

Wellspring of Dua "Al Sahifah al Alaviyah"

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History cannot forget the glorious contribution of Amir al Muminin Ali in enriching Arabi literature. He has written various Adyaat (plural of Dua) for all occasions, which is available in "Al Sahifah al Alaviyah". This treasure of Adyaat provides us not only to sustain in this world but also offer us an opportunity to build suitable luggage for the long journey to the hereafter. If anyone reads "Al Sahifah al Alaviyah", with a true sense he will find that the writer is not only well informed of the entire prerequisite of Dua, but at the same time also aware with Him (Allah). Beside this, he has fulfilled the responsibility of introducing the reader with Marefat. It is admitted by historians that prior to sucking the milk of his mother; Ali first sucked the saliva of Rasulullah (S), as a spiritual and physical food. What saliva it was, which was filled with the blessings of Wahi, enabling Ali to proclaim upon the Minbar:

"Saluni Amma Dun'al Arsh"

(Ask me about whatever is under and beneath the skies).

According to the writer of "Sirah al Halbiyah", Vol. 1, Ali became entitled to "Lehmuka Lahmi". It is that ilm al Marefat, where the short sighted can have no access. These are 'Sacred Truths', towards which one can not get, unless Allah bestows him Tawfiq. Famous Sufi, Shams Tabrezi has beautifully interpreted the event in his famous Manqabat as follows:

"Syedi Sarwari Karam Gufta Ba Tu Ai Ibni Aam;

Lihmuka Lhmi Damuka Dami Dam Hama Dam Ali Ali"

(Rasulullah (S) said: "O, son of my Uncle! Your flesh is my flesh and your blood is my blood so, (O' people you) become the Rosarian of Ali").

The core purpose of "Al Sahifah al Alaviyah" is to extend the Talim of the Quraan. Ali ibn Abi Talib smashed idols of false prestigious claim of different faith. It was the practice in those days, that Zoroastrians, Jews and the Christians conducted religious rituals under the supervision of their clerics. The clergy claimed themselves as the 'Representatives of God on earth'. To remove this evil concept of the so called 'Sacred Class', Ali ibn Abi Talib bestowed a collection of Adyaat, for all seasons, to the Ummah. In each of his Dua one can find the springs of wisdom and divine secrets. Through "Al Sahifah al Alaviyah", Ali Ibn Abi Talib rejects the concept of Ruhbaniyat – celibacy and renunciation of the world. He provided guidance in crystal clear terms how to live in this world, and continue the mission to prepare the hereafter. Our religion does not want an increment in number of recluses, like cattle. It also strongly condemns those who adopt the way of celibacy, and ignore the worldly affairs for Ibadat. Ali provided comprehensible direction on this issue.

The first Dua of "Al Sahifah al Alaviyah" covers the topic of Hamd, with perfection. In a few sentences, Amir al Mumeneen Ali has praised Allah in such a superior manner that even the master of the subject of ilahiyaat (intellectuals of divine-realities) are unable to comprehend it. We do not find any other, after Ali, in the history of human, who discussed with eloquence, in short sentences, ocean of meanings. He taught manners to address the Creator, in a way that fulfills the requirement of Tawhid. In the history of Philosophy of Islam, it is only Ali who has discussed the topic of Tawhid perfectly. Some have presented it under the influence of Greek mythology. According to some, Almighty is seated upon the Arsh and through His weight Kursi is shaking. Some others have expressed that on the Day of Judgment we will be see Him and His face will more shimmering than Sun. Yet others have submitted that a voice will be heard from the Jahannam:

"Hal Min Mazid"

(Have needed more).

Someone have committed Shirk in Hamd, while discussed the Rehmat and said: (Nauzubillah) "He (Allah) entered His feet in the Jahannam"- to cool. Tawhid is such a difficult topic that highly skilled scholars are unable to translate the actual meanings, the voices of the orators break down, philosophers and intellectuals fail to express, but Ibn Abil Hudaidd al Mutazali, principal commentator of the "Nahj al Balagha" submitted his tribute to Ali in the following terms: "If Aristotle hears these wordings, his heart will melt and he will bow down, and a revolution would come in to his mind. Do not you see the loftiness of the wordings; sweetness is available with all colors of Latafat. I have never found words like it, anywhere".

An intelligent reading of the Adyaat of the Sahifah confirms the following merits:

- Oratory command on the peak
- Literary gems on the height

Famous intellectual poet and philosopher of the East, Syedna Nasir Khusraw submitted his feelings as follows:

*"Maruf Shud Bahi ilmi Tu Deen Zira;
Deen Oud Bud u Khatiri Tu Mabkhar"*

("Due to your ilm - indication towards the famous non-controversial Hadith: "I am City of Knowledge and Ali is its gateway", Islam got the prestige, example of religion is similar to the Oud – (Bukhur-smoke of fragrance); and resemblance of your chest is the like of Mabkhar" – (incense- burner).

Some scholars have written volumes in order to explain the meaning and significance of even short sentences of his various Adyaat. History can not trace a personality parallel to Ali, who has command on the topic of Tawhid with such fluency. Each and every sentence of "Dua al Hamd" contains a deep sense of wisdom. There is a flow of sacred energy. Besides philosophers or Intellectuals, if anyone reads only "Dua al Hamd", his heart would melt, and tears would roll down from his eyes. He would bow down his head in submissiveness, and sit down knees folded in the court of Ali. There would appear a

revolutionary change in his approach of understanding. It is not a matter of surprise that the manner of Dua is exactly a true reflection of the Quraan. Let us only consider the first sentence from "Dua al Sabah", which is a master piece of the Arabi literature. Ali says:

"Allahumma Ya Man Dalaa Lisanas Sabahi"

(O Allah! Who has discovered the tongue of morning from the power of speech).

Volumes are required for the interpretation of even the preliminary sentence of this Dua. Those who read this sentence in its true meaning are deeply drowned in a sea of amazement. This short sentence is an evidence of Ali's unquestioned mastery, expertise and command over Arabi language. It is Ali alone, who described Dawn as a tongue of Morning. Linguistics are surprised to observe the use of such metaphors. In "Dua al Sabah", Ali says at another place:

"Ya Man Dalla Ala Zatihi Bi'zatihi"

(The one who's Zaat (persona) is, it self proof of His existence).

Such sentences comprise of deep inner meanings. The famous Farsi phrase has been also derived from the above sentence:

"Aftab Aamad Dalili Aftab"

(Appearance of Sun is it self evidence of Sun).

The wordings of Ali ibn Abi Talib used in this Dua, cannot be fully expressed in any other language, except the Arabi alone.

"Dua al Kumail" is a peerless and precious gem available in the treasure of Ali, known as "Al Sahifah al Alaviyah". Each sentence of this Dua renders the reader spellbound. As "Surat al Yaseen" is supposed to be heart of the Quraan, likewise "Dua al Kumail" is considered as the nucleus of "Al Sahifah al Alaviyah". It is enough to mention that Awliya had composed numerous Adyaat, with the help of a single sentence available in the Sahifah. I cherish a beautiful Dua of the learned writer of "Al Shamus al Zahirah", 3rd al Dai al Fatemi, Syedna Hatim Mohiyuddin. He had composed this Dua in the famous fort of Al Hutaib, Hiraaz, Yaman, which begins, and is completed with in the opening sentence of the "Dua al Kumail". Accredited Scholars have written commentaries on numerous Adyaat (plural of Dua) of "Al Sahifah al Alaviyah", in Yemen Iran, Iraq and in India. In "Dua Mazkhur", Ali had discussed Tasbih and Tahmid with his miraculous power in a way, that it shakes the human feelings. Study the last sentence of the Dua with deep understanding. Only in eight words, Ali had covered all chapters of Maghfirat:

"Wa An Taf'al Bi Ma Anta Ahlahu La Ma Ana Ahlahu"

(And do what you deserve and not do what I deserve).

For "Istaghfaar" (repentance), in each era, selected chosen people of Allah have provided wordings, which are recorded later on, for seekers of Najaat-salvation. These previous sacred literatures are not enough to impress the minds of the readers, who before hand are in the influence of Ali's teachings. Dua No. sixteen has taught us a manner of Istaghfaar in which Ali has collected all the Ayaat related to Istaghfaar, and after each Ayat has repeated sentence of repent as follow:

"Wa Ana Astaghfiruka Wa Atubu ilyka"

(And I submitted my sorry to you and repent on it near you).

Ali had composed a number of Munajaat, which are shining gems of Arabi poetic literature. Devotees recite these Munajaat during night Salaat, especially in Ramazan. In one of his famous Munajaat he says:

*“Wa Kam Lil’lahiy Min Lut’fin Khafi’i;
Yaduq Khafau An Fahmaz Zakki’i”*

(Un-counted blessings of Allah are beyond the power of an intelligent person to count; as he is unable to realize).

Only those giant scholars of literature can value the wordings of Ali who know the difference between stones and gems of Arabi language. Not only scholars from the Muslim world, but non Muslims intellectuals are also influenced with the merits of the “Sahifah”. Hammer Purgstall (1774-1856), an Austrian Oriental, was born at Graz on the 9th of June 1774, the son of Joseph Johann von Hammer, and received his early education mainly in Vienna. Entering the diplomatic service in 1796, he was appointed in 1799 to a position in the Austrian embassy in Constantinople, and in this capacity he took part in the expedition under Admiral Sir William Sidney Smith and General Sir John Hely against the French. In 1807 he returned home from the East, after which he was made a privy councilor, and, on inheriting in 1835 the estates of the countess Purgstall in Styria, was given the title of "freiherr." In 1847 he was elected president of the newly founded academy, and he died at Vienna on the 23rd of November 1856. He learned Turkish, Persian and Arabi, in addition, Italian, French, Latin and Greek.

For fifty years Hammer-Purgstall wrote incessantly on the most diverse subjects, and published numerous texts and translations of Arabi, Persian and Turkish authors. Hammer Purgstall had command over the Hebrew language too. He tried to introduce his newly created version of the “Supplications of Ali” for prayer in the Synagogues, located in Arabi speaking areas, especially in Philistine and Syria. For this reason he had translated a number of Adyaat first in Hebrew and later in Arabi, with alterations, from Al Sahifah al Aalaviyah”, but the altered translations became devoid of the sweetness, original magnetic value and eloquence which was the basic component of the Sahifah. Therefore, he prepared an edited version in Arabi only; and deleted Ayaat and wordings of Salawaat upon Mohammad and Aale Mohammad. Afterwards, he introduced this version of prayers in Arabi speaking countries. The copy of this book is available in the renowned Aligarh University Library, India. This single example shows us that while we still neglect sources of blessings like “Al Sahifah al Alaviyah”, the people of other religions enjoy in its merits.

As soon as a person recites Adyaat of the Sahifah, he feels as if he is coming out of darkness. Today, in the age of information technology, people have lost their faith in Dua. They regard Dua as non important issue. Slaves of science and technology regard Dua as a non secondary matter. The factor responsible behind this approach is solely the clergy, who never discuss among the masses such a heritage. This “Sahifah” is not only a

collection of various Dua but it contains numerous treasures of science, which are still hidden. So called intellectuals have argued that how Ali came to know of the Secrets of the Universe, which science has yet to discover? Secular minded scholars have attempted unsuccessfully to explain that the conceptions communicated in "Al Sahifah al Alaviyah" are mythological. Such arguments of so-called intellectuals and scholars shows the denial of divine science, bestowed upon the "Selected Chosen People". The literates know very well that a Hindu, a Buddhist, a Jew or a Christian or anyone who practices and concentrates can achieve some hidden powers by an exercise. Hypnotism, Mesmerism, Reiki and Telepathy are branches of existence Science, through which one can know the hidden facts and events of the past and future by internal power. Then how is it possible that *Ibadi'hil' Lazinas'tafa* ('Selected Chosen Representatives of Allah') remains deprived from the Sacred Sciences? Can a person remain deprived of the science of the Universe to whom Rasulullah (S) taught one thousand chapters? Ali confirmed as Follows:

"Rasulullah(S) taught me one thousand chapters and from each chapter one thousand more chapters have been discovered for me"

Prince among the galaxy of scholars, Al Dai al Fatemi, Syedna Taher Saifuddin discussed the miraculous merits of Ali in Manqabat as follows:

*"Lahu Maqamun Rabubiyun Tajalala Ayn
Yuqasa Fil Wahmi Bil Marbube Tamsila"*

(For Ali al Murtaza, status of foster, he is above to visualize; none can imagine his lofty status-granted him by Allah)

Can a person like Ali remain ignorant of the secrets of the Universe? He occupies a high pedestal of Knowledge. He has discussed the affairs of the spiritual world as fluently as a native of a village can express the details of his residential area. A bird of human intellect has no excess to fly and enter in the divine world. Nor it has a power of human being to think about the vast ocean of Knowledge which Ali has? Imagine, the knowledge of the hidden sciences, over which Ali had command, and which allowed him to say the following sentence spontaneously:

"Lav Kushif'al Ghita Lama Azdat'tu Yaqinan"

(If curtain of the ultimate Ghaib would remove for me; even then it will not increase little, in my faith).

After Ali, his son Imam Husain also prepared a Sahifah, by the name of "Sahifah Husainyah". History can not forget the manner of Dua Husain taught. In Karbala, Iraq. Shimar attempted twelve times precisely to cut the throat of Husain, from an unsharpened dagger, mercilessly but in vain. Husain then proclaimed: "my throat is the kissing place of Rasulullah(S) since my birth. Let me perform final Sajdah and allow me an opportunity to offer Dua for the Ummah, and then you could separate my neck from the back". Can history produce such example of Dua which Husain taught.

His son, Imam Ali Zain al Abedeen also compiled a Sahifah, which is also famous as "Zubure Aale Mohammad". It was founder of Al Qahera al Moizziyah, 14th Fatemi Imam

al Moiz, who had written “Adyaat al Ayyam al Sabaa”. He produced seven Adyaat in total, each for a day of week. The Imam had discussed in the Adyaat the Haqiq-divine realities, on the hints given in the sermons of Ali, like in “Al Tanjiyah” and “Al Tananiyah”. The wordings he used are not only technical but esoteric and can not be communicated easily to anyone even if he claims to know Arabi language, until the learned guide teaches him. Awliya protect Asrar ilahiyah in scientific language, as divine policy, because a Hadith strictly directs as follows:

“La Tatrah’ul Jawahiru That’al Aqd’am al Khinzir”

(Do not throw the gems under the feet of the pig to perish”).

17th Fatemi Imam, Al Zahir also prepared Adyaat for each day of the week, and as per Alavi tradition he has showered through it gems of divine wisdom for the coming generation. During the era of 19th Fatemi Imam al Mustansir, his “Baab al Abwaab (highest rank after the Imam in Fatemi Ismaili hierarchy), Syedna al Moayyad al Shirazi had composed thirty Adyaat and collected them in his Sahifah, known as “Al Adyat al Moayyadiyah”. The base of Dua literature traces its origin from “Al Sahifah al Alaviyah” alone. Later in Yemen, Syedna Ibrahim al Hamedi prepared a book of lofty status, “Kanz al Walad”. For his compilation he took blessings of the wordings of Ali and the later sacred literature like Adyaat of the Fatemi Imams and “Al Adyat al Moayyadiyah”.

Mazun of the 3rd Al Dai al Fatemi, Syedna Hatim Mohiyuddin was a paramount scholar of the time. His name is Syedna Mohammad bin Taher. He compiled another paramount book, under the title of “Al Anwaar al Latifah”, and one famous Dua known as “Dua’il Aqalil Awwal”. It is regrettable that members of the Ummah are still ignorant with “Al Sahifah al Alaviyah”, which is itself a treasure of Sciences. This collection is an evidence of the Nubuwwat of Mohammad (S). Those who regularly recite Dua from “Al Sahifah al Alaviyah” can understand well that it has miraculous powers. “Al Sahifah al Alaviyah” clearly reflects the skill of language and approach that remains devoted to a field of human understanding.

This collection of Dua is a basic pillar of the glorious edifice of the Fatemi Literature. Even today the devotees derive a lot from this treasure. “Al Sahifah al Alaviyah” has provided an opportunity of learning. Out of multifarious subjects, one can find following topics of common interest also:

- How a sufferer of loan, or a needy for protection from tyrant should ask?
- Which Dua should be recited after sighting of the Moon?
- Which Dua should be recited daily during the month of Ramazan?
- What one should beg for on the night of Eid al Fitar and on the day of Eid?
- Which Dua should be recited for cure from diseases & how should one ask for Rizaq?
- What is to be asked for and when? In what manner the begging hands should be extended?

In short, this collection of Dua is an unparalleled, matchless, priceless and peerless asset for the Ummah. Ibadat and good deeds are the basic components of salvation. We in this present age are not fully aware with divine realities. Ali knew this Haqaiq fully, and used to shiver, during Ibadat and said:

“Ah’in Li Qil’latil Z’adi wa Tawli Safar”

(Ah---the Luggage is small- in quantity- and the journey is long)

It is a great generosity of Ali that he has provided us a source of sufficient belongings, which helps us in the long journey for the hereafter. This valuable baggage ensures the travelers, to help till sustain him up till his final destination. It is such a scale for the virtuous, without which a determination of the standard of piety is not only difficult but is rather impossible. Indeed, it is beyond the limit of human intellect to cover all aspects, and discuss fully the merits of the Sahifah, with intellectual understanding. Those who are influenced with modern science, technology and atomic-energy, are totally unaware with this treasure of infinite knowledge. It is time that scholars of the Muslim world pay attention towards this neglected sacred treasure, which is beyond the curtain due to the bias attitude of the enemies. It is a ripe time to pay close attention towards this sacred literature. Many vistas of learning would open, and its results would lead us towards the forgotten path of progress. Finally, concluding this discussion on the verses of the Manqabat, written by 51st Al Dai al Fatemi, Syedna Taher Saifuddin, as “Khitaam al Misk”-seal of fragrance:

“Sal’amun Alike Amir’al Arab;

Amin’al ilahi Munil’al Arab”

(O Amir al Arab! O Trustee of Allah! O distributor of wishes - on behalf of Allah, upon you Salaam)

“Shahidtu Biannika Qumta Bi Amar’il;

ila’hi wa Addayta Ma Qad Wajab”

(I testify that you had enforced laws of Allah and performed obligatory responsibility which was assigned to you)

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