

Manifestation of the Divine Light, A Glimpse into the Spiritual Greatness of Fatima az-Zahra

Manifestation of the Divine Light



**A Glimpse into the Spiritual Greatness
of Fatima az-Zahra - Shaykh 'Ali
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Article

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Manifestation of the Divine Light, A Glimpse into the Spiritual Greatness of Fatima az-Zahra (s.a.)

Written by Shaykh 'Ali Sa'adat Parwar

Translated by Saleem Bhimji for www.al-mubin.org [3]

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious [to all of His creation], the Most Merciful [to those who believe in Him]

Al-'Urayqi [a companion of the 5th Imam] has said: "One day, Imam al-Baqir, peace be upon him, said to me: When you enter the burial area of my grandmother, Fatima, peace be upon her, say the following¹:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious [to all of His creation], the Most Merciful [to those who believe in Him]

يَا مُتَحَنِّنُ

O the one who was carefully examined:

إِمْتَحَنَكَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَخْلُقَكَ

Allah had tried you before He created you,

فَوَجَدَكَ لِمَا إِمْتَحَنَكَ صَابِرَةً

And thus He found you successfully patient (and enduring) in that trial.

وَزَعَمْنَا أَنَّا لَكَ أَوْلِيَاءُ وَمُصَدِّقُونَ

We claim that we are your loyalists and believers,

وَصَابِرُونَ لِكُلِّ مَا أَتَانَا بِهِ أَبُوكَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ،

and standing as regards all that which has been conveyed to us by your father – peace of Allah be upon him and his Household,

وَأَتَى بِهِ وَصِيَّهُ،

And all that which his successor has brought to us.

فَإِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ إِن كُنَّا صَدَقْنَاكَ

We thus ask you, if we have truly believed in you,

إِلَّا الْحَقَّتْنا بِتَصَدِّيقِنَا لَهُمْ

That you may include us with those who believe in all of them all,

لِنُبَشِّرَ أَنْفُسَنَا بِأَنَّا قَدْ طَهَّرْنَا بِوَلَايَتِكَ

So that we may feel happy that we have been purified on account of our loyalty towards you.

Explanation

The rites of visitation (*ziyarat*) for Fatima az-Zahra, peace be upon her, [which have been narrated in the books of supplication] are more than what has been cited (above) and a majority of the content of the passages conform with the traditions that speak of her excellence and also the repression which she endured.

However at this stage of our analysis of this illustrious woman (Fatima az-Zahra, peace be upon her), we will suffice ourselves with reviewing this particular *ziyarat* which examines a portion of the prominence of this notable lady and we direct the respected readers to contemplate on the following points.

The portion which reads:

يَا مُمْتَحَنَةٌ. إِمْتَحَنَكَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَخْلُقَكَ

“O the one who was carefully examined: Allah had tried you before He created you (for this worldly life)...”

can be appreciated in two ways, and in either reading, the understanding we derive is that her ‘creation’ [which is spoken about in this line] is something other than her physical creation, and this is something which we proved in chapter 1 of this work.[2](#)

First Supposition

The *adverb for time or place* (الظَرْفُ) which is contained in the word ‘قَبْلَ’ – ‘before’ in this sentence returns back to the phrase ‘خَلَقَكَ’ – ‘He (Allah) **created** you (Fatima az-Zahra)’ – and if we take this possibility to be the intended meaning, then the understanding of this portion of her visitation is rendered as:

“O the carefully examined one: Allah had tested you and found you successfully enduring the trial; Allah the One Who, before creating you in this material world, had created you in the worlds of the celestial light...”

With this meaning, we comprehend that this sentence only indicates to the creation (in the *Worlds of the Celestial Light*) of Fatima az-Zahra, peace be upon her, and not to her physical creation on this earth. As a result, in this reading, there is no evidence that the testing which she underwent and which Allah found her to be ‘successfully enduring’ took place in any other plane of existence other than the existence of this temporal, material world.

Second Supposition

The *adverb for time or place* (الظَرْفُ) which is contained in the word ‘قَبْلَ’ – ‘before’ in this sentence returns back to the phrase ‘إِمْتَحَنَكَ’ – ‘He (Allah) **tested** you (Fatima az-Zahra)’ – and if we take this supposition to be the intended meaning, then the understanding of this portion of her visitation is rendered as:

“O the carefully examined one: before Allah had created you in this temporal, material world, He had tried you and found you successfully enduring the trial; and then from there He created you in this material world...”

With this meaning and understanding, it is possible that the meaning of ‘قَبْلَ’ which is found in ‘قَبْلَ أَنْ يَخْلُقَكَ’ – ‘[he tested you] before He (Allah) created you (Fatima az-Zahra)’ relates to the examination which she went through in the ‘*World of the Intermediate State – al-alam al-barzakh*’ just as Prophet Àdam – Abu’l Bashir, peace be upon him – was also Divinely tested in that world – and we have

discussed this issue in part one, tradition four of this book.³

According to the second interpretation, we can safely say that: The meaning of ‘قَبْلُ’ which is found in “قَبْلُ أَنْ يَخْلُقَكَ” – ‘[he tested you] before He (Allah) created you (Fatima az-Zahra)’ is a reference to ‘*The World of the Celestial Lights – al-alam al-anwar*’ and ‘*The World of Corresponding or Parallel – al-alam al-tamatthul*’ and it was in those worlds where the examination took place.

At this point, a few questions arise:

In what form does the Divine examination take place in “*The Worlds of the Celestial Lights*”, “*The Worlds of Corresponding or Parallel*” and “*The Worlds of the Intermediary Realm*”? What is the meaning of them? Are the examinations which take place in other than ‘*The World of Responsibilities – al-alam al-dunya*’ (this temporal, transient world) compatible [with our understanding that tests only occur when one is charged with fulfilling a Divinely-measured duty]?

In response to such questions it must be stated that:

The type of examination which took place in the three worlds mentioned above is undeniably not clear to us. However what is known to us is that in whatever plane of existence we are in, the examinations must be conducive to that world. In ‘*The World of Responsibilities – al-alam al-dunya*’ the tests are conducive to this plane; in ‘*The Worlds of the Celestial Lights*’ or in ‘*The Worlds of the Intermediary Realm*’, the tests are conducive to those environments. For the ones who have been rendered sincere⁴ (al-Mukhlāṣīn - الْمُخْلِصِينَ), their tests are of one nature while for the rest of humanity, there tests are of a different nature.

An Explanation Of The Divine Examinations

1. Perhaps we can state that the [first] Divine examination which was taken from humanity is when they were in their pre-Earthly existence, and this was the test of our promise and pact – ‘*The Pact of True Servitude*’ which Allah took from the offspring of Adam, peace be upon him, when He said:

﴿أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَا بَنِي آدَمَ أَنْ لَا تَعْبُدُوا الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ. وَأَنْ اعْبُدُونِي هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ﴾⁵

“Did I not exhort you, O children of Adam, saying, do not worship Satan. He is indeed your manifest enemy. Worship Me. This is a straight path”? (Al-Qur’an, Yasin, 36:60-61)

2. It is also possible that the second meaning of the Divine examination is in reference to ‘*The Taking of the Firm Covenant*’ from the children of Adam, peace be upon him, when He says:

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَى شَهِدْنَا أَنْ تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ﴾

﴿الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ﴾

“When your Lord took from the Children of Adam, from their loins, their descendants and made them bear witness over themselves, [He said to them,] ‘Am I not your Lord?’ They said, ‘Yes indeed! We bear witness.’ [This,] lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, ‘Indeed we were unaware of this.’” (Al-Qur’an, Al-A’raf 7: 172).

3. The third meaning of the Divine examination is the taking of ‘*The Immutable Agreement*’ which was taken from a group of high-ranking Prophets or in some interpretations, from all of the Prophets, and was one in which even Fatima az-Zahra, peace be upon her, was also included due to her extremely close relationship with the Prophets of God or even with only the high-ranking Prophets. We read in the Noble Qur’an:

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ مِيثَاقَهُمْ وَمِنْكَ وَمِنْ نُوحٍ وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُم مِّيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا لِّسْأَلِ ۚ الصَّادِقِينَ عَنْ صِدْقِهِمْ وَأَعَدَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا﴾

“[Recall] when We took a pledge from the prophets, and from you [Muhammad] and from Noah and Abraham and Moses and Jesus son of Mary, and We took from them a solemn pledge, so that He may question the truthful concerning their truthfulness. And He has prepared for the faithless a painful punishment.” (Al-Qur’an, Al-Ahzab 33:7-8)

In summary we can state that:

The discussion on ‘*The Pact of True Servitude*’, and ‘*The Taking of the Firm Covenant*’ (from all of the children of Adam, peace be upon him) and ‘*The Immutable Agreement*’ taken from the Prophets [and from Fatima az-Zahra, peace be upon her] was not merely one oath. Rather they were three separate oaths taken and each of these was taken in one [of the] worlds, and the type of creation [which had taken these oaths] was one of the various stages of creation when the individuals were ‘lights’. And Allah knows best...

In any case, this analysis has looked at merely one angle of the Divine examination while the other aspects of the Divine examinations which are manifest in its outward realization of the Divine test will take place in this material world and it will not be until the ‘last world’ where we will be questioned in regards to the examination [which took place in our current plane of existence – meaning this present world].

[1.](#) Please note that the translation of this ziyarat as presented below will be further elucidated upon in this article and thus, the wordings presented here will differ from the actual discussion due to limitations in the English language to preserve and convey the meanings in the Arabic text. (Tr.)

[2.](#) Available in the original work written in Farsi, The Manifestation of Divine Light by Shaykh ‘Ali Sa’adat Parwar

[3.](#) Available in the original work written in Farsi, The Manifestation of Divine Light by Shaykh ‘Ali Sa’adat Parwar

4. This footnote has not been included in the original text; it is presented by the translator to further elaborate on this subtle difference.

There is a stark difference between two relatively similar terms: al-Mukhlāḥin (الْمُخْلِصِينَ) and al-Mukhlīn (الْمُخْلِينَ) – and even though there is only one vowel point which makes the pronunciation different, however that one difference radically changes the meaning of the words. In his seminal work, Tafsire Namuneh, Āyatullah al-ʿUṣma Shaykh Naḥīr Makarim Shirazi states that:

It must be noted that the word “الْمُخْلِصُ” – “al-Mukhlāḥ” is the passive participle (al-ism al-mafʿul) and is in the meaning of ‘one who has been made sincere’; while the word “الْمُخْلِي” – “al-Mukhlī” which is the active participle (al-ism al-faʿil) can be rendered as ‘one who is making himself sincere’. By carefully studying the verses of the Qurʾan we clearly see that “الْمُخْلِي” – “al-Mukhlī” has been used more often than “الْمُخْلِصُ” – “al-Mukhlāḥ” and [this word] is used in reference to a person who is at the first of many stages of perfection and on the path of self-building, for example in the verse of the Qurʾan which states:

فَإِذَا رَكِبُوا فِي الْفُلِكِ دَعَوْا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ فَلَمَّا نَجَّاهُمْ إِلَى الْبَرِّ إِذَا هُمْ يُشْرِكُونَ

“When they board the ship, they invoke God putting exclusive faith in Him, but when He delivers them to land, behold, they ascribe partners [to Him.]” (Al-Ankabut, 29:65)

And also:

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ

“Yet they were not commanded except to worship Allah, dedicating their faith to Him as men of pure faith, and to maintain the prayer, and pay the zakat. That is the upright religion.” (Al-Bayyinah (98:5)

However the word “الْمُخْلِصُ” is a higher station which one can only attain after traversing the station of the struggle with the self; and this is the level at which Satan loses all hope of using his influence or whisperings to misguide these individuals; and is that station in which Allah himself guards the person so that no impurity can touch him.

Therefore, the one who is initiating that ‘act of making one sincere’ is Allah Himself, and the one who is ‘receiving the status of being made sincere’ is the human being [who has been bestowed with this lofty status]; and in essence such a person has been granted a level of insurance from Allah. Therefore we read:

قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي لَأُزَيِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخْلَصِينَ

“He said, ‘My Lord! As You have consigned me [Satan] to perversity, I will surely glamorize [evil] for them on the earth, and I will surely pervert them, except Your exclusive servants among them.’” (Al-Hijr, 15:39–40)

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