

Fitrah-Oriented Child Training: Salvation and Prosperity

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Dec.2016

Abstract: every human being has been endowed with an ability and talent of getting to perfection by God, therefore, it can be claimed all mankind are talented enough to get to perfection. In addition to it, every parent's most significant concern is to know these abilities and wise care to realize them. Now, the question in front of us is what are the most influential factors in children's prosperity based on Quran and traditions of infallibles? The present article deals with some aspects of this issue mentioned in Quran and traditions to offer a practical guidelines in this regard. The method of research is library research. The results show that Fitrah of human beings is their best capital in their salvation and by its gradual flourish, children's salvation is guaranteed.

Key words: Child prosperity, Fitrah-oriented training, God-given talents; Fitrah

In modern era, due to inevitable changes and evolutions and the unbelievable speed of science and technology from one hand, and cultural expansions which can lead into destroying religious culture or cultural and

religious denial, each society can be a target of an attack. Youth nowadays are more vulnerable than other times as they are more faced with this raid; regarding the fact that words of God and Sunnah of infallible

imams include all training requirements, human beings are in need more than other time of taking advices of Quran and infallibles in choosing their way. Body and soul of a child is given to her/his parents in trust to be trained. But this great duty is not feasible without paving the ground into this goal. By knowing prerequisites and preparing them, children divine features can blossom and naturally they can get to a pure holy satisfaction. Recognizing all necessary prerequisites to get to salvation is not in the domain of human beings' knowledge and understanding. To compensate human beings' inability, heavenly teachings and divine revelation are obligatory to reach this holy happiness which in its light longer steps can be taken. In Divine teachings and words of infallibles these steps and procedures have been explained. Studying them can help us to map a way of prosperity suggested by holy Quran.

Literal and expressional meaning of prosperity

Prosperity in word means benediction, goodness and happiness in an affair, which is against mischief, misery and adversity. In Quran, in addition to this meaning, assisting, accompanying, and God's given grace are also added. In this expressional meaning, different analysis have been given, because this meaning is interpreted in different ways based on ideology: the

way a person looks at life and human beings; therefore, it can be said based on various ideologies, various prosperities have been defined; therefore, some people seek it in drowning themselves in worldly pleasures and some seek its meaning somewhere above worldly pleasures and seek perfect perfection, i.e. God.

Training: the foundation of Prosperity

According to the verses of Quran and traditions, real prosperity and eternal life of human beings depend on refinement and self-purification which lead us to the highest level of humanity; this is possible in the light of training; this training, in fact , is the very purification of soul from evils and illuminates it with goodness. In this regard, Imam 'Alī (p.b.u.h.) said,

حسن الادب خير موازر و افضل قرين.

Which means "the best clothes and ornament and companions are politeness."¹ The ultimate training is getting to salvation and prosperity which is in fact the foundation of creation. According to traditions, the cause of perfection and goodness is to acquire virtues. This acquirement believed to be the result of having good ancestors. Imam 'Alī said,

ليست الانساب بالاباء و الامهات لكنها بالفضائل المحمودات .

Human beings are talented to enjoy virtues of God and this would not happen unless by divine training.

Quran includes the best and most comprehensive training methods

The best method to train human being is the one which is based on true familiarity with human being and all his needs and aspects of him and his real destination; this method is in fact what God orders and Sunnah (the lifestyle of infallible imams) teaches. God knew this way useful and says,

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ

“This Quran shows the way to that which is the most upright” (17:9)

There is a close relationship between prosperity in the other World and training; anyone who receives Godly training would be of those who find salvation. It is because training is to grow Fitrah of human beings, the Fitrah which is Monotheist which means preparing ground to grow mankind’s divine talents and providing essential requirement to flourish Fitrah towards Absolute perfection; therefore one of the main pillars of mankind’ prosperity is to be trained based on Fitrah.

Human beings’ child, the mere creation able to be trained and be perfected

All alive creatures knew their way towards perfection well due to the inborn guidance,

and they are needless of educating, but human beings need education to put his inborn talents into practice. Therefore, the first step of training is to recognize inborn talents; there are various traditions concerning the importance of this recognition and it is in fact introduced as the base and fundamental of prosperity. Imam ‘Alī said in this regard,

معرفة النفس انفع المعارف

Knowing the abilities of human beings is the most useful knowledge.²

A prosperous person is the one who pays attention to all resources and capitals of himself, which are part of his fitrah, and does not go out of the Fitrah path, which prosperity is tied to flourishing Fitrah.³ The inborn talents of human beings are the capitals for their prosperity and base of happiness. Spiritual elevation is caused by being able to be educated. This truth has been explained by imam ‘Alī who said,

ان النفس لجوهره ثمينه من صانها رفعها و من ابتذلها وضعها⁴

“The soul of human being is a precious gem, anyone who keeps it from evil (and educate and discipline it) is getting it to an elevated position and anyone who drowns it in banality and inferiority will become despicable and degraded.”

In Quran it is asserted that God Almighty has stated,

فَذَاقُوا ثَمْرَ الْفَلَحِ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا

“Prosperous is he who purified it,” (Shams,9).

Edification and building up the soul truly will lead to prosperity and salvation. Therefore, educating is the base of prosperity and the foundation of education is edification of soul. Each education and training in case of being accompanied by edification and building up soul can be helpful to construct human beings' salvation. Growing children's talents and abilities is the base of children's edification; this base of edification in fact is founded in childhood. Training is a goal-oriented issue. Tracing back a lot of virtues and moralities, we can find the root in having good training.

Educating Fitrah

In Islam, it is regarded as duties of parenting to train themselves and anyone under their custody and know themselves responsible in their education. Belief in God is the base of religious training and prosperity.

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

“Prosperous are the believers,” (23, 1)

Human beings are endowed with the gift of faith and their fitrah is familiar with God. Fitrah is based on purity and pure goodness which is the greatest capital in their prosperity. Realization of this Fitrah asset can provide them with a prosperous life.

Fitrah efflorescence: a gradual affair

Fitrah efflorescence is a gradual affair and it can not be expected all people at once do good and avoid bad deeds. This gradual and level-based changing is of God's Sunnah in His creation, in Prophets' missions and legislation. Prophets and infallibles also followed the same instructions and invited people to the religion of Unity of God. According to this, God ordered His Prophet:

وَقُرْآنًا فَرَقْنَاهُ لِتَقْرَأَهُ عَلَى النَّاسِ عَلَى مُكُتٍ وَنَزَّلْنَاهُ تَنْزِيلًا

“We have divided the Quran into many segments so that you would read them to the people in gradual steps as We reveal them to you from time to time.” (17: 106)

Announcing all religious laws and messages at once was out of people's tolerance and could scare and estrange people. It is suitable that parents patiently and gradually inspire their children with laws. We should bear in our mind that childhood is not a duty-based period of life, but it is a step to get familiar and practice. Before his/her puberty age, religious duties should be simplified and let them be free in doing them. In this way, they will feel their sweetness and religion will influence their soul. Acquiring moral virtues is a process which its performance suddenly is not possible and needs passage of time and perseverance. It is advised from infallibles, in a detailed tradition, parents should teach

religious duties to a child gradually and in various ages: when they are third-year old, they should be taught to say God is One, when they are four-year old to say Muhammad is His Prophet,... . Other religious rules should be taught to them step by step.

In a tradition we read: when a child turns three, read to him “there is no God but Allah” seven times, then let him be carefree until he is three years and seven months and twenty days, ask him to repeat seven times “Muhammad is Allah’s messenger”. Let him play up to his four years old; when his four years old finishes, ask him to repeat for seven times, “Peace be upon Muhammad and his holy family.” In his five years old teach him right and left hand. When he learns, turn his face to Qiblah and ask him to prostrate...⁵

Faith and purity, conditions of salvation

Quran expresses firmly and explicitly,

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

“Prosperous are the believers,”(23:1)

And in

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا

“Those who purify their souls will certainly have everlasting happiness”(91:9)

and

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى

“Prosperous is he who purifies himself,” (87:14)

In holy Quran, the word “prosperous” has been mentioned eleven times and in three cases, it has been spoken about certain and definite salvation; this salvation depends on faith, edification and building up soul. By comparing them, it becomes clear that they have the same essence and the goal of all programs of Islam is to educate and the zenith of education should be salvation. Also, the roots of faith and belief should be fixed and reinforced in children and they should be helped to flourish their endowed talents. Therefore, attention in children’s training is of the most important issues, of children’s rights on their parents and the cause of their salvation.

تجب للولد على والده ثلاث خصال اختياره لوالدته و تحسين اسمه و المبالغة في تاديبه⁶

One of the obligatory rights of children on parents is to attempt and pay attention to their training. As in Sirah of Prophet Abraham and other infallibles, it was customary that they advised their children to follow Islam and do believe in God and be persistent in this way:

وَوَصَّى بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَا بَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَى لَكُمُ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

“Abraham charged his children with this, and so did Jacob, saying: ‘My sons, Allah has chosen for you the religion. Do not die

except being submissive (Muslims). (2: 132). This verse teaches us Abraham's attention to religious training of his children. Quran clarifies this truth that you human beings are responsible for your offspring, next generation, their spiritual life and even hereafter. Quran says in this regard,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا

“Believers, guard yourselves and your families against the Fire”(66,6)

This verse warns parents to care for themselves, their family and children not to be misled.

One of the lessons of Nahjul Balaghah and instructions of imam ‘Alī is to have sense of responsibility in front of religious faith of children. The importance of this issue is apparent in the advices of imam ‘Alī to his son imam Hasan in letter 31 of Nahjul Balaghah which is well-known as Islamic training code.

وجدتك بعضی بل وجدتك کلی حتی كان شیئا لو اصابک
اصابنی

I see you not as a part of my body but as whole of my body in a way that if you are afflicted with misery, it is me who is afflicted.

Expedience in religious training

Modern time in comparison to the past is full of conflicts and threats. Youth, each moment, are exposed by immoral teachings

and misguidance, in this situation it is important parents be wise and prudent to prepare a good field to cultivate morality and harvest their children's prosperity. One of the most significant arrangements is to haste in religious training of children.

Attempt to religious training: children's right

Imam ‘Alī, due to the importance of religious training of a child and its impact which is more if it is started on young hood, which is a good period to carve personality of a person, mentioned the reason of this haste in religious training like this,

و انما قلب الحدث كالارض الخاليه ما القى فيها من شى قبلته...

It is a warning which says if you do not accelerate to cultivate seeds of faith in the hearts of children their hearts may be attracted to immorality and sins.

It is narrated from imam Sadiq who said, when the verse ايها الناس امنوا قوا انفسكم و اهليكم نارا has been sent down, people said, oh, the messenger of God! How can we rescue ourselves and our families? He answered, do good deeds and advise your family to do good deeds and grow them up based on God's obedience.

Childhood, the easiest time to train children

The easiest time to accept any kind of training is childhood; because children's souls are free from any conflicts which

resist to be trained. In the traditions of infallibles there are serious advices about attention to this point in the seven years of life of any child as these seven years are the most important period in forming a child personality. Because the teachings of this period of time can not be eliminated. The roots of most of our behavior trace back to our childhood and is resulted from parent's teaching. The first learning is similar to the seeds planted in the brain of a child and later on will grow like a stem and turn into a tree which will gives sweet or bitter fruits.

Guidance is a goal-oriented affair and the base of a child personality is prepared then. Imam Sadiq said, teach your kids Islamic traditions as soon as possible before opponents accelerate and fill your children's heart with untrue words.

Familiarizing children with love of God

Leading to God does not need philosophical or complicated logical reasons. The fitrah of children itself can prove God.

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا

“Therefore set your face to the religion purely, the upright creation upon which He originated people.” (30, 30)

In the interpretation of this verse it has been written by Allamah Tabatabai that the only way to be rescued is to face inborn identity which is fitrah. So join your fitrah. The

zenith of love and the most elevated love is to love God. If this love is real, it will bring obedience, as God says,

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

“Say (Prophet Muhammad): 'If you love Allah, follow me and Allah will love you, and forgive your sins. Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.’ (3, 31)

If the love of God fills heart of a child, His obedience will be easy for the child. Because his pure fitrah will be attracted to Him and the result of this attraction is obedience. The first and fundamental point in training a child is to draw his attention to God. Prophet's style in training is awakening Fitrah. The holy Prophet, according to the word of Quran, is just a reminder.

فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُذَكِّرٌ

“Therefore remind, you are only a Reminder.” (88, 21) because he was not appointed to introduce God to us but to awaken our Fitrah. A child is born by monotheistic fitrah and if his environment is suitable, he will not go astray. The world is sign of God. Children's eyes should be opened up to the endless power and secret of God. They should be invited to study and contemplate on the creations of the world. Through this way, hearts can be surrounded to their Creator and there is no higher and more pleasure than worshipping God. Quran invites people to

contemplation on the universe for example in surah Baqarah, verse 164, Tareq, verses 5-6 and Ghaf, verses 6-8.

Children should be taught since early time from childhood with simple and understandable language about God's unlimited blessing and kindness and inspire children's heart with love of God. They should know God creates us and gives us everything. Faith can easily open up its way to children hearts but later on in their adulthood it is difficult: a young branch is flexible but not a dry branch. In a tradition from imam Baqir God told Moses, love me and by remembering my blessings and kindness make people love me. Therefore, faith and belief in God is the base of disciplining children, the morality advisors see unbreakable relationship between belief in God and morality; faith is the spring of all virtues. Having sense of responsibility, observing ethical codes, setting good goals for life, ... all depend on faith.

Familiarizing children with love of Prophet and Ahlul Bayt

After love of God, love of Prophet and Ahlul Bayt should be taught; the infallibles who could successfully passed their way towards God can only be good guides towards prosperity. Therefore drawing children's attention to imams and infallible can play a great role in training children. As the holy Prophet repeatedly told imam 'Ali,

ان السعيد حق السعيد من احبك و اطاعك

A true prosperous person is one who loves you and obeys you.

The reality of life, in the light of wilayah (guardianship of imam 'Ali)

In the principals of Shia belief, salvation and real life are tied up to obedience of infallibles and in the hearts of verses and traditions refusing wilayah (guardianship) is similar to death and dead body.

أَوْ مَنْ كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَنْ مَثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

"Is he who was dead whom We have revived and given a light with which he walks among people to be compared to him who blunders about in darkness from which he will never emerge? As such what the unbelievers have done appear decorated to them."(6, 122) or for example in Surah An'am verse 36 or Nahl verse 97.

In fact, a person who believes in imam, has a sort of living different from others and his understanding is more than others. Therefore, in mentioned verses there are expression which liken misdirection as death, and faith and guidance as life; going towards faith as revitalizing; making ways towards good deeds as light.

In an interpretation book of Quran titled Noor al-Thaqalayn we read in the interpretation of the verse 6 surah 6 of Quran from infallible that meaning of a

light which revitalizes human being is the presence of infallible imam.

Wilayah: the base of Islam and true prosperity

The base of real Islam is Ahlul Bayt's friendship. Quran advises us to love Prophet and his family. In verse 24th of Surah Tubah the love of Prophet is mentioned besides the love of God. The truth and reality of faith will realize its values when love of God and His Prophet surround all other attachments, family and children. In fundamentals of Shia belief after belief in God and His obedience, friendship and obedience of Ahlul Bayt is mentioned; because it is order of God who says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

“Believers, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. Should you dispute about anything refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is better and the best interpretation.” (Nisa 59) In fact, following Prophet and his family is obedience of God. In frequent traditions like hadith by Jabir, it is apparent that meaning of Ulul-amr is imams and infallibles. Therefore, the important point in training children is to train them with the love of Prophet and imams. Therefore, the holy Prophet told us,

ادبوا اولادكم على ثلاث خصال ، حب نبيكم و حب آل بيته و تلاوه القرآن

Raise your kids with three characteristics: love of Prophet, love of Ahlul Bayt and reciting Quran. In interpretation book of Lahiji we read about the verse 125 Surah Nahl, “This route is Islam and obedience of infallibles.” As imam Sadiq said,

و الله نحن السبيل الذي امركم الله باتباعه

I swear God we are the route which God advised you to obey.

It has been narrated from Prophet who said,

من رزقه الله حب الائمه من اهل بيتي فقد اصاب خير الدنيا و الآخرة، فلا يشك ان الله في الجنة .

Anyone who is endowed with the love of imams of my family has, in fact, found access to the blessings of this world and hereafter and there is no doubt he / she is heaven-settler. In an explanation of Surah Hood verse 107, from imam Baqir, has been said, anyone who joins Muhammad and his family (accepts their guardianship) will enter heaven and anyone who joins their enemies, will go to hell. It has been narrated from Imam Baqir and imam Sadiq that heaven and hell in this verse refer to wilayah of Muhammad and wilayah of his enemies.

Encouragement to prayer

It is suitable that parents gradually and step by step prepare their children to do their religious duties. One of the religious

principles is to draw children's attention to prayer and emphasizing on it.

حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ

And preserve the prayers and the middle prayer, and stand obedient to Allah.(2, 238) observe your prayers. (31: 17). In fact prayer, as a main base of religion has a significant role in prohibition of sins. Imam 'Alī said in this regard,

الصلاة حصن من سطوات الشيطان

Prayer is like a strong fortress which saves human beings from satanic temptations. An attempt should be made to reach a child to psychological equilibrium and moral purity by supplication, then a child will get used to it and become part of his personality. A child should be encouraged to practice religious customs. Imam Sadiq said, we advise and encourage our children to say prayer while they are five year old but you encourage your children when they are seven. Luqmān also advised his son to pray after he had advised him about Ma'ad, and said,

يَا بُنَيَّ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَانْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَاصْبِرْ عَلَى مَا أَصَابَكَ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ

“My son, establish the prayer, order with honor but forbid dishonor, and bear patiently with whatever may fall upon you, indeed that is true constancy.” (31 17)

Fitrah training of a child based on moderation

God says, 2, 143.

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا ...

“And so We have made you a median nation...”

Quran points out to a characteristic of an Islamic nation which is “moderation”. A training which is based on Fitrah should be based on moderation as well. Because creation of human being is such that any tendency to break moderation will harm him. Moderation is the criteria of Quranic behavior and infallibles' behavior. Extremism is of harmful factors in training a child. Imam 'Alī said,

فكل تقصير به مضر كل افراط له مفسد

So any ignorance will cause harm and immoderation is cause of corruption. In the words of imam, explicitly, it has been said that immoderation could not reach us to goals and the way which is explained by God is moderation. Training based on Fitrah is a moderate and logical program. Therefore, God in each affair, invites human beings to moderation (Luqmān, 19) Imam 'Alī said,

اليمن و الشمال مضله، و الطريق الوسطى هي الجاده عليها باقى الكتاب و اثار النبوه.

In left and in right is the ambush of mislead and moderation is the path of God. The book of God and the Sunnah of Prophet are

the Proof. Don't you see an ignorant person who goes to extremes? Imam Baqir said,

ليس منا من ترك دنياه لآخرته و لا اخرته لدنياه.

Moderation and balanced between body and soul of a child is the greatest cause of his salvation. Health and salvation of a child rest in having a balanced training, being too strict or too lenient both are blameworthy. The base of ethics is moderation. To save human beings and leading her to prosperity moderation is the best policy.

Fitrah training based on Quran

In words of infallibles we can see their respect to their children. For example in a hadith titled hadith Kasa, the interaction of Prophet and Hazrat Zahra with imam Hasan and Imam Husayn is a clear example of our claim. The Prophet addressed them by saying you are part of my body, or the fruit of my heart, or the light of my eyes are some examples of our claim.

Spiritual growth of a child result of Munificence

Perfection of a human being is possible in the light of munificence. Imam 'Alī said,

عليكم بمكارم الاخلاق فانها رفعه

All virtues are flourished in the light of Kiramah (munificence). The best and most stable principle to train Fitrah is to respect children. When a child receives respect, the feeling of being importance emerges in him and he is encouraged to go towards goodness; in fact he sees himself greater than a person who does every thing good or bad, worthy or unworthy.

Respecting others, the trend of infallibles

Mission of all Prophet was to help human beings to reach Kiramah. If human beings do not know their value, they will sell themselves for nothing worthy. Nothing can be as dangerous as feeling unworthy. The holy Prophet said,

اكرموا اولادكم و احسنوا ادابكم.

Value your children and train them well. In the light of respecting children, it is possible to raise virtues in them. A child who grows up in a family who respects him, has balanced behavior. The goal of training will not be fulfilled unless his soul stays away from sins and finds peace.

¹ Leithi Vaseti

² Tamimi Amedi, p.712

³ Falsafi, vol.1, p.175

⁴ Tamimi Amedi, p.227

⁵ Tabarsj, vol.1,p.425

⁶ Ibn Shu'ba Harrani,p.3

Moral Principles and Behaviour In

Al-Sahifah al-Sajj^{adi}yah

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Jan. 2017

Abstract: *The basic productive interaction between people is to provide respect and to recognize the other's efforts. In the work place, the basic assumption is that each person expects fair compensation for one's efforts and the corresponding recognition for those efforts. At the start of the third millennium, the world is, in some ways, entering a time of economic disarray. Some of the world's troubles probably arise because of the lack of understanding those basic rules of human behaviour, Principles of Morality and Ethics.*

Al-Sahifah al-Sajj^{adi}yah, as an Islamic reference and religious book, is a celebrated collection of supplicatory prayers attributed to Zayn-al-Ābedin Ali b. Hosayn, also known as Imam Sajjād, the fourth Imam of the Imami Shiites. The Al-Sahifah al-Sajj^{adi}yah is an important source of Shite piety, and its prestige is reflected in its honorific titles, Zabur āl Mohammad (the psalms of the family of Mohammad) and Enjil Ahl al-Bayt (gospel of the prophet's family; Majlisī, Bihār al-Anwār XXV, p. 305).

Keywords: Al-Sahifah al-Sajj^{adi}yah, Supplications