The 'Family Tradition' series is comprised of 10 books that contain selected traditions for various age groups in a family.

All the traditions used in this series have been extracted from Shi'a sources of tradition and have been selected in various stages. The main criteria in selecting traditions for every group have been based on the age group, mental framework, and the particular spiritual needs of the readers.

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FAMILY
TRADITION
8



# Forty Traditions for Mothers

Authored by Mohammad Elahi-Khorasani
Translated by Mahsa Raeisi Sattari

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To the daughter of Prophet, Lady Fāṭimat al-Zahrā' (pbuh), the story of whose blessed life has been reflected in this book

**Table of contents**

Arabic Transliteration ..... 11

Preface ..... 13

Introduction ..... 17

1. Heavenly flower ..... 24

2.The blessed palate of a newborn ..... 25

3. In return for loving one's child ..... 26

4. The reward for loving one's child ..... 27

5. Fairness in love ..... 28

6. The stages of children's life ..... 29

7. When in touch with a child ..... 31

8. Tempestuousness during childhood ..... 32

9. Curiosities during childhood ..... 34

10. Being grown fond of daily prayers ..... 35

11. Along with the change of circumstances 37

12. Raising chaste children ..... 39

13. Repeated censures ..... 41

14. The seed of good upbringing ..... 42

15. They should blame themselves ..... 43
16. Seeking marriage ..... 44
17. Do not neglect him ..... 46
18. What vinegar does to honey ..... 47
19. The price of hurting a believer ..... 48
20. Purification ..... 49
21. The goblet of calamity ..... 51
22. The good of this world and the hereafter ..... 52
23. Fulfillment in this world or the hereafter 54
24. The reward of relieving a believer ..... 55
25. How a good deed prospers ..... 56
26. The hardships of servitude ..... 57
27. A consolation for the mother ..... 58
28. Overtaking others in virtuous deeds ..... 59
29. Family bonds ..... 60
30. Nursing a grudge ..... 62
31. Seeking to disgrace others ..... 63

32. The one who refrains..... 64

33. The repercussions of calumny ..... 65

34. From superficial Shias to practicing Shias ..... 66

35. The basis of faith ..... 67

36. The boundaries of rage and happiness... 68

37. The gathering of disobedience ..... 69

38. What matters is His satisfaction ..... 70

39. To whom are you teaching kindness towards servants? ..... 71

40. The response to servitude..... 72

Bibliography..... 75

# Arabic Transliteration

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ا | alif | a<br>ā (long vowel) | ط | ṭā | ṭ/Ṭ |
| ب | bā | B | ظ | ẓā | ẓ |
| ت | tā | T | ع | ʻayn | ʻ |
| ث | thā | Th | غ | Ghayn | gh |
| ج | jim | J | ف | Fā | f |
| ح | ḥā | ḥ/Ḥ | ق | Qāf | q |
| خ | khā | Kh | ك | Kāf | k |
| د | dāl | D | ل | Lām | l |
| ذ | dhāl | Dh | م | Mīm | m |
| ر | rā | R | ن | Nūn | n |
| ز | zā | Z | ه | Hā | h |
| س | sīn | S | و | Wāw | w (consonantal)<br>ū (long vowel) |
| ش | shīn | Sh | ي | Yā | y (consonantal)<br>ī (long vowel) |
| ص | ṣād | Ṣ/ṣ | ء | Hamza | ʼ |
| ض | ḍād | ḍ/Ḍ | | | |
| Short vowels | | fatḥa | ◌َ | | = a |
| | | Kasra | ◌ِ | | = i |
| | | ḍamma | ◌ُ | | = u |

## Preface

'Abdul Salām al-Harawī quoted from Imam Riḍā (pbuh) saying, "May God have mercy upon the one who revives our lifestyle and manner." Al-Harawī asked, "How should one revive your lifestyle and manner?" The Imam said, "He should learn our knowledge and teach it to people. If people get informed of the virtue of our words, they would follow us."[1]

*Wasā'il al-Shī'a*, vol 27, p 92

One of the great blessings of God the Almighty to us is that He put the infallible Imams (pbuh) amongst us to learn how to live a God-centered life through observing their lifestyle and to achieve eternal bliss through practicing their useful guidelines.

---

1. «عَنْ عَبْدِ السَّلَامِ الْهَرَوِيِّ عَنِ الرِّضَا ﷺ قَالَ رَحِمَ اللَّهُ عَبْداً أَحْيَا أَمْرَنَا قُلْتُ كَيْفَ يُحْيِي أَمْرَكُمْ قَالَ يَتَعَلَّمُ عُلُومَنَا وَ يُعَلِّمُهَا النَّاسَ فَإِنَّ النَّاسَ لَوْ عَلِمُوا مَحَاسِنَ كَلَامِنَا لَاتَّبَعُونَا الْحَدِيثَ.»

Mashhad is a piece of paradise where [the shrine of] the son of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), the eighth star in the sky of Imamate, is located and every year from various parts of Iran and the world, millions of fascinated pilgrims visit this heavenly shrine to water their thirsty soul from the limpid spring of the infallible Imams' (pbuh) knowledge.

The servants of this shrine, Āstān Quds Raḍawī, are all by some means in the service of the pilgrims of Imam Riḍā (pbuh) so that they can make a pilgrimage with peace of mind and receive many benefits from this heavenly shrine.

"The Management of Foreign Pilgrims of Āstān Quds Raḍawī" also has been trying in various forms to introduce culture, manners, and lifestyle of the Infallibles (pbuh) - especially Imam Riḍā (pbuh) to the lovers and enthusiasts of this school.

The affairs of this management are in line with the Supreme Leader of Iran's (May God prolong his life) statements, running the commands of the custodian of Āstān Quds

Raḍawī as well as Āstān Quds Raḍawī 20-year vision plan for disseminating Islamic culture and civilization in accordance with needs of non-Iranian pilgrims in order to create insight and spiritual growth in them.

Some good examples of these programs done in line with serving non-Iranian pilgrims of Imam Riḍā (pbuh) in the international arena are as following; organizing special cultural programs, insight circles, professional meetings, scientific conferences, educational classes and workshops, cultural competitions, poetry nights, conversion ceremonies, expert panels and advisory board as well as responding to letters, sending books and cultural products around the world, answering religious and theological questions, and also Razavi Talk chat rooms, production and translation of pure Islamic teachings into various language.

It is the time that the call of Islam is going not only to return the people - who have fallen from their origin in every corner of the world - to the truth but also to return the Islam seeking

and truth seeking hearts to the [Islamic] sublime and magnanimous teachings which are spreading in the world. It is wished that in such days, reading this book would be found useful for the truth seekers and it would be regarded as a forward step for giving insight to the pilgrims and lovers of the Infallibles (pbuh) as well as gaining the satisfaction of God.

"O' God bless Muḥammad and Muḥammad's Household, give me to enjoy a sound guidance which I seek not to replace, a path of truth from which I swerve not, and an intention of right conduct in which I have no doubts! Let me live as long as my life is a free gift in obeying Thee."[1,2]

**The Management of Foreign Pilgrims of Āstān Quds Raḍawī**

1. اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَاٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، وَمَتِّعْنِى بِهُدًى صالِحٍ لَا اَسْتَبْدِلُ بِهِ، وَ طَرِيقَةِ حَقٍّ لَا اَزِيغُ عَنْهَا، وَنِيَّةِ رُشْدٍ لَا اَشُكُّ فِيهَا، وَ عَيِّزْنِى مَا كانَ عُمْرِى بِذْلَةً فِى طاعَتِكَ.

2. *Ṣaḥīfa al-Sajjādiyya*, Supplication 20

## Introduction

قال الصّادقُ عليه السلام:

﴿مَنْ حَفِظَ مِنْ أَحَادِيثِنَا أَرْبَعِينَ حَدِيثاً بَعَثَهُ اللهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَالِماً فَقِيهاً﴾

'Whoever memorises forty traditions from our utterances, God shall resurrect him as a learned scholar on the Day of Resurrection'.

*Al-Kāfī*, vol 1, p 49

It has always been prevalent amongst Muslim scholars to compile forty traditions. This practice is rooted in the various traditions quoted from the Prophet and his household (pbut) concerning the many virtues and benefits of memorising and preserving forty traditions, one of which has been mentioned above.

The author has been working as a researcher, writer and teacher in the field of tradition-related sciences and knowledge for a few years. He also has many years of experience in the field of teaching at various levels ranging from primary school, middle school, high school and university. As a result, he decided to graft the branch of 'traditions' unto the branch of 'religious education' and prepare a series of traditions based on the educational needs of readers while doing his best to add more practical literature to this field. The series before you, which is entitled 'Family Tradition', is the product of this urge and the result of around 3 years of study and consultation for selecting, arranging and elucidating the traditions.

The 'Family Tradition' series is comprised of 10 books that contain selected traditions for various age groups in a family. We have divided these age groups into the following sections:

**First book:** Children (8 to 11 years old)

**Second book:** Teenagers

**Third book:** Youth (Girls - 16 and above)

**Fourth book:** Youth – Boys 1 (16 to 19 years old)

**Fifth book:** Youth – Boys 2 (20 and above)

**Sixth book:** Spouses (Husbands)

**Seventh book:** Spouses (Wives)

**Eighth book:** Fathers

**Ninth book:** Mothers

**Tenth book:** Grandparents

All the traditions used in this series have been extracted from Shia sources of tradition and selected from amongst – at least – 20,000 narratives in various stages. The main criteria in selecting traditions for every group were as follows:

**1.** Contextual cohesion amongst the characteristics and needs of readers in each particular age group

**2.** Universality and not being limited to a particular situation in terms of time or place

**3.** Explicitness of context and its dissimilarity in a way that would not lead to incorrect

perceptions

**4.** Plainness and relative briefness – as suitable for each age group – with the aim of easier memorization in mind

It ought to be mentioned that due to our commitment to the above criteria, there are similar narratives in relevant groups such as the youth (boys and girls), spouses (husbands and wives), and parents (fathers and mothers). However, the traditions have been selected in a way that none of them would be repeated as far as age and gender are concerned.

There are also some points that have been taken into consideration when organising narratives in each book.

**1.** To avoid creating a black or white picture in a way that the majority of traditions would not demonstrate only a sense of encouragement and giving glad tidings or to the contrary indicating only a sense of censure and warning

**2.** Relative comprehensiveness from an educational perspective in a way that the collection of traditions in each book would

almost refer to the important issues and the special needs of a particular age group.

3. A simultaneous reference to major issues and providing a tangible guidance for one's life

4. The inclusion of some momentums and impetuses for spiritual development throughout the traditions of each book

5. Targeted categorization of traditions so that there would be a clear correlation and cohesion between all traditions as much as possible, making the reader feel that all traditions follow the same sequence and order.

6. Paying particular attention to the selection process of the very first and last traditions in each book in a way that the first tradition would be a good starting point and the last one would be a good concluding point while at the same time being a source of momentum and development.

In addition, certain points have been taken into consideration in relation to the quality of presenting the narratives and traditions:

**1.** That the narratives should come fully with their short vowels and inflections.

**2.** That the translation of traditions and narratives would be plain and simple and that 'word for word' or literary translation would be avoided.

**3.** That the source of every single narrative would come precisely beneath each tradition and a reference (bibliography) of all sources would come at the end of each book.

**4.** That after each narrative a short explanation– proportionate to each age group – would be provided for a better understanding of the tradition.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude towards the respected Dr. Naghizadeh who encouraged me to complete this series when it was still in its early stages of writing. I would also like to thank Abd al-Hadi Masoudi and Mohammad Hossein Elahizadeh who kindly agreed to assess and evaluate this work.

I am also grateful to the Department of Islamic Relations and Propagation of the AQR as

well as the respected head of the Office for Teaching Traditions and Quranic Sciences and all their colleagues who have paved the way for the pilgrims of the Holy Shrine of Imam Riḍā (pbuh) to have access to this work. Furthermore, I would like to thank my kind wife to whom I owe the conclusion of this task.

It is hoped that this endeavour would be accepted by the Prophet and the infallible Imams (pbut) and particularly the kind Imam Ridā (pbuh) to whom I have always been indebted and grateful for his kindness. I also hope that families –from all walks of life – could benefit from this series.

**Mohammad Elahi-Khorasani**

19th November 2009 - 1st of Dhī al-Ḥajja 1430 *(Coinciding with the blessed marriage anniversary of Imam 'Alī and Lady Fāṭimah – peace be upon them both)*

## 1. Heavenly flower

قالَ رسولُ الله ﷺ:

﴿اَلْوَلَدُ الصَّالِحُ رَيْحَانَة مِنَ اللّٰهِ قَسَمَهَا بَيْنَ عِبَادِه﴾

The Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household):

'A righteous child is a fragrant flower from God which has been shared amongst His servants'.

*Al-Kāfī*, vol 6, p 2

The fragrance of the flowers gives us a sense of bliss and brings about delight and freshness. Sometimes seeing a flower would remove the grief from one's heart and tiredness from their body. A good child is a flower from Paradise that God has sent to us.

## 2.The blessed palate of a newborn

قالَ الصّادقُ عليه السلام:

﴿حَنِّكُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ بِتُرْبَةِ الْحُسَيْنِ عليه السلام فَإِنَّهُ أَمَانٌ﴾

Imam Ṣādiq (pbuh):

'Rub the palate of your infants with the soil of Ḥussain (pbuh) as it brings about safety [for them]'.

*Kāmil al-Ziārât*, p 278

The palate of the newborn is often rubbed with the soil of the Chief of Martyrs (pbuh), so that the love of *ahl al-bait (pbuh)* would grow in their heart from the very moment they set their eyes on this world. If this love and affinity is entwined with their soul, their life shall be concluded in goodness – God-willing.

### 3. In return for loving one's child

قالَ الصّادقُ عليه السلام:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَيَرْحَمُ الْعَبْدَ لِشِدَّةِ حُبِّهِ لِوَلَدِه﴾

Imam Sādiq (pbuh):

'Verily, God would show mercy to the servant who has a strong love towards his child'.

*Al-Kāfī*, vol 6, p 50

How multiple are the calamities and difficulties that are repelled from the mother due to a mother's love towards her child. Loving one's child would lead to the flow of divine grace.

## 4. The reward for loving one's child

قالَ رسولُ الله ﷺ:

﴿مَنْ قَبَّلَ وَلَدَهُ، كَانَ لَهُ حَسَنَةً وَمَنْ فَرَّحَهُ، فَرَّحَهُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ﴾

The Messenger of God (pbuh & hh):

'The one who kisses his child, a good deed would be [recorded] for him and the one who gladdens his child; God shall gladden him on the Day of Resurrection'.

*Al-Kāfī*, vol 6, p 49

Loving one's child is of such high advantage that kissing them would be deemed as a good deed by God and making them happy would bring about happiness and joy on the Day of Resurrection. Never withhold your love from your child.

## 5. Fairness in love

قالَ رسولُ الله ﷺ:

﴿إِعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ أَوْلادِكُمْ كَمَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَكُمْ فِي الْبِرِّ وَاللُّطْفِ﴾

The Messenger of God (pbuh & hh):

'Exercise fairness between your children in the same way you would like them to treat you (father and mother) with fairness in [their expression of] compassion and kindness'.

*Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol 101, p 92

One should not disregard justice and fairness in their love towards children. If we are going to hold a birthday party we should hold one for all of our children. One must even observe fairness when kissing their children. The mother who discriminates amongst her children when showing affection, likewise, she should not feel upset if her children were to discriminate between her and their father.

## 6. The stages of children's life

قالَ رسولُ الله ﷺ:

﴿اَلْوَلَدُ سَيِّدٌ سَبْعَ سِنِينَ وَعَبْدٌ سَبْعَ سِنِينَ وَ وَزِيرٌ سَبْعَ سِنِينَ﴾

The Messenger of God (pbuh & hh):

'The child is a master for [the first] seven years, and a servant for [the second] seven years and a vizier for [the next] seven years'.

*Makārim al-Akhlāq*, p 222

Every child goes through three different phases in their life. The first seven years is the period of their mastery, during which they should be free and their wishes should be fulfilled where possible. The next seven years is the period during which the child should heed commands and engage in learning. The third seven years is the period of being

a vizier during which they should be treated as a consultant and vizier by respecting their character and trusting them. Paying due attention to the necessities of each stage would lead to success in later stages.

## 7. When in touch with a child

قالَ رسولُ الله ﷺ:

﴿مَنْ كَانَ عِنْدَهُ صَبِيٌّ فَلْيَتَصَابَ لَه﴾

The Messenger of God (pbuh & hh):

'Whoever has a child should concur with him like a child'.

*Kitāb Man lā yahḍarah ul-Faqīh*, vol 3, p 493

The world of children has its own characteristics. Some of the issues that are important to us are of no importance to them and on the contrary some of the issues that are insignificant to us may be important to them. Many of the concepts and notions are meaningless in their world and equally certain rules and regulations do not fit into their minds. We should enter their world of childhood in order to be able to establish a relationship with them and subsequently influence them.

If you are in touch with a child

You should act like a child

## 8. Tempestuousness during childhood

قالَ الكاظمُ عليه السلام:

﴿تُسْتَحَبُّ عَرَامَةُ الْغُلَامِ فِي صِغَرِهِ لِيَكُونَ حَلِيماً فِي كِبَرِهِ﴾

Imam Kāẓim (pbuh):

'Tempestuousness of a boy during his early years is commendable because he would become patient during his adulthood'.

*Kitāb Man lā yaḥḍarah ul-Faqīh*, vol 3, p 493

Boys' tempestuousness during childhood is often more than that of girls. Sometimes this issue upsets parents and troubles them. We ought to know that a boy's tempestuousness would relieve him of his childhood excitements and at the same time satisfy his sense of adventure. This prevents him from having personality disorders during adulthood and

instead gives him self-esteem. Most impatient and oversensitive people have not had much of a happy childhood.

## 9. Curiosities during childhood

قالَ عليٌّ عليه السلام:

﴿مَنْ سَأَلَ فِي صِغَرِهِ أَجَابَ فِي كِبَرِهِ﴾

Imam 'Alī (pbuh):

'The one who asks [more questions] in his childhood would answer [more questions] in his adulthood'.

*Ghurar al-Ḥikam,* Words of wisdom 662

Children ask a lot of questions and one should not censure them for their many questions. They would become familiar with the world around them through these very questions. If this sense of curiosity is not strengthened in the child and their inquisitiveness is suppressed, then in future they will not be interested in research once they grow into an adult and would be living with the unknown. If we answer their childish questions patiently, they would also answer other people's question in future.

## 10. Being grown fond of daily prayers

قالَ عليٌّ عليه السلام:

﴿عَلِّمُوا صِبْيَانَكُمُ الصَّلَاةَ وَ خُذُوهُمْ بِهَا إِذَا بَلَغُوا الْحُلُمَ﴾

Imam 'Alī (pbuh):

'Teach your children [how to say daily] prayers and admonish them [for not saying their prayers] when they reach puberty'.

*Ghurar al-Ḥikam*, Words of wisdom 3345

Every father and mother has the responsibility for teaching religious duties to their children. Daily prayers have a special place amongst religious obligations. In Islamic narratives, great emphasis has been laid on teaching children how to perform prayers while at the same time supervising their performance. The child would be out of touch with prayers should they realize that their parents are

reluctant towards their children's prayers. Let's bring up our children in a way that they would grow fond of saying prayers.

## 11. Along with the change of circumstances

قالَ عليٌّ عليه السلام:

﴿مُرُوْا صِبْيَانَكُمْ بِالصَّلاةِ إذا كانُوا أبْناءَ سَبْعِ سِنينَ وَ فَرِّقُوا بَيْنَهُمْ فِي الْمَضاجِعِ إذا كانُوا أبْناءَ عَشْرِ سِنين﴾

Imam 'Alī (pbuh):

'Compel your children [to perform their daily] prayers when they reach the age of seven and separate their beds when they reach the age of ten'.

*Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol 14, p 288

From the age of seven when the child enters the period of obedience they should be compelled to fulfill some of their duties and observe some of the religious rules, amongst which saying prayers is of paramount importance. In addition, as the child gradually begins to distinguish between good and bad,

and right and wrong some of the previous situations must change. This includes sleeping together with their brother or sister in the same bed. Competent mothers pay attention to all these major and minor points.

قالَ الصّادقُ عليه السلام:

﴿إِذَا بَلَغَتِ الْجَارِيَةُ سِتَّ سِنِينَ فَلَا يُقَبِّلُهَا الْغُلَامُ وَالْغُلَامُ لَا يُقَبِّلُ الْمَرْأَةَ إِذَا جَازَ سَبْعَ سِنِين﴾

Imam Ṣādiq (pbuh):

'A girl who reaches the age of six, must not be kissed by any boy and a boy who reaches the age of seven must not kiss the marriageable females'.

*Kitāb Man lā yaḥḍarah ul-Faqīh*, vol 3, p 437

The seeds of chastity must be sown in childhood so that the child could lean on it like a huge tree during adulthood. If the child continues to experience physical contact with the opposite sex –beyond a certain age as mentioned in the narratives– maintaining chastity would prove to be difficult for them while on the other hand they would feel

relaxed about having a relationship with the opposite sex. Let's not ignore this issue in our parties and ceremonies.

## 13. Repeated censures

قالَ عليٌّ عليه السلام:

﴿إِيَّاكَ أَنْ تُكَرِّرَ الْعَتْبَ فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ يُغْرِي بِالذَّنْبِ وَ يُهَوِّنُ الْعَتْبَ﴾

Imam ʻAlī (pbuh):

'Avoid repeating censures, as it would entice one to [commit further] sins and render censure ineffective'.

*Kitāb Man lā yaḥḍarah ul-Faqīh*, vol 4, p 371

If you blame your child for every single mistake and keep blaming them under any pretext you would be rendering it useless, as your child would gradually get used to their mother's censures. The child would then prepare themselves to confront the mother whenever they wish to do something wrong. Do not apply your motherly censure easily.

## 14. The seed of good upbringing

قالَ عليٌّ عليه السلام:

﴿إِنَّمَا قَلْبُ الْحَدَثِ كَالْأَرْضِ الْخَالِيَةِ، مَا أُلْقِيَ فِيهَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ قَبِلَتْهُ﴾

Imam 'Alī (pbuh):

'The heart of a youth is like a bare land that would accept any seeds thrown into it'.

*Wasā'il al-Shī'a*, vol 21, p 478

The land in which no seeds have yet been planted would be ready to accept any type of seed that is sown in it. Good produce would grow from good seeds and low quality and decayed produce would grow from bad seeds. Attend to your child before others find the chance to sow unhealthy seeds in the heart and soul of your child.

## 15. They should blame themselves

قالَ رسولُ الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم:

﴿لَعَنَ اللَّهُ وَالِدَيْنِ حَمَلَا وَلَدَهُمَا عَلَى عُقُوقِهِمَا﴾

The Messenger of God (pbuh & hh):

'May God curse those parents who lead their own child towards recalcitrance'.

*Kitāb Man lā yaḥḍarah ul-Faqih*, vol 4, p 371

A father and mother who have not spent enough time for bringing up their child, have not been a good listener for their child, have not asked them about how they are doing at school, have never met their child's friends and have not listened to their concerns have in fact opened the gates of recalcitrance and defiance to them. So they should no longer blame anyone but themselves.

## 16. Seeking marriage

قالَ رسولُ الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم:

﴿زَوِّجُوا أَيَامَاكُمْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحْسِنُ لَهُمْ فِي أَخْلَاقِهِمْ وَ يُوَسِّعُ لَهُمْ فِي أَرْزَاقِهِم﴾

The Messenger of God (pbuh & hh):

'Marry off your children, as God shall make their behaviour good and increase their sustenance'.

*Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol 100, p 222

If your child has reached a suitable age for marriage and enjoys the necessary intellectual maturity for it, you should pave the way for their marriage. The fact that they may still have certain behavioral problems or have financial constraints does not amount to a valid reason for avoiding marriage. If only those people who had no financial or behavioral problem were supposed to get married, what percentage of people could start their marital life? Good character and extensive sustenance

are amongst the benefits and blessings of marriage.

## 17. Do not neglect him

قالَ الباقرُ عليه السلام:

﴿لَا شَفِيعَ لِلْمَرْأَةِ أَنْجَحُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهَا مِنْ رِضَا زَوْجِهَا﴾

Imam Bâqir (pbuh):

'There is no better intercession for a woman before God than her husband's satisfaction'.

*Al-Khiṣāl*, vol 2, p 585

This world shall pass with all its ups and downs but nothing in the hereafter could prove as effective as your husband's contentment. Be wary that your preoccupation with children would not lead you to neglecting your husband.

## 18. What vinegar does to honey

قالَ الصّادقُ عليه السلام:

﴿إِنَّ الْخُلُقَ السَّيِّئَ يُفْسِدُ الْعَمَلَ كَمَا يُفْسِدُ الْخَلُّ الْعَسَلَ﴾

Imam Ṣādiq (pbuh):

'Bad-temperedness spoils one's deeds in the same way as vinegar decays honey'.

*Al-Kāfī*, vol 2, p 321

A bee makes honey through a difficult process but only a few drops of vinegar would be sufficient to take away all its sweetness. Sometimes we go through a lot of trouble to do a good deed but then we spoil both the sweetness of our deed for others and undermine our own reward by behaving inappropriately. Let's not spoil our deed through bad-temperedness.

## 19. The price of hurting a believer

قالَ رسولُ الله ﷺ:

﴿مَنْ أَحْزَنَ مُؤْمِناً ثُمَّ أَعْطَاهُ الدُّنْيَا لَمْ يَكُنْ ذَلِكَ كَفَّارَتَهُ وَ لَمْ يُؤْجَرْ عَلَيْه﴾

The Messenger of God (pbuh & hh):

'The one who saddens a believer and then [tries to even] give him the [whole] world; this would not amount to a penance [for hurting him] nor would he be rewarded for it'.

*Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol 9, p 99

Some plates can be repaired if they are broken in a way that no one could realize they were once broken. This is while there are some other plates that would never seem new even if they have only had a crack. This would be in a way that even if this plate is filled with the best and most colorful fruits it would still be a cracked plate. One could not break one's heart and say I will compensate for it by a gift. This sin cannot be bought off even by paying a high price.

قالَ رسولُ الله ﷺ:

﴿مَا أَصَابَ الْمُؤْمِنَ مِنْ نَصَبٍ وَلَا وَصَبٍ وَلَا حُزْنٍ حَتَّى الْهَمِّ يُهِمُّهُ إِلَّا كَفَّرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ عَنْهُ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِهِ﴾

The Messenger of God (pbuh & hh):

'No suffering, hardship or grief and even no anxiety shall be inflicted upon a believer unless God would grant remission to him of his sins'.

*Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*, p 38

Disasters that are inflicted on a believer are not out of punishment or chastisement but instead they are intended at cleansing and purifying them. Every hardship that is inflicted on them would be a penance for the sin they have committed as God had not wished to keep that sin in their dossier of deeds even though the servant of God may not realize it and complain about it to God. In the same

way a mother would bathe her child when she notices that her child needs bathing even though the child may shout, scream and punch the mother.

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## 21. The goblet of calamity

قالَ رسولُ الله ﷺ:

﴿إِنَّ اللهَ لَيُغَذِّي عَبْدَهُ الْمُؤْمِنَ بِالْبَلاءِ ، كَمَا تُغَذِّي الْوَالِدَة وَلَدَها بِاللَّبَنِ﴾

The Messenger of God (pbuh & hh):

'God feeds His believing servant with calamity in the same way that a mother feeds her child with milk'.

*A'lām al-Dīn*, p 277

Sometimes the calamities that are inflicted on some of the believing servants of God are not intended at purifying them but at promoting them. These individuals suffer not for their sins but for their good deeds so that they may grow in the wake of such hardships whereby they would become worthy of promotion. This type of suffering does not happen to just anyone.

Whoever is closer to God in this world
Shall drink more from the goblet of calamity

## 22. The good of this world and the hereafter

قالَ عليٌّ عليه السلام:

﴿ثَلَاثٌ مَنْ كُنَّ فِيهِ فَقَدْ رُزِقَ خَيْرَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ هُنَّ الرِّضَا بِالْقَضَاءِ وَالصَّبْرُ عَلَى الْبَلَاءِ وَالشُّكْرُ فِي الرَّخَاءِ﴾

Imam 'Alī (pbuh):

'There are three characteristics having which would be tantamount to having the good of this world and the hereafter. These are contentment towards faith and divine decree, patience in the wake of calamities and thankfulness in times of ease and comfort'.

*Ghurar al-Ḥikam*, Words of wisdom 6283

The one who is content with what God has ordained for them and is a grateful servant in times of happiness and exercises patience in the wake of difficulties has in fact earned both the peace and happiness of this world and

the comfort and prosperity of the hereafter. Blessed are them.



## 23. Fulfillment in this world or the hereafter

قالَ الصّادقُ عليه السلام:

﴿يَتَمَنَّى الْمُؤْمِنُ أَنَّهُ لَمْ يُسْتَجَبْ لَهُ دَعْوَةٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا مِمَّا يَرَى مِنْ حُسْنِ الثَّوَابِ﴾

Imam Ṣādiq (pbuh):

'A believer would wish that none of his prayers were answered in this world had he seen the good rewards [in the hereafter]'.

*Al-Kāfī*, vol 2, p 490

God says (40:60) «ادعونی استجب لکم». "Call on me; I will answer your prayer". Thus, if a servant calls on God sincerely, their prayer would certainly be answered. If expediency determines for the prayer not to be answered in this world it would be answered in the hereafter in the form of a great reward. This reward would be of such greatness that the believer would say I wish all my prayers were saved for me.

## 24. The reward of relieving a believer

قالَ الرّضا عليه السلام:

﴿مَنْ فَرَّجَ عَنْ مُؤْمِنٍ فَرَّجَ اللّٰهُ عَنْ قَلْبِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ﴾

Imam Riḍā (pbuh):

'The one who relieves a believer [from sorrow]; God shall relieve his heart [from grief] on the Day of Resurrection'.

*Al-Kāfī*, vol 1, p 200

In the same way that upsetting a believer would not remain unanswered, pleasing a believer would not remain unanswered either. Whoever relieves the heart of a believer from grief and anxiety; the merciful God shall relieve their heart from grief and bring smile to their face on the day that everyone is concerned about their faith while their souls are filled with grief and sorrow.

## 25. How a good deed prospers

قالَ الصّادقُ عليه السلام:

﴿ رَأَيْتُ الْمَعْرُوفَ لَا يَصْلُحُ إِلَّا بِثَلَاثِ خِصَالٍ: تَصْغِيرِهِ وَ تَسْتِيرِهِ وَ تَعْجِيلِه﴾

Imam Ṣādiq (pbuh):

'I saw that a good [deed] would not prosper unless through three considerations; understating it, concealing it and expediting it'.

*Al-Kāfī*, vol 4, p 30

When attempting to do something for someone sometimes we procrastinate so much that we dishearten them. Sometimes we do something for someone but then we confer an obligation upon them at the slightest excuse. Let's not ruin the value of our deed.

قالَ عليٌّ عليه السلام:

﴿ثَوَابُ الْعَمَلِ عَلَى قَدْرِ الْمَشَقَّةِ فِيهَ﴾

Imam 'Alī (pbuh):

'The reward of a deed relies on the degree of the hardship that lies within it'.

*Ghurar al-Ḥikam*, Words of wisdom 2946

The reward of a person who observes the religious rules as a matter of convenience is never equal to the reward of the one who bears considerable difficulties and troubles in order to observe their religion. For instance the reward of a lady who should tolerate the mockery and ridicule of those around her because of observing her hijab (Islamic dress code) is far greater than that of the lady who is praised for her hijab. The hardships of servitude will not remain unrewarded.

## 27. A consolation for the mother

قالَ عليٌّ عليه السلام:

﴿مَنْ عَزَّى الثَّكْلَى أَظَلَّهُ اللَّهُ فِي ظِلِّ عَرْشِهِ يَوْمَ لَا ظِلَّ إِلَّا ظِلُّه﴾

Imam 'Alī (pbuh):

'The one who consoles a bereaved mother; God shall protect him under the shade of His [divine] throne on the day that there would be no shade except His'.

*Al-Kāfī*, vol 3, p 227

No sorrow is as painful as losing a child. If you console a bereaved mother and manage to lessen the burden of her grief, God will place you under the auspices of His grace and mercy in the scorching desert heat of the day of congregation [of the dead].

## 28. Overtaking others in virtuous deeds

قالَ عليٌّ عليه السلام:

﴿عُدْ مَنْ لَا يَعُودُكَ وَ أَهْدِ إِلَى مَنْ لَا يُهْدِي إِلَيْكَ﴾

Imam 'Alī (pbuh):

'Visit the patient who does not visit you [when you are sick] and give gifts to the one who does not give you any gifts'.

*Kitāb Man lā yaḥḍarah ul-Faqīh*, vol 3, p 300

Showing affection towards friends and relatives is a moral virtue. If someone has deprived themselves of this virtue why should I be doing so? It does not matter whether they have visited me during my illness or not, I myself should not lose the opportunity to visit them in their time of sickness.

## 29. Family bonds

قالَ الصّادقُ عليه السلام:

﴿إِنَّ صِلَةَ الرَّحِمِ تُزَكِّي الْأَعْمَالَ وَ تُنْمِي الْأَمْوَالَ وَ تُيَسِّرُ الْحِسَابَ وَ تَدْفَعُ الْبَلْوَى وَ تَزِيدُ فِي الرِّزْقِ﴾

Imam Ṣādiq (pbuh):

'Verily, keeping in touch with your close relatives on a regular basis would cleanse your deeds, increase your wealth and facilitate its judgment [on the day of resurrection], alleviate possible calamities and disasters and finally increase your sustenance'.

*Al-Kāfī*, vol 2, p 157

In addition to alleviating grudges and resentments, God has placed special rewards in this world and the hereafter for having close bonds with relatives which is referred to as *silat u al-rahim* in religious literature. Repelling calamities, increasing wealth and

the abundance of material and spiritual sustenance are amongst its worldly results while the cleansing of deeds and facilitation of judgments are amongst its results in the hereafter. Let's not lose all these blessings.

## 30. Nursing a grudge

قالَ عليٌّ عليه السلام:

﴿الدُّنْيَا أَصْغَرُ وَأَحْقَرُ وَأَنْزَرُ مِنْ أَنْ تُطَاعَ فِيهَا الْأَحْقَادُ﴾

Imam 'Alī (pbuh):

'The world is much smaller, lower and more insignificant than bearing rancor in it'.

*Ghurar al-Hikam*, Words of wisdom 2544

Some people feel offended by others but they then tend to forget them after a short while. Some others nurse their grudges and keep finding reasons for them. Indeed, how much time and opportunity do we have in this swift-passing world for it to be spent on our resentments towards others? We should be wary of our own faults and mistakes rather than thinking about the past mistakes of others.

## 31. Seeking to disgrace others



قالَ عليٌّ عليه السلام:

﴿لِيَكُنْ أَبْغَضُ النَّاسِ إِلَيْكَ وَ أَبْعَدُهُمْ مِنْكَ أَطْلَبُهُمْ لِمَعَايِبِ النَّاسِ﴾

Imam 'Alī (pbuh):

'The most loathsome people before you and the furthest of them from you must be those who seek to find faults with other people'.

*Ghurar al-Ḥikam*, Words of wisdom 9601

Some people take joy at seeing others being disgraced. For this reason, they are always seeking to find other people's faults and weaknesses so that they could see their embarrassment by revealing such faults. Speaking to and keeping company with such people is tantamount to encouraging them to continue with this heinous behaviour. One must not condone the behavior of such people.

## 32. The one who refrains

قالَ السّجّادُ عليه السلام:

﴿مَنْ كَفَّ عَنْ أَعْرَاضِ النَّاسِ أَقَالَ اللَّهُ عَثْرَتَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ﴾

Imam Sajjād (pbuh):

'The one who refrains from tarnishing people's reputation, God shall overlook their slippages on the Day of Resurrection'.

*Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol 68, p 426

Sometimes you have been hurt by someone and you could tarnish their reputation by revealing some of their words or behavior so that by doing so you could relieve some of your own pain. If you did not retaliate against them and preserve their reputation, God would also protect your reputation and standing before the prophets, the Infallibles and all those witnessing the Day of Resurrection.

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## 33. The repercussions of calumny

قالَ رسولُ الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم:

﴿مَنِ اغْتَابَ مُسْلِماً أَوْ مُسْلِمَةً لَمْ يَقْبَلِ اللَّهُ صَلَاتَهُ وَ لَا صِيَامَهُ أَرْبَعِينَ يَوْماً وَ لَيْلَةً إِلَّا أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لَهُ صَاحِبُه﴾

The Messenger of God (pbuh & hh):

'The one who speaks behind the back of a Muslim man or woman, God shall not accept his prayer and fast for [a period of] forty days and nights unless the one behind whose back he has spoken would forgive him'.

*Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol 7, p 322

Calumny or backbiting is a great sin that not only some people consider it to be insignificant but they even practice it as a hobby. Underestimating a sin and enjoying it would increase the weight of a sin by manifold. How can the prayers and fasts of the one who deems great sins as being insignificant be accepted while they enjoy such sins?

## 34. From superficial Shias to practicing Shias

قالَ الصّادقُ عليه السلام:

﴿لَيْسَ مِنْ شِيعَتِنَا مَنْ قَالَ بِلِسَانِهِ وَ خَالَفَنَا فِي أَعْمَالِنَا وَ آثَارِنَا﴾

Imam Ṣādiq (pbuh):

'The one who claims [to be one of our followers (Shias)] by his tongue and [at the same time] acts contrary to our deeds and conducts is not amongst our followers'.

*Mishkāt al-Anwār*, p 70

The superficial Shias chant the slogan of being a Shia but their behaviour does not resemble the Ali-like behaviour. However, the practicing Shias are those whose deeds are a reflection of Ali's life and conduct in terms of obedience, worship, kindness, compassion, sacrifice, forbearance. Let's be one of the practicing Shias and not a superficial one.

## 35. The basis of faith

قالَ رسولُ الله ﷺ:

﴿أَصْلُ الْإِيمَانِ حُسْنُ التَّسْلِيمِ لِأَمْرِ اللَّه﴾

The Messenger of God (pbuh & hh):

'The basis of faith is proper submission to God's command'.

*Ghurar al-Ḥikam,* Words of wisdom 1444

Islam means declaration while faith means belief. Declaration is made by tongue while belief is to do with heart. Islam is completed by uttering the two testimonies but faith requires deeds. If you are humbly obedient towards God's instructions and have not turned a blind eye on them, you have indeed achieved the basis of faith.

## 36. The boundaries of rage and happiness

قالَ الصّادقُ عليه السلام:

﴿إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُ، الَّذِي إِذَا غَضِبَ، لَمْ يُخْرِجْهُ غَضَبُهُ مِنْ حَقٍّ وَ إِذَا رَضِيَ، لَمْ يُدْخِلْهُ رِضَاهُ فِي بَاطِلٍ﴾

Imam Ṣādiq (pbuh):

'The believer is the one whose rage would not lead him into straying from the right [path] when being angry and whose happiness would not lead him to straying into the wrong [path] when being happy'.

*Al-Kāfī*, vol 2, p 233

The believer rides on the vehicle of his own "self". If his self becomes angry he would not let that anger lead him outside the right path. Likewise, if he is happy he would not let his happiness lead him towards the wrong path. Doomed are those who are not in control of their vehicles.

## 37. The gathering of disobedience

قالَ الصّادقُ عليه السلام:

﴿لَايَنْبَغِي لِلْمُؤْمِنِ أَنْ يَجْلِسَ مَجْلِساً يُعْصَى اللَّهُ فِيهِ وَ لَايَقْدِرُ عَلَى تَغْيِيرِهِ﴾

Imam Ṣādiq (pbuh):

'It is not appropriate for a believer to remain seated in a gathering in which there is defiance of God ['s instructions] while he is unable to make any changes'.

*Al-Kāfī*, vol 2, p 374

When someone is asked as to why they did not say anything, they would reply by saying that no one would have listened to me. Changing what is happening there, is beyond their ability but leaving that place is certainly possible. They must get up and leave so that they may not be partners in their sins.

## 55. What matters is His satisfaction

قالَ رسولُ الله ﷺ:

﴿لَاتَخَفْ فِي اللَّهِ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ﴾

The Messenger of God (pbuh):

'Do not be afraid of the censure of the severe censurer in the path of God'.

*Wasā'il al-Shī'a*, vol 15, p 289

If you have discerned what your responsibility is you should no longer pay any attention to other people's judgments and censures. Others would censure you for many different issues such as a low dower, a simple dowry and even for living a life free of luxuries. What matters is God's satisfaction and contentment.

### 39. To whom are you teaching kindness towards servants?

قالَ رسولُ الله ﷺ:

﴿قَالَ اللَّهُ جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ: يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ! أَطِعْنِي فِيمَا أَمَرْتُكَ وَ لَا تُعَلِّمْنِي مَا يُصْلِحُكَ﴾

The Messenger of God (pbuh & hh):

'God the Sublime and Exalted said "O, son of Adam, Obey what I have commanded you and do not [attempt to] teach me what is expedient for you"'.

*Al-Amāli Li al-Ṣadūq*, p 320

Our duty is servitude and His role is to show kindness towards servants. Although we may not know how to be good servants, He knows how to be compassionate towards His servants.

## 40. The response to servitude

قالَتْ فاطِمةُ عليها السلام:

﴿مَنْ أَصْعَدَ إِلَى اللَّهِ خَالِصَ عِبَادَتِهِ أَهْبَطَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ أَفْضَلَ مَصْلَحَتِه﴾

Lady Fāṭima (pbuh):

'The one who sends his sincere worship up towards God, God shall send down to him what is most expedient for him'.

*Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol 68, p 184

Some acts of worship are deceptive and intended for eye service. Some people would only say prayers so that others would not accuse them of not performing their prayers. They fast so that others would not accuse them of not fasting. They are not accustomed to supplications and worship but they do so in order to deceive others and achieve certain goals. On the other hand, some acts of worship are sincere and there are no motives other than serving God. Such worship deserves the best

rewards, the best commendations, the best forms of sustenance and the best expediencies from God.



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