be upon him). He said: A man wrote to al-Husayn b. `Ali (peace be upon him): "O my Master! Inform me of the best of this world and the Hereafter." So, he wrote to him: "**In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. As for what comes after: whoever seeks the pleasure of Allah despite the discontent of the people, Allah will suffice him in the affairs of the people. Whoever seeks the pleasure of the people despite the discontent of Allah, Allah will entrust him to the people. Peace.**"

— Al-Amali by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 36, Hadith #14

عن جابر، عن أبي جعفر)عليه السالم(اقل: اقل رسول هللا)صل هللا عليه وآله(: من طلب مرضاة الناس بما يسخط هللا عز وجل كان حامده من الناس ذاما، ومن آثر طاعة هللا عز وجل بما بغضب الناس كفاه هللا عز وجل عداوة كل عدو، وحسد .كل حاسد، وبغي كل ابغ، وكان هللا له انصرا وظهيرا

From Jabir, from Abu Jafar (peace be upon him) who said: **The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) said: Whoever seeks people's pleasure through what displeases Allah the Mighty and Majestic, those who praise him among people will become his critics, and whoever prefers obedience to Allah the Mighty and Majestic through what angers people, Allah the Mighty and Majestic will suffice him against the enmity of every enemy, the envy of every**

envier, and the transgression of every transgressor, and Allah will be his helper and supporter.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 16, Section 2, Chapter 11, Hadith 21221

ـ عدة من أصحابنا عن أحمد بن محمد بن خالد عن إسماعيل بن مهران عن سيف بن عميرة عن عمرو بن شمر عن جابر عن أبي جعفر (عليه السلام) قال قال رسول الله (صلى الله عليه وآله) من طلب مرضاة الناس بما يسخط الله كان حامده من الناس ذاما ومن آثر طاعة الله بغضب الناس كفاه الله عداوة كل عدو وحسد كل حاسد وبغي كل باغ وكان الله عز وجل له ناصرا وظهيرا.

A number of our people have narrated from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Khalid from Isma'il ibn Mehran from Sayf ibn 'Amirah from ' Amr ibn Shimr from Jabir from abu Ja'far (peace be upon him) who has said the following: "**The Messenger of Allah has said, 'Whoever seeks the pleasure of people with that which angers Allah, the people praising will belittle him. Whoever gives preference to Allah's obedience with that which angers people, Allah will suffice him against the animosity of every enemy, the envy of all enviers and the transgression of all transgressors. Allah, the Most Majestic, the Most Holy, will be his helper and supporter**.'"

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 2) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ya qub al-Kulayni, Book 1, Chapter 161, Hadith #2

Humility and Self-Submission: It entails the relinquishment of one's rights towards others, as humility is praiseworthy when the ultimate goal is to seek Allah's pleasure. It also means "selling one's self" in the path of Allah, which implies exerting oneself and submitting to His will and pleasure, working in obedience to Him.

Ethical and Moral Conduct: This includes a range of virtuous behaviors such as:

- **Kindness to Parents:** Ayatullah Sistani considers being kind to one's parents as the best means of attaining Allah's pleasure, involving humility, mercy, and prayers for them.
- **Speaking Justice:** Preferring the pleasure of the All-Powerful Lord necessitates speaking with words of justice in the presence of a tyrannical ruler.
- **Charity:** Giving the relative, the needy, and the traveler their due rights is seen as an act pleasing to Allah.
- **Positive Character Traits:** Not being angry, not begging people for anything, and wishing for others what one wishes for oneself.

Rejection of Unsanctioned Practices: Allah condemned those who invented monasticism (Rahabaniat) because they "did not observe it with right observance, and their intention was not solely to seek Allah's pleasure." This indicates that seeking Allah's pleasure must be within the bounds of His prescribed religion, not through self-invented practices.

Following the Imam (peace be upon him): A key to attaining Allah's pleasure is to follow the Imam (peace be upon him) in all affairs with complete obedience to the religion of Allah and to purify one's soul. The pleasure of Allah is intricately tied to the pleasure of the Household (Ahl al-Bayt) of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.a.h.p.).

II.B. Significance and Rewards of Seeking Allah's Pleasure

Seeking Allah's pleasure is of paramount importance due to its profound significance and numerous rewards:

Key to Divine Reward: It is the essential key to being rewarded in the hereafter, leading to a greater reward in the afterlife and helping one to live a righteous life.

Ultimate Goal and Happiness: It is the most important goal for a Muslim, leading to real happiness, fulfillment, and ultimate deliverance and success in the company of prophets and saints in Heaven. It is the culmination of prophethood, divine mission, Wilayah, and Imamate.

Source of Power and Guidance: Allah's pleasure is the ultimate source of unlimited power and freedom of action. Following Allah's pleasure and guidance leads to being guided to the right path, bringing one out of darkness into light by His grace.

Divine Affection and Sufficiency: Allah is affectionate with those servants who seek His pleasure. "**And of the people is he who sells himself, seeking means to the approval of Allah. And Allah is kind to [His] servants**." (Quran 2:207). If Allah is pleased with a person, He will grant all their wishes without reservation, and make them needless of people if they prioritize His pleasure.

رسول الله (صلي الله عليه و آله): إذا أراد الله أن يستجيب لعبد أذن له في الدعاء

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: '**When Allah wants to answer or respond to His servant, He allows him [through divine succour] to supplicate**.'

— Kanz al-'Ummal, no. 3156

اقل: وعن النبي)صل هللا عليه وآله(اقل: الدعاء مخ العبادة، وما من مؤمن يدعو هللا إال استجاب له، إما أن يعجل له في .الدنيا، أو يؤجل له في اآلخرة، وإما أن يكفر عنه من ذنوبه بقدر ما دعا، ما لم يدع بمأثم

He said: From the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) who said: **Supplication (dua) is the essence of worship (ibadaah), and no believer supplicates to Allah except that He responds to him - either by hastening it for him in this world, or delaying it for him in the hereafter, or by expiating his sins**

in proportion to what he supplicated for, as long as he does not supplicate for something sinful.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 2, Hadith 8615

وعن عيل)عليه السالم(: ما كان هللا ليفتح ابب الدعاء ويغلق عليه ابب اإلجابة.

From Ali (peace be upon him): **Allah would not open the door of supplication and close the door of response**.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 2, Hadith 8618

الإمام الصادق عليه‌السلام: جاء رجل إلى أمير المؤمنين عليه‌السلام فقال: إني دعوت الله◌ فلم أر الإجابة ! فقال: لقد وصفت الله◌ بغير صفاته ، و إن للدعاء أربع خصال: إخلاص السريرة ، و إحضار النية ، ومعرفة الوسيلة ، والإنصاف في المسألة ، فهل دعوت وأنت عارف بهذه الأربعة ؟ قال: لا ، قال: فاعرفهن

Imam Ali (peace be upon him): Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) said, '**A man came to the Commander of the Faithful and said, 'Verily I have supplicated to Allah, but I have not received an answer!', the Im?m (peace be upon him) said, 'You have described Allah in a manner that He is not worthy of being described, for verily supplication has four stages: sincerity of the heart, making the intention, having true knowledge of the means, and being fair regarding the request. So did you supplicate knowing these four conditions?' He said, 'No', then the Imam (peace be upon him) said, 'Then know them now'**.'

— Tanbih al-Khawatir, v. 1, p. 302

عن معاوية بن وهب، عن أبي عبدهللا)عليه السالم(اقل: من اعطي ثالاث لم يمنع ثالاث: من اعطي الدعاء اعطي االجابة ومن اعطي الشكر اعطي الزايدة، ومن اعطي التوكل اعطي الكفاية، ثم اقل: أتلوت كتاب هللا عز وجل)ومن يتوكل عىل هللا فهو .(حسبه(واقل:)لئن شكرتم الزيدنكم(واقل:)ادعوني أستجب لكم

From Muawiyah bin Wahb, from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him), he said: **Whoever is given three things will not be denied three things: Whoever is given supplication is given the response, whoever is given thankfulness is given increase, and whoever is given reliance [on Allah] is given sufficiency**. Then he said: **Have you not recited the Book of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic: "And whoever relies upon Allah, then He is sufficient for him" [Quran 65:3], and He said: "If you are grateful, I will surely increase you" [Quran 14:7], and He said: "Call upon Me, I will respond to you" [Quran 40:60]. Obligation Of Reliance On Allah And Delegation To Him**

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 15, Section 2, Chapter 11, Hadith 20308

عن حماد بن عيسى، عن أبي عبد هللا)عليه السالم(، اقل: سمعته يقول: ادع وال تقل: قد فرغ من ااألمر، افن الدعاء هو .(إن هللا يقول:)ادعوني أستجب لكم- إلى أن اقل- العبادة

From Hammad bin Isa, from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him), he said: I heard him saying: Supplicate and do not say: "**The matter has been decided," for supplication (dua) is worship (ibadaah) - then he said - Indeed Allah says: Call upon Me, I will respond to you** [Quran, 40:60].

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 6, Hadith 8640

12 - حدثنا الحسين بن أحمد بن إدريس (رضي الله عنه)، قال: حدثنا الحسين ابن إسحاق التاجر، عن علي بن مهزيار، عن فضالة بن أيوب، عن إسماعيل بن أبي زياد، عن أبي عبد الله الصادق (عليه السلام)، عن آبائه (عليهم السلام)، قال: قال رسول الله (صلى الله عليه وآله): من تمنى شيئا وهو لله عز وجل رضا لم يخرج من الدنيا حتى يعطاه (2).

Al-Husayn b. Ahmad b. Idris (ra) narrated to us. He said: Al-Husayn b. Ishaq al-Tajir narrated to us from `Ali b. Mahziyar from Fadala b. Ayyub from Isma`il b. Abi Ziyad from Abi `Abdillah al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) from his forefathers (peace be upon him). He said: **The Messenger of Allah (s) said: Whoever wishes for a thing whilst being pleased with Allah will not leave this world until he is granted it**.

— Al-Amali by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 85, Hadith #12

عن عيل)عليهم السالم(اقل: اقل: سمعته يقول: من تمنى شيئا وهو هلل رضا لم يخرج من الدنيا حتى يعطاه. رسول هللا)صلى هللا عليه وآله وسلم(

From Ali (peace be upon him) who said: **The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) said: Whoever wishes for something while it is pleasing to Allah, will not leave this world until he is given it**.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 1, Section 2, Chapter 6, Hadith 110

اقل: وعليكم ابلدعاء افن المسلمين لم يدركوا نجاح- في رسالة طويلة- (وابالسناد آالتي عن أبي عبد هللا)عليه السالم الحوائج عند ربهم أبفضل من الدعاء، والرغبة إليه، والتضرع إلى هللا والمسألة، افرغبوا فيما رغبكم هللا فيه، وأجيبوا هللا إلى .ما دعاكم لتفلحوا وتنجحوا من عذاب هللا

Through the forthcoming chain of narrators from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) - in a lengthy letter - he said: **You must persist in supplication, for indeed Muslims have not found anything better than supplication for fulfilling their needs with their Lord, along with having desire towards Him, humbling themselves before Allah, and asking of Him. So desire what Allah has made you desire, and respond to Allah in what He has called you to, so that you may succeed and be saved from Allah's punishment**.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 3, Hadith 8629

Superior to Worldly Desires: The pleasure of Allah is considered a great blessing, better and greater than the desires of this world's life, and is mentioned alongside gardens, pure wives, grace, forgiveness, and mercy in the Quran.

Nature of Allah's Pleasure: Allah's pleasure and displeasure are of a different nature than those found in humans. His pleasure is His reward, and His anger is His punishment; these attributes do not imply a change in His state but rather refer to the manifestation of His justice and mercy through consequences.

III. Allah Taking Charge of Rectification and Management (Taqwiyah wa Siyasah)

When Allah observes genuine sincerity and a profound desire for His pleasure in a servant's heart, He promises to "Take Charge of his rectification and his management." This divine intervention and guidance manifest in several ways:

Divine Guidance and Reform: Allah undertakes to reform and guide such a servant, ensuring their path is righteous. When Allah sees a servant who is sincere in their obedience and seeking His pleasure, He undertakes to reform and guide them.

Inward Protection and Illumination: Allah helps the servant "over himself," adorning their heart with lamps of guidance and preparing them for good works. He brings what is far close and makes difficult matters light, allowing the servant to perceive their true path, stay away from pitfalls, and hold onto the firmest part of the rope. This is part of the divine management that purifies the heart from deviation and frees the intellect from enslavement to anything other than Allah, preserving human dignity.

Guarantee of Sustenance and Contentment: For a servant who prefers Allah's pleasure over their desires, Allah guarantees their sustenance through the heavens and earth, and is behind their trade more than any trader. Furthermore, Allah places contentment in their soul.

Intervention in the Heart: Allah is described as intervening "between a person and his heart." This means Allah is closer to a person than they might imagine, aware of their thoughts and intentions. He prevents the servant from being deceived by false ideas or ideologies, making them realize the difference between falsehood and truth. This divine intervention is a core aspect of His rectification and governance.

Becoming a Source of Guidance: Through divine management, the sincere servant becomes "of the keys to the doors of guidance and of the locks of the doors of

perdition," becoming a treasure trove of His religion and a peg of His earth. Their certainty becomes like the light of the sun, reflecting the profound transformation brought about by Allah's direct supervision.

Entrusting Affairs to Allah: When a servant entrusts their affairs to Allah, acknowledging His awareness and wisdom, Allah takes care of the situation. This act of surrender and reliance is met with Allah's direct management and care.

III.A. The Nature of a Sincere Servant

A sincere servant of Allah is characterized by an unwavering devotion, free from any ulterior motives, showiness, or worldly influences in their faith and actions. Sincerity entails being purified for Allah's Religion, having one's motivations based purely on love for Allah, and cutting off attachments to anything that might detract from this pure intention. Such a servant strives to follow the shari'ah, performing obligatory and recommended actions while avoiding forbidden and even non-recommended permissible acts, all to demonstrate their profound devotion. They are not among those who ascribe false claims to Allah.

عن أبي عبيدة الحذاء، عن أبي عبدهللا)عليه السالم(اقل: من أحب هلل وأبغض هلل وأعطى هلل فهو ممن كمل ايمانه .

From Abu Ubaidah Al-Hadha, from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) who said: **Whoever loves for Allah, hates for Allah, and gives for Allah is among those whose faith is complete**.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 16, Section 2, Chapter 15, Hadith 21249

وبهذا الإسناد قال: قال رسول الله صلى اللهعليه وآله: الإيمان إقرار باللسان، ومعرفة بالقلب، وعمل بالأركان.

God’s Prophet (S) said, “**Faith consists of verbal expression, whole-hearted acceptance and acting accordingly**.”

— Uyun akhbar al-Rida (Vol. 2) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 1, Hadith #17

عن سعيد االعرج، عن أبي عبدهللا)عليه السالم(اقل: من أوثق عرى االيمان أن تحب في هللا، وتبغض في هللا، وتعطي في هللا، وتمنع في هللا.

From Saeed Al-A'raj, from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) who said: **Among the strongest bonds of faith is that you love for Allah, hate for Allah, give for Allah, and withhold for Allah**.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 16, Section 2, Chapter 15, Hadith 21250

والإيمان اداء الفرائض واجتناب المحارم. والإمان هو معرفة بالقلب وإقرار باللسان وعمل بالأركان. (تحف العقول ص442)

Imam Ali Raza (peace be upon him): **And faith means performing and discharging the obligatory duties and avoiding the committing of forbidden acts and faith, is the recognition and knowing (Allah) through the heart and admitting and confessing through the tongue and practicing through the parts of body (Physically)**

— Tuhaf al-Uqul P422

The Prophet (S) said, "A servant's faith in Allah is not complete until he has five attributes in him: complete reliance upon Allah, entrusting [his affairs] to Allah, submission to Allah's will, contentment with Allah's decree, and patience in Allah's tribulations. Certainly one who loves for the sake of Allah, hates for the sake of Allah, gives for the sake of Allah, and withholds for the sake of Allah has in fact completed faith."

رسول الله (صلي الله عليه و آله) : لا يكمل عبد الإيمان بالله حتى يكون فيه خمس خصال : التوكل على الله ، و التفويض إلى الله ، و التسليم لأمر الله ، و الرضا بقضاء الله ، و الصبر على بلاء الله . إنه من أحب في الله ، و أبغض في الله ، و أعطى لله ، و منع لله ، فقد استكمل الإيمان

The Prophet (S) said, "**A servant does not perfect his faith in God until he possesses five qualities: reliance upon God, entrusting one's affairs to God, submission to God's command, contentment with God's decree, and patience in the face of God's trials. Indeed, whoever loves for the sake of God, hates for the sake of God, gives for the sake of God, and withholds for the sake of God, has perfected his faith**."

— Mizan al-Hikma, volume: 1, page: 426

Such servants are not among those who ascribe false claims to Allah, nor are they easily deceived by Satan. Sincerity is considered the goal and fruit of worship, the attribute of the most excellent people, and the highest form of success.

III.B. Forms of Divine Intervention and Management

1. Inner Illumination and Understanding

Allah guides His servant by sending a "light to their hearing and sight," making them more careful and aware. When Allah intends to guide a servant, He "opens the hearing of their heart," enabling them to discern good from evil. He then "Throws a Word in their heart," which consolidates their affairs and serves as a continuous

source of guidance. This divine intervention grants the servant "understanding in the religion," asceticism in worldly matters, and insight into their own faults, thus leading them towards spiritual growth and self-awareness. Furthermore, Allah "illuminates wisdom" and "purifies one's religion," shaping the servant's inner self with fear and hope, making their hearts containers of thanksgiving, and safeguarding them from inattentiveness and languor.

2. Protection and Inclination to Obedience

If Allah desires good for a servant, "He creates a barrier between the servant and what is disliked by Allah, and harmonizes the servant to His obedience." This includes intervening to prevent a servant from engaging in disobedience. Allah acts as a protector, a haven, and a supporter for those who seek His recourse and trust in Him. He protects the servant from worldly matters, akin to how a physician protects a patient, preventing them from becoming overly attached to the world and its desires.

عن أبي عبد الله (ع) قال: إن الله يذود المؤمن عما يكره مما يشتهي كما يذود الرجل البعير عن إبله ليس منها.

It has been narrated that Abu 'Abd Allah (peace be upon him) said: **Allah keeps a believer away from what He dislikes even if he (the believer) longs for it, just as a man keeps a camel away from a flock it does not belong to**.

— Kitab al-Muʾmin by Husayn b. Saʿid al-Ahwazi, Book 1, Chapter 1, Hadith #25

رسول الله (صلي الله عليه و آله) : الإيمان في عشرة : المعرفة ، والطاعة ، والعلم ، والعمل ، والورع ، والاجتهاد ، والصبر ، واليقين ، والرضا ، والتسليم ، فأيها فقد صاحبه بطل نظامه

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: ‘**Faith is in ten things: inner knowledge, obedience, knowledge, action, piety, striving, patience, conviction, contentedness and submission. And if the individual lacks any one of them, it nullifies the whole structure of his faith**.’

— Bihar al-Anwar, v. 69, p. 175, no. 28

عن سفيان بن السمط اقل: اقل أبو عبدهللا)عليه السالم(: إذا أراد هللا عز وجل بعبد خيرا أفذنب ذنبا أتبعه بنقمة ويذكره االستغفار، وإذا أراد هللا عز وجل بعبد شرا أفذنب ذنبا أتبعه بنعمة فينسيه االستغفار ويتمادى به، وهو قول هللا عز .وجل)سنستدرجهم من حيث ال يعلمون(ابلنعم عند المعاصي

From Sufyan bin al-Simt who said: Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) said: **When Allah, Mighty and Majestic, wants good for a servant who commits a sin, He follows it with a hardship and reminds him to seek forgiveness. And when Allah, Mighty and Majestic, wants evil for a servant who commits a sin, He follows it with a blessing which makes him forget to seek forgiveness and**

persists in it. This is the meaning of Allah's words "We will gradually lead them to destruction from where they do not know" [Quran 7:182] through blessings at times of disobedience.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 16, Section 1, Chapter 85, Hadith 21000

عن سفيان بن السمط اقل: اقل أبو عبدهللا)عليه السالم(: إن هللا إذا أراد بعبد خيرا أفذنب ذنبا أتبعه بنقمة ويذكره .االستغفار

From Sufyan ibn al-Simt who said: Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) said: **When Allah intends good for a servant who commits a sin, He follows it with a punishment and reminds him to seek forgiveness**.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 16, Section 1, Chapter 90, Hadith 21040

ـ علي بن إبراهيم عن أبيه عن ابن أبي عمير عن السري بن خالد عن أبي عبد الله (عليه السلام) قال إذا أراد الله عز وجل بعبد خيرا عجل له عقوبته في الدنيا وإذا أراد بعبد سوءا أمسك عليه ذنوبه حتى يوافي بها يوم القيامة.

Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated from his father from Ibn Abi ‘Umayr from al-Sariy ibn Khalid from Abu ‘Abdillah (peace be upon him) who has said the following: “**When Allah, the Most Majestic, the Most Holy, wants good for a servant He hastens his punishment in this world. When He wants evil for a servant He preserves his sins for him to find their consequences on the Day of Judgment.**”

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 2) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ya qub al-Kulayni, Book 1, Chapter 196, Hadith #5

3. Trials and Afflictions

Allah "tends to His believing servant with trials just as an absent person tends to his family with gifts." These afflictions and restrictions in livelihood serve a purpose: to prevent the servant from inclining too much towards worldly desires, thereby purifying them and strengthening their faith.

4. Dealing with Sins and Repentance

Allah deals with a servant's sins in a way that promotes rectification. If He desires good for a servant, He makes their sins apparent and heavy upon them, often following a sin with a punishment that prompts them to seek forgiveness. Conversely, if Allah is displeased with a servant, He might cause them to forget their sins or follow a sin with a favor, which unfortunately leads them to continue sinning without repentance. For those who sincerely repent, Allah loves them and covers their sins by causing the recording angels to forget them and inspiring their body parts and the earth to hide their transgressions.

5. Sufficiency and Support

Allah satisfies those servants who trust in Him. He is their protector, haven, and supporter. It is stated that "if Allah helps a servant, then there is none that can overcome them." Furthermore, "Whoever excels in what is between him and Allah, Allah will suffice him in what is between him and people." This means Allah provides all necessary support and makes the servant independent of people's help.

6. Rectification of Affairs

A fundamental aspect of Allah's management is the rectification of a servant's affairs. "Whoever rectifies his private affairs, Allah will rectify his public affairs. Whoever works for his religion, Allah will take care of his worldly affairs." By maintaining good relations with Allah, a servant receives divine blessings in their worldly associations. Allah undertakes to reform what has been corrupted in their hearts and guides them in the right direction, for the hearts are in His hands.

III.C. The State and Characteristics of the Guided Servant

As a result of this divine guidance, the sincere servant undergoes a profound transformation:

- They become more mindful and cautious in their actions.
- "The lamps of guidance illuminate in his heart," prompting them to prepare good works for the hereafter.
- They find ease in difficult matters, perceiving their path clearly and staying away from its traps.
- They divest themselves of desires and worldly concerns, focusing on a single, paramount concern.
- They are no longer described by blindness or as people of desires; instead, they become "keys to the doors of guidance and locks of the doors of perdition."
- Their certainty becomes "like the light of the sun."
- When they speak, they act upon their words, and when in charge, they are just.
- They are delighted when they do good, and when they do evil, they repent.
- Ultimately, such a servant, having made themselves sincere for God, is "extracted" by Him to become "of the treasure troves of His religion and of the pegs of His earth."

III.D. Complete Reliance (Tawakkul)

Reliance on Allah is a cornerstone of sincerity and complete faith. The five attributes mentioned for a servant's complete faith—complete reliance upon Allah, entrusting affairs to Him, submission to His will, contentment with His decree, and patience in His tribulations—highlight this aspect.

A sincere servant:

Establishes Servitude for Allah Alone: By not asking anything from creation, they demonstrate their servitude is solely for Allah.

سلوا الله كل شيء حتى الشسع، فإن الله إن لم ييسره لم يتيسر

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: **Ask God for everything, even a shoelace; for should He not wish success, to nothing will you have access**

— Nahj Al-Fasahah

و قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و آله : «إن الله تبارك و تعالى أحب شيئا لنفسه و أبغضه لخلقه أبغض عز و جل لخلقه المسألة و أحب لنفسه أن يسأل و ليس شيء أحب إليه من أن يسأل فلا يستحيي أحدكم أن يسأل الله عز و جل من فضله و لو شسع نعل ».

The Messenger of Allah (swt) (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) said: Indeed, Allah (swt), the Blessed and Exalted, loves something for Himself and dislikes it for His creation. He dislikes for His creation the act of asking [from others] but loves for Himself to be asked. There is nothing dearer to Him than being asked. So, let none of you feel shy to ask Allah (swt), the Mighty and Glorious, for His bounty, even if it is [as small as] the strap of a sandal.

— Man La Yahduruh al-Faqih (Vol. 2) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 20, Hadith #28

عن إبراهيم بن عثمان، عن أبي عبد هللا)عليه السالم(اقل: اقل رسول هللا)صل هللا عليه وآله(: إن هللا أحب شيئا لنفسه وأبغضه لخلقه، أبغض لخلقه المسألة، وأحب لنفسه أن يسأل، وليس شئ أحب إلى هللا عز وجل من أن يسأل، فال .يستحيي أحدكم أن يسأل هللا من فضله ولو شسع نعل

Ibrahim bin Uthman narrated from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) who said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) said: **Allah loves something for Himself and dislikes it for His creation. He dislikes asking for His creation, but loves it for Himself to be asked. There is nothing more beloved to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, than to be asked. So none of you should be shy to ask Allah from His bounty, even if it is for a shoelace**.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 4, Hadith 8633

Content with Allah's Provision: When they find something, they are pleased, signifying their contentment with Allah.

الإمام الباقر (أ) و الإمام الصادق ’: من قنع بما رزقه الله◌ فهو من أغنى الناس

Imam al-Baqir and Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) said, ‘**He who is content with whatever sustenance Allah has provided him is the richest of people**.’

— al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 139, no. 9

عن أبي حمزة أو أبي عبدهللا)عليهما السالم(اقل: من قنع بما رزقه هللا فهو من أغنى الناس.

From Abu Hamza or Abu Abdullah (peace be upon them both) who said: **Whoever is content with what Allah has provided him is among the richest of people**.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 21, Section 7, Chapter 15, Hadith 27779

عنه عن ابن فضال عن عاصم بن حميد عن أبي حمزة عن أبي جعفر أو أبي عبد الله (عليه السلام) قال من قنع بما رزقه الله فهو من أغنى الناس.

It is narrated from him (narrator of the Hadith above) from ibn Faddal from ‘Asim ibn Humayd from abu Hamza from abu Ja’far or Abu ‘Abdillah (peace be upon him) who has said the following: “**Whoever is content with what Allah has given him for his sustenance is the richest person of the people**.”

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 2) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ya qub al-Kulayni, Book 1, Chapter 63, Hadith #9

Generous for Allah's Sake: If they give to others, it is for the sake of Allah, indicating they have reached the "station of reliance on their Lord."

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): السخاء قربة

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: '**Generosity is a means of nearness [to Allah]**.’

— Bihar al-Anwar, v. 72, p. 193, no. 9

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): السخاء يكسب المحبة ويزين الأخلاق

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: '**Generosity imparts love and adorns one's character**.’

— Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 1600

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): السخاء أن تكون بمالك متبرعا وعن مال غيرك متورعا

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: '**Generosity is that you contribute willingly from your own wealth, and restrain yourself from other people's wealth**.’

— Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 1928

Acknowledges Dependence: They humble themselves, acknowledging their dependence on Allah and hoping for His guidance and protection, leaving all their affairs in His hands.

III.E. Practical Test of Sincerity

Sincerity can be assessed by examining the motive behind an action: whether it is performed for Allah alone or whether it depends on praise, recognition, personal benefit, or fear of people. The central aim of a sincere individual is to make their actions, intentions, and inner state directed toward Allah. It is not the quantity of one's deeds that determines sincerity, but rather whether Allah accepts and is pleased with them. The sign of acceptance is the existence of integrity and correctness, involving accurate awareness of every movement and stillness, unifying knowledge and action.

Sincerity is a difficult task to achieve and maintain, as it requires continuous vigilance against self-love and ostentation. Maintaining sincerity in deeds is harder than the deed itself, and one must continue to persevere in an action until it becomes sincere.

IV. Conclusion

In essence, the saying reveals that sincere devotion and the pure pursuit of Allah's pleasure create a special relationship with the Divine. In response, Allah directly intervenes in the servant's life, rectifying their path, managing their affairs, providing sustenance, and guiding them toward spiritual perfection and success in both worlds.

Allah, in His infinite wisdom and boundless mercy, actively intervenes and guides the lives of individuals who demonstrate sincere devotion and seek His pleasure. This divine management is a profound manifestation of His care and is initiated when a servant's heart is purely dedicated to Him.

The divine intervention is predicated upon the servant's sincere devotion and their earnest pursuit of Allah's pleasure. This sincerity implies:

Pure Intention: Actions are performed solely for the sake of pleasing Allah, free from showiness or any other worldly motive. As the Prophet (S) stated, Allah looks into a servant's heart for sincere love for His sole obedience and the seeking of His pleasure.

رسول الله (صلي الله عليه و آله) : قال الله عزوجل : لا أطلع على قلب عبد فأعلم منه حب الإخلاص لطاعتي لوجهي وابتغاء مرضاتي إلا توليت تقويمه وسياسته

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: '**Allah said, 'No sooner do I look into a servant's heart and find that he has sincere love for My sole obedience and he seeks My pleasure than I take charge of his plans and affairs**.'

— Bihar al-Anwar, v. 85, p. 136, no. 16

رسول الله (صلي الله عليه و آله): تعرضوا لرحمة الله بما أمركم به من طاعته

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: '**Elicit Allah's mercy through the performance of the acts of obedience that He has commanded you.**'

— Tanbih al-Khawatir, v. 2, p. 120

رسول الله (صلي الله عليه و آله): إنه لا يدرك ما عند الله إلا بطاعته

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: '**Verily what is with Allah can only ever be attained through His obedience**.'

— Wasa il al-Shi'ah, v. 11, p. 184, no. 2

Worship as a Way of Life: A Muslim's entire life is intended to be an act of worship, lived by obeying Allah, as expressed in the Quran: "**Verily my prayers, my ritual actions, (in short) my life and my death are all for Allah, the Lord of the universe**" (Quran 6:162).

عن معمر بن خالد اقل: سمعت أاب الحسن الرضا)عليه السالم(يقول: ليس العبادة كثرة الصالة والصوم إنما العبادة التفكر .في أمر هللا عز وجل

From Ma'mar ibn Khallad who said: I heard Abu al-Hasan al-Rida (peace be upon him) saying: **Worship is not about praying and fasting much, rather worship is contemplation about the command of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic**.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 15, Section 2, Chapter 5, Hadith 20261

الإمام الرضا (عليه السلام): ليست العبادة كثرة الصيام والصلاة، وإنما العبادة كثرة التفكر في أمر الله

Imam Ali Raza (peace be upon him): Imam Ar-Ridha' (peace be upon him) said, '**Worship is not about fasting or praying much, rather worship is to reflect much on the command of Allah**.'

— Tuhaf al-'Uqul, no. 442

محمد بن إدريس في آخر)السرائر(نقال من كتاب أبي عبدهللا السياري، صاحب موسى والرضا)عليهما السالم(اقل: سمعته .يقول: ليس العبادة كثرة الصيام والصالة، وإنما العبادة الفكر في هللا تعالى

Muhammad bin Idris in the end of (Al-Sarair), quoting from the book of Abu Abdullah Al-Sayyari, companion of Musa and Al-Ridha (peace be upon them) said: **I heard him say: Worship is not abundant fasting and prayer, rather worship is contemplation about Allah the Exalted**.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 15, Section 2, Chapter 5, Hadith 20265

Absence of Hidden Polytheism (Shirk): The worshipper's intention must be pure, not seeking to please both God and "the people" with one act of worship.

Striving in Allah's Cause: Those who exert themselves in Allah's cause are promised guidance to His paths, as stated: "**As for those who strive hard in Us (our Cause), We will surely, guide them to Our paths (i.e., Allah's religion-Islamic Monotheism). And verily, Allah is with the Muhsinun (good doers)**"

(Quran 29:69).

The verse implies that this striving must be accompanied by sincerity of intention. Failure or dissatisfaction can often be attributed to either a neglect of this holy struggle or a pollution of intentions. The Quran encourages striving "**lightly or heavily**" with one's goods and persons (Quran 9:41), and to "**strive together (as in a race) toward all that is good**" (Quran 2:148). This means that striving is not exclusively about continuous prayer or Quran recitation, but also includes actively helping those in need and fighting for the rights of others.

IV.A. Mechanisms of Divine Intervention and Guidance

Once a servant demonstrates sincere devotion and seeks Allah's pleasure, Allah undertakes their reformation and guidance through several direct and profound mechanisms:

1. Direct Management of Affairs: When Allah observes sincere love for His obedience and pleasure in a servant's heart, He takes immediate charge of their plans and affairs. This signifies a direct, personal involvement in the servant's life, guiding their decisions and circumstances. As Allah states, "**Surely Ours is it to show the way**" (Quran 92:12), emphasizing His exclusive authority in guiding individuals.

2. Inner Illumination and Understanding: Allah places a "point of light" in the servant's heart and opens the "ears of their heart," enabling them to discern good from evil. This includes opening their "heart's eye and ear" to allow them to hear and see with their heart, leading to an understanding of Allah's Majesty and Greatness.

Allah also grants wisdom to whomever He wishes and creates a spark in an individual's heart, directing them towards seeking the truth. He guides to His Light whomever He wishes and enhances the guidance of those who are rightly guided.

3. Protection from Disobedience and Misguidance: Allah acts as the Guardian of those who believe, guiding them and extracting them from darkness into the light of guidance and forgiveness. He is the protector who leads them forth into light from the depths of darkness. When Allah desires good for a person, He actively intervenes to prevent them from engaging in disobedience. This is a sign of His pleasure, as revealed to Prophet Moses (peace be upon him):

روي أن موسى (عليه السلام) قال: يا رب أخبرني عن آية رضاك عن عبدك ، فأوحى الله◌ تعالى إليه: إذا رأيتني اهيئ عبدي لطاعتي وأصرفه عن معصيتي ، فذلك آية رضاي

Prophet Moses (peace be upon him): It is narrated in Bihar al-Anwar that Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) said, '**O My Lord, what is a sign of Your pleasure with a servant of Yours?' So Allah revealed to him, saying, 'When you see Me preparing My servant for My obedience and averting him from My disobedience, [know that] it is a sign of My pleasure**.'

— Bihar al-Anwar, v. 70, p. 26, no. 29

رسول الله◌ (صلي الله عليه و آله): إن الله◌ عز ذكره يعصم من أطاعه، ولا يعتصم به من عصاه

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: '**Verily Allah, Exalted be His remembrance, protects [from sin] whoever obeys Him, and whoever disobeys Him does not benefit from His protection**.'

— al-Kafi, v. 8, p. 82, no. 39

عن مروان بن مسلم، عن أبي عبدهللا)عليه السالم(عن آابئه)عليهم السالم(عن رسول هللا)صل هللا عليه وآله(اقل: اقل .هللا عز وجل: أيما عبد أطاعني لم أكله إلى غيري، وأيما عبد عصاني وكلته إلى نفسه، ثم لم أابل في أي واد هلك

From Marwan bin Muslim, from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him), from his forefathers (peace be upon them), from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) who said: **Allah Mighty and Majestic said: Any servant who obeys Me, I will not leave him to other than Me, and any servant who disobeys Me, I will leave him to himself, then I do not care in which valley he perishes**.

— Wasa il al-Shia Vol. 15, Section 2, Chapter 18, Hadith 20365

4. Facilitating Acceptance of Faith and Worship: Allah guides individuals by "opening their breast to Islam," making it easier for them to accept and follow the faith. His favor towards a person entails guiding them to Islam and the path of truth,

facilitating their performance of worship, and enabling them to carry it out. He also protects them from the devils among mankind and the jinn, ensuring their spiritual journey is unhindered.

5. Provision of Support and Friendship: Allah assigns an angel to support the sincere servant. He reveals the Book and befriends the righteous, guiding those who are willing to listen. Allah is the Guardian and Helper of those who turn to Him. He comforts the gnostics with His goodly munajaat (intimate supplications) and clothes the seeker with the clothing of His guardianship, demonstrating a close and benevolent relationship.

IV.B. Outcomes and Rewards of Divine Intervention

The result of Allah's direct intervention and guidance in the lives of sincere servants is a profound transformation and numerous blessings:

Spiritual Peace and Contentment: Those guided by Allah achieve a sense of peace and tranquility, expanding their breast for submission to Allah, trust in Him, and tranquility towards what He has promised of reward. They find peace and contentment, no longer anxious or uncertain.

Love of Allah and Disdain for Worldly Pleasures: Allah puts love into the heart of the devoted servant. He makes the world seem small and insignificant to them, causing them to hate it with all its pleasures. This fosters a detachment from worldly desires and a deeper focus on the hereafter.

Elevated Status and Divine Favor: Allah gives the seekers of His pleasure the maximum of their aspiration and increases them in good deeds beyond what they have earned. He is affectionate and treats them with kindness, causing them to experience His love in return, which brings about peace, joy, contentment, prosperity, and His mercy. When Allah is pleased, He blesses. A devotee who seeks sincere advice from Allah will be granted a satisfactory provision and the pleasure of their Lord that saves them in the Hereafter.

Protection and Steadfastness: Believers who do not mix their faith with injustice are guided by Allah and protected from going astray, led by divine guidance onto the straight path. This divine protection shields them from negative influences and strengthens their faith.

Allah's guidance is a divine act, exclusive to Him, as affirmed by the verse: "**Surely you cannot guide whom you love, but Allah guides whom He pleases**" (Quran 28:56). This highlights that while human efforts and sincerity are prerequisites, the ultimate power and decision to guide and intervene rest solely with Allah.

حدثنا علي بن عبد الله الوراق، ومحمد بن أحمد بن الشيباني، وعلي بن أحمد بن محمد - رضي الله عنهم - قالوا: حدثنا أبو العباس أحمد بن يحيى بن زكريا القطان، قال: حدثنا بكر بن عبد الله بن حبيب، قال: حدثنا تميم بن بهلول، عن أبيه، عن جعفر بن سليمان البصري، عن عبد الله بن الفضل الهاشمي، قال: سألت أبا عبد الله جعفر بن محمد عليهما السلام عن قول الله عز وجل: " من يهدي الله فهو المهتد ومن يضلل فلن تجد له وليا مرشدا " فقال: إن الله تبارك وتعالى يضل الظالمينيوم القيامة عن دار كرامته ويهدي أهل الايمان والعمل الصالح إلى جنته كما قال الله عز وجل: " ويضل الله الظالمين ويفعل الله ما يشاء " وقال الله عز وجل: " إن الذين آمنوا وعملوا الصالحات يهديهم ربهم بإيمانهم تجرى من تحتهم الأنهار في جنات النعيم "، قال: فقلت: فقوله عز وجل: " وما توفيقي إلا بالله " وقوله عز وجل: " إن ينصركم الله فلا غالب لكم وإن يخذلكم فمن ذا الذي ينصركم من بعده " فقال: إذا فعل العبد ما أمره الله عز وجل من الطاعة كان فعله وفقا لأمر الله عز وجل وسمي العبد به موفقا، وإذا أراد العبد أن يدخل في شئ من معاصي الله تبارك وتعالى بينه وبين المعصية فتركها كان تركه لها بتوفيق الله تعالى، ومتى خلى بينه وبين المعصية فلم يحل بينه وبينها حتى يرتكبها فقد خذله ولم ينصره ولم يوفقه.

We were told by Ali bin Abdullah al-Warraq, and Muhammed bin Ahmad bin Shaybani, and Ali bin Ahmad bin Muhammed, may Allah be pleased with them, that they said: We were told by Abu'l-Abbas, Ahmad bin Yahya bin Zakariya al-Qattaan, that he said: We were told by Bikr bin Abdullah bin Habib, that he said: We were told by Tamim bin Buhlul, from his father, from Ja'far bin Sulayman al-Basri, from Abdullah bin Fadl al-Hashimi, that he said: I asked Abu Abdillah, Ja'far bin Muhammed, peace be upon them both, about the saying of Allah, Exalted and Glorious is He: «**He whom Allah guides, he is certainly the guided, and he whom He leads astray, you will certainly not find for him a protecting guide**.» (Quran 18:17) So he said: Indeed, Allah, Blessed and Exalted is He, makes the aberrant go astray, on the Day of Resurrection, from the Home of His Generosity and guides the people of faith and good deed to His Paradise, like how He, Exalted and Glorious is He, said: «**And Allah leads the aberrant astray and does what He wishes**.» (Quran 14:27) Also, Allah, Exalted and Glorious is He, said: «**Indeed, those who believed and did righteous deeds, their Lord will guide them by their faith. Under them will rivers flow in the Gardens of Bliss**.» (Quran 10:09) He said: Then I said: And His saying, Exalted and Glorious is He: «**And my success is not but through Allah**» (11:88) and His saying, Exalted and Glorious is He: «**If Allah supports you, then none can overcome you, and if He abandons you, then who is there to support you after Him**» (3:160)? So he said: **If the servant does what Allah, Exalted and Glorious is He, commands him of obedience, his act will be in accordance to the commandment of Allah, Exalted and Glorious is He, and by it, a servant will be considered as being given success. And if the servant would want to enter into something of disobedience to Allah, Blessed and Exalted is He, between him and the act of disobedience and then abandons it, his abandonment of it would be by being given success from Allah, Exalted is He. And whenever He would apart from between him and the act of disobedience and not interfere between him and it until he performs it, then He has abandoned him, not supported him nor given him success**.

— Ma ani al- Akhbar by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 15, Hadith #1

حدثنا علي بن عبد الله الوراق، ومحمد بن أحمد السناني، وعلي بن أحمد بن محمد بن عمران الدقاق رحمهم الله، قالوا: حدثنا أبو العباس أحمد بن يحيى بن زكريا القطان، قال: حدثنا بكر بن عبد الله بن حبيب، قال: حدثنا تميم بن بهلول، عن أبيه، عن جعفر بن سليمان البصري، عن عبد الله بن الفضل الهاشمي قال: سألت أبا عبد الله جعفر بن محمد عليهما السلام، عن قول الله عز وجل: (من يهد الله فهو المهتد ومن يضلل فلن تجد له وليا مرشدا) فقال: إن الله تبارك وتعالى يضل الظالمين يوم القيامة عن دار كرامته، ويهدي أهل الإيمان والعمل الصالح إلى جنته كما قال عز وجل: (ويضل الله الضالمين ويفعل الله ما يشاء) وقال عز وجل (إن الذين آمنوا وعملوا الصالحات يهديهم ربهم بإيمانهم تجري من تحتهم الأنهار في جنات النعيم) (١) قال: فقلت: قوله عز وجل: (وما توفيقي إلا بالله) (٢) وقوله عز وجل: (إن ينصركم الله فلا غالب لكم وإن يخذلكم فمن ذا الذي ينصركم من بعده) فقال: إذا فعل العبد ما أمره الله عز وجل به من الطاعة كان فعله وفقا لأمر الله عز وجل وسمي العبد به موفقا، وإذا أراد العبد أن يدخل في شئ من معاصي الله فحال الله تبارك وتعالى بينه وبين تلك المعصية فتركها كان تركه لها بتوفيق الله تعالى ذكره، ومتى خلى بينه وبين تلك المعصية فلم يحل بينه وبينها حتى يرتكبها فقد خذله ولم ينصره ولم يوفقه .

`Ali ibn `Abd Allah al-Warraq; Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Sinani; and `Ali ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn `Imran al-Daqqaq (may Allah have mercy on them) all said: Abu al-`Abbas Ahmad ibn Yahya ibn Zakariyya al-Qittan said: Bakr ibn `Abd Allah ibn Hubayb said: Tamim ibn Bahlul said, on the authority of his father, on the authority of Ja`far ibn Sulayman al-Basri, on the authority of `Abd Allah ibn al-Fadl al-Hashimi that I asked Abu `Abd Allah Ja`far ibn Muhammad about the Word of Allah, the Mighty and High: **Whomsoever Allah guides, he is the rightly guided one and whomsoever He causes to err, you shall not find for him any friend to lead (him) aright**. Therefore, he explained: **Verily, Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, leads astray the oppressors on the Day of Judgment from the abode of His Kindness, and guides the Faithful ones and the ones with good deeds, to paradise, as He, the Mighty and High, says: And Allah causes the unjust to go astray, and Allah does what He pleases. The Mighty and High says: Surely (as for) those who believe and do good, their Lord will guide them by their faith; there shall flow from beneath them rivers in gardens of bliss. He says: I asked, "What about the Word of Mighty and High: And with none but Allah is the direction of my affair to a right issue, and His Word, the Mighty and High: If Allah assist you, then there is none that can overcome you, and if He forsakes you, who is there then that can assist you after Him? Thus, hereplied: If a servant carried out what Allah, the Mighty and High, commands him to do in terms of obedience, then his action would be in accordance with the Command of Allah, the Mighty and High, and the servants will be directed. However, if a servant intends to disobey Allah, then Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, obstructs him from that disobedience, refraining him from it. If the servant was refrained from**

disobedience it was due to Allah's guidance, Exalted be His Remembrance. Whenever He leaves him to disobedience, and does not present him from disobedience, then Allah has forsaken him, and decided not to guide him and assist him.

— Al-Tawhid by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 2, Chapter 35, Hadith #1

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