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Article

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Following a question from a gentleman about the sequence of the *ta'qibat al-salat* as practiced and taught by the Messenger of God (saw) and the Imams (as), the author has embarked on the journey of giving the best answer. In order to help answer the question the author has used works of demonstrative law (*al-fiqh al-istidlal*) which are taught and studied at the inter-mediate level of the Hawza curriculum.

A couple of months ago, a certain gentleman from Mombasa Jamaat (Kenya) asked an interesting question on an email list-serve to which I belong. He wished to know the sequence of the *ta'qibat al-salat* as practiced and taught by the Messenger of God (saw) and the Imams (as).

Though the question was very specific and clear but to discern the authentic practice and teachings of the Prophet and the Imams from their sunna, would require a researcher to delve into the body of Hadith literature, which is the second most authoritative source of reference for Islamic thought and practice after the Qur'an, and indeed complements it.

Yet working with the raw contents of the Hadith literature to answer this question; raw in the sense of being unclassified or uncategorised in terms of the degree of authenticity of the traditions, where the latter (i.e., the degree of authenticity) influences the potential utility of the ahadith in legal deduction, would require a person possessing competency in several disciplines such as fiqh, usul, 'Ilm al-hadith, 'Ilm al-rijal, etc.

On the other hand, juridical manuals (*kutub tawdih al-masa'il*) published in English for lay Shi'as tend not to have a lot on this issue and it is probably due to the absence of such information in such a text that prompted the concerned gentleman to post this question on the list-serve.

Hence, in order to help answer the gentleman's question I have used works of demonstrative law (*al-fiqh al-istidlal*) which are taught and studied at the inter-mediate level of the Hawza curriculum because these are most helpful indeed! They fulfil all the necessary criteria sought such as mentioning the *ta'qibat* in more or less exhaustive fashion, discussing their sequence in light of the teachings and practices of the Prophet and the Imams and allowing me to keep the author-jurists of these works who were/are all qualified experts in Islamic law, as intermediaries between myself and the exercise of *ijtihad*, as I have not yet developed the ability to deduce legal answers independently.

The sequential structure and content of the *ta'qibat* has remained relatively stable as found in the legal

texts throughout the centuries, irrespective of the complexity of the legal text concerned. Further, the manner in which the ta'qib ritual is practiced today in Shi'a communities world-wide as well as taught in local madaris does reflect on the whole, the way the Prophet and the Imams practiced and taught it, albeit with some differences here and there.

With regards to the choice of text of demonstrative law, many have been written in the form of voluminous commentaries and super-commentaries over the centuries as well as in the form of glosses.

I chose the following texts to help me answer the above question.

1) Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya fi Sharhi al-Rawdhat al-Bahiyya by Syed Muhammad Hassan al-Tarhini al-Amili. Volume 2

2) Al-Jawhar al-Fakhriyya fi Sharhi al-Rawdhat al-Fiqhiyya, by Ayatullah al-Shaykh Wijdani Fakhr, volume 2.

These two texts consist of two layers of commentaries on an original text written in the 14th century AD by al-Shahid al-Awwal, Muhammad bin al-Makki and titled al-Lum'a al-Dimashqiyya. The latter text attracted a commentary by al-Shahid al-Thani, Shaykh Zaynuddin al-Amili who lived during the 16th century AD.

It is this text which is taught and studied today at the intermediate level in many Shi'a seminaries and the commentary by al-Shahid al-Thani is titled al-Rawdhat al-Bahiyya fi Sharhi al-Lum'a al-Dimashqiyya. This text in turn has attracted several commentaries by later scholars, two titles of which are mentioned above.

3) Ijma'iyatu Fiqhi al-Shi'a wa ahwat al-aqwal min ahkam al-shari'a, by Syed Ismail al-Hussaini al-Mar'ashi (d 2004 AD)

4) Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa volume 5 by Syed al-Khu'i (d 1992 AD). This text is a gloss by Syed al-Khu'i on the work of Syed Kazim al-Yazdi (d 1918 AD).

5) Minhaj al-Salihin volume 1 by Syed Muhammad Said al-Hakim.

6) Al-Urwat al-Wuthqa by Syed Kazim al-Yazdi with glosses by Syed Sistani.

Not all works of demonstrative law are particularly concerned with delineating the exact sequence of the ta'qibat, however the above texts proved most useful in this regard.

It must be remembered that this answer is not an exhaustive treatment of all the contents that may be included in the ta'qibat ritual, for if that were the concern then this answer would extend to tens of pages. The concern here is to present the general and basic sequence of the ta'qibat in a form in which it is generally accepted by the jurists and as delineated by them from the al-sunna al-nabawiyya and al-

sunna al-walawiyya.

Definition of the Term 'Al-Ta'qib'

The term al-ta'qib (Pl: al-ta'qibat) is defined as pre-occupying oneself following the ritual prayer with supplications, remembrance of God,¹ recitation of the Qur'an and other recommended rituals² such as endeavours at cultivating the soul, exhorting it to patience,³ contemplating on the greatness of God, weeping in fear of God,⁴ etc. These supplications and remembrances are not limited but are manifold due to the abundant number of traditions that have been reported from the Ahlulbayt (as) containing supplications and other recitals that may be recited following the ritual prayers;⁵ both the obligatory and the supererogatory ritual prayers.

Sequence of the Ta'qib Ritual

The best of the rituals to be performed in terms of both sequence and merit⁶ are the following three:

- 1) The three takbirat to be performed by raising the hands till they are parallel to the ears, while the palms face the qibla.⁷
- 2) Then the tahlil in the form transmitted (from the Ahlulbayt (as))⁸ which is as follows:

لا إله إلا الله وحده أنجز وعده ونصر عبده وأعز جنده وغلب الأعداء وحده، فله الملك وله الحمد يحيي ويميت
ويميت ويحيي وهو على كل شيء قدير.

- 3) Then the tasbih of Lady Zahra (sa).⁹
- 4) Then supplicating by means of transmitted supplications¹⁰ some of which have been shared below but the first one that is suggested to be recited is the following supplication to be recited thrice:

استغفر الله الذي لا اله الا هو الحي القيوم ذا الجلال والاکرام وأتوب اليه

- 5) Then supplicating for one's wishes and desires (i.e., in one's own words, in contrast to supplicating by means of specific transmitted supplications).¹¹
- 6) There then follow the two prostrations of thanks-giving/gratitude (sajdat al-shukr), in which the worshipper should repeat the following formula a 100 times: al-hamdu lillahi, shukran shukra – meaning: 'all praise belongs to God, thank you, thank you (O God)'. However, at every tenth such repetition the worshipper should say: shukran lilmujib – meaning: 'thanks be to the respondent'.

After that the worshipper may repeat the term shukran thrice at the very least and 100 times at the most.

Thereafter, the worshipper may beseech God for any of his/her needs; both in the form of transmitted supplications and in his/her own words. [12](#)

Between these two prostrations, the worshipper should rub his forehead and cheeks in the dust; first the right cheek and then the left cheek, while he stretches out his arms, chest and abdomen, all the while maintaining the posture of prostration and not raising his/her head from the ground. [13](#)

7) Then, the worshipper may supplicate to God by means of transmitted supplications. [14](#)

8) Finally when one wishes to leave the place of prayer, which would generally be after having had performed the prostrations of gratitude, it is recommended that the worshipper pass his hand over the place of prostration and then wipe or pass it over his face and forehead/brow [15](#) and recite a specific supplication [16](#) (the text to which is shared below).

Evidence Adduced from the Ahadith in Favour of the Ta'qib

The significance and emphasis on adhering to the ta'qib ritual may be evidenced from a number of traditions and four are mentioned here as a sample:

Sayyid Ibn Tawus (d 1266 AD) reports in his book Falah al-Sa'il with his chain that terminates at Muhammad bin 'Ali bin Mahbub who in turn reports from Imam al-Sadiq (as) who reported from his forefathers from the Messenger of God (saw) who said: 'a person who sits at his place of prayer (for the purpose of ta'qib), cross-legged, has God appoint for him an angel who says to him "increase in nobility (by engaging in the various ta'qib rituals) and good deeds will be written in your favour, evil deeds will be effaced from you(r record) and (exalted) stations will be registered for you till you move away"'. [17](#)

The mursal tradition of Mansur bin Yunus from Imam al-Sadiq (as) that: 'one who performs an obligatory prayer and pre-occupies him/herself with the ta'qib ritual (after it) till the next prayer is a guest of God and it is incumbent on God that He honours His guest'. [18](#)

Al-Walid bin Sabih reports from Imam al-Sadiq (as) that: 'the ta'qib ritual is more effective and intense in its effects with regards to obtaining sustenance than striking out in the land (seeking the same)'. [19](#)

It is reported in a tradition that: 'whoever engages in the ta'qib ritual after his/her prayers is as if he/she is in prayer'. [20](#)

1) Evidence adduced from the ahadith that the three takbirat are the first of the ta'qibat to be performed after the termination of the ritual prayer.

This ritual is performed with raised voices and in unison, especially during the congregational prayers. [21](#)
It is reported in the Sunan of Abi Dawud from Ibn 'Abbas who reported: 'the termination of the ritual prayer of the Prophet would be known by the takbir'.

Ibn ‘Abbas also reports: ‘I would recognise the termination of the prayers by that (i.e., by the takbir’) and I would hear it’. Muhammad bin Ismail al-Bukhari has recorded a similar tradition in his hadith compilation in the chapter on the remembrances/recitals to be recited after the ritual prayers, as well as in the chapter on the adhan, as has al-Nasa’i in the chapter on forgetfulness in the prayer and as has Ahmad bin Hanbal in his Musnad. [22](#)

Zurara bin A’yan reports from Imam al-Baqir (as), who said: ‘when you have completed the recital of the taslim then raise your hands for the takbir, thrice’.[23](#)

Mufaddal bin ‘Umar, a companion of the 6th Imam al-Sadiq (as) reports that he asked the 6th Imam of the reason why a musalli (worshipper) says the takbir three times after the taslim, by raising his hands.

The Imam (as) replied that this was because when the Prophet of Islam conquered Mecca, he recited the Dhuhr prayers at the Hajar al-Aswad. When he recited the salams, he raised his hands and did the takbir thrice...[24](#)

Hence it is in light of these traditions that jurists of the past and present have ruled that the three takbirat feature as the first of the ta’qibat rituals. Shaykh al-Ta’ifa al-Tusi (d 10067 AD) writes in his al-Nihayatu fi Mujarradi al-Fiqh wa al-Fatwa (pg 70) that it is recommended for a worshipper to raise his hands to his ears and say allahu akbar thrice on completing the prayer...

Also Al-Majlisi (d 1699 AD) cites in his Bihar al-Anwar from Shaykh al-Tusi’s work on worship rituals titled Misbah al-Mutahajjid wa Silah al-Mut’abbid as follows: ‘then the worshipper says the taslim, and then raises his hands for takbir bringing them parallel to his ears and performs the takbir thrice in a slow, even pace...’[25](#)

2) Evidence adduced from the ahadith that the tahlil is the second of the ta’qibat to be performed after the termination of the ritual prayer.

The evidence for this is found in the composite tradition of Mufaddal bin ‘Umar cited above in a truncated form and cited here below in full as it contains the evidence for two things: the takbir and the tahlil.

Mufaddal bin ‘Umar, a companion of the 6th Imam al-Sadiq (as) reports that he asked the 6th Imam of the reason why a musalli says the takbir three times after the taslim, by raising his hands.

The Imam (as) replied that this was because when the Prophet of Islam conquered Mecca, he recited the Dhuhr prayers at the Hajar al-Aswad. When he recited the salams, he raised his hands and did the takbir thrice. He then recited this supplication:

لا إله إلا الله وحده أنجز وعده ونصر عبده وأعز جنده وغلب الأحزاب وحده، فله الملك وله الحمد يحيي ويميت
ويميت ويحيي وهو على كل شيء قدير.

Both sets also mention that these glorifications need to be recited by the worshipper before the worshipper changes his/her posture from that of the salat, i.e., before the worshipper crosses his/her legs to sit comfortably, thereby denoting an unbroken link with the ritual prayer and alluding to an immediate sequence or succession of acts.

a) The tasbih of Lady Zahra (sa). This glorification has been emphasised with such overwhelming intensity in the traditions from the Imams that its individual superiority is beyond doubt. Those texts of demonstrative law (i.e., those that I consulted) that are not particularly concerned with a sequential description of the ta'qibat rituals always begin their discussion of the ta'qib rituals with mentioning the significance and merit of this tasbih and that may be the reason why Shaykh al-Tusi exhorts in his *al-Nihayatu fi Mujarradi al-Fiqh wa al-Fatwa* (pg 70) that if a worshipper is unable to carry out all the ta'qibat rituals then he/she must not let go of this tasbih save in such emergencies when nothing at all is possible to recite.

Nevertheless if a sequence is adhered to, then it may not precede the two rituals mentioned above.

Abu Khalid al-Qummat narrates from Imam al-Sadiq (as) who said: 'the tasbih of Fatima (as) recited every day after every ritual prayer is more beloved to me than the recitation of a thousand cycles of ritual prayer every day'.^{[32](#)}

Zurara bin A'yan reports from Imam al-Sadiq (as) as saying: 'the tasbih of Fatima al-Zahra is from the abundant remembrance of God about which God says (in Q33:41) "...remember God with abundant remembrance"^{[33](#)}

Salih bin 'Uqba reports from Imam al-Baqir (as) as saying: 'God has not been worshipped with anything of praise better than the tasbih of Fatima and if there had been anything better than that then the Messenger of God (saw) would have gifted that as a gift to Fatima'.^{[34](#)}

Ibn Abi Najran reports from Imam al-Sadiq (as) via an intermediary that: 'one who glorifies God after the obligatory ritual prayer with the tasbih of Fatima a hundred times and follows it up with لا اله الا الله once, will be forgiven'.^{[35](#)}

Ibn Sinan reports from Imam al-Sadiq (as) who said: 'any one from among you who extols God by means of the tasbih of Fatima (as) before he changes his posture from that of the obligatory prayer/or before he crosses his legs to sit comfortably (the literal words are: qabla 'an yuthanyya rijlayhi min salati al-faridha) will have God forgive him'.^{[36](#)}

All the traditions above prove the place of this tasbih within the ta'qibat ritual, but the last tradition in particular contains the evidence that this tasbih needs to be recited very soon after the cessation of the ritual prayer.

However, as the evidence above shows, the 3 takbirat and the tahlil must not be preceded by any other

ritual after the cessation of the ritual prayer and therefore it follows that if this tasbih is to be recited before we change our posture, then it is my reasoned suggestion that it needs to be recited after the tahlil.

It is recommended to make the rosary from the earth of the grave of Imam al-Husayn (as)³⁷ for as al-Hasan bin Mahbub reports: ‘Imam al-Sadiq (as) was asked about using the earth from the grave of Hamza and al-Husayn (as) and their comparable superiority, and he replied: “a rosary made from the earth of the grave of al-Husayn (as) is equivalent to glorification (of God) when in the hands of a person without the person (actually) uttering the glorifications (verbally)”’.³⁸

And al-Tabrisi records a mursal tradition from Imam al-Sadiq (as) as follows: ‘a person who turns a rosary, that is made from the earth of the grave of al-Husayn (as), in his/her hand once with or without reciting the formula of repentance (al-istighfar) will have God register for him 70 (al-istighfar), and the prostration on it tears apart the seven veils’.³⁹

b) The al-tasbihat al-arba’a to be recited either 30 times or 40 times or a 100 times after the obligatory prayers.⁴⁰

The 6th Imam (as) reports from the Messenger of God (saw) who said: ‘let the one who concludes his/her prayer repeat 30 times (the formula):

سبحان الله والحمد لله ولا اله الا الله والله اكبر

It fends off destruction, devastation, drowning, destruction by fire, tumbling into a well, being eaten by a beast of prey, an evil and unfortunate death and the misfortune that would descend on the servant (of God) on that day’.⁴¹

When the 6th Imam was asked about the verse (Q33:41) *يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا* (Q33:41) said: ‘it means to glorify (God) thirty times after the obligatory prayer’.⁴²

The 6th Imam also said: ‘Anyone who says 40 سبحان الله والحمد لله ولا اله الا الله والله اكبر times after every obligatory prayer before he changes his posture (from that of the ritual prayer) and then beseeches God, will be granted what he had asked for’.⁴³

Again, all the above traditions prove the place of al-tasbihat al-arba’a within the ta’qibat ritual but the last tradition insists that it be recited very soon after the cessation of the ritual prayer.

Now in light of the fact that this ritual cannot precede the 3 takbirat and the tahlil then it must be recited following them, but again, in light of the overwhelming excellence of the tasbih of Lady Zahra (sa) which is clearly evident in the transmitted traditions, then it is my reasoned suggestion that it should necessarily follow it rather than precede it.

4) Evidence of the emphasis on supplications as part of the ta'qib is based on the traditions from the Prophet and the Imams such as the following: The 10th Imam Ali al-Naqi (as) reports from his forefathers that the Messenger of God (saw) said: 'One who performs an obligatory prayer for the sake of God earns to his credit an answered supplication as a result of it'. A similar report is also transmitted from Imam al-Ridha (as). [44](#)

Zurara bin A'yan said: 'I heard Imam al-Baqir (as) say: "supplication rendered after an obligatory prayer is better than saying a voluntary ritual prayer (i.e., al-nafila prayer) and the (Prophetic) practice has been established on this"'.[45](#)

'Ali bin Ja'far reports from his brother the 7th Imam Musa bin Ja'far, from their father Imam al-Sadiq (as) as follows: 'there is not a believer who discharges an obligation from the obligations of God, save that he obtains an accepted supplication to his credit at the time of discharging his obligation.[46](#)

Hammad bin 'Isa reports from Imam al-Sadiq (as) as follows: 'Indeed God has obligated on you the five daily ritual prayers at the best of hours; hence it is incumbent on you to supplicate after every ritual prayer'.[47](#)

Al-Husayn bin Hammad reports from Imam al-Baqir (as) as follows: 'any person who recites the following supplication: *استغفر الله الذي لا اله الا هو الحي القيوم ذا الجلال والاکرام وأتوب اليه* thrice after the termination of the obligatory prayers and before he changes his posture from that maintained during the obligatory prayers/ before he crosses his legs (inorder to sit comfortably) will have God forgive his/her sins even if they were like the foam of the sea'.[48](#)

The last tradition above again has the determining phrase: qabla 'an yuthanyya rijlayhi min salati al-faridha – before he sits down cross-legged after the obligatory prayer/ before he changes his posture after the obligatory prayer. Hence, while any supplication may be recited when this stage is reached, it is my reasoned suggestion that it would be better to recite this supplication either after the al-tasbihat al-arba'a or after the tasbih of Lady Zahra (sa).

After it, some or all of the following transmitted supplications may be recited[49](#):

اللهم اهدني من عندك وأفض علي من فضلك وانشر علي من رحمتك وأنزل علي من بركاتك

'Ali bin Mahzayar reports that the following supplication was taught to Muhammad bin Ibrahim when he wrote to the 8th Imam to teach him a supplication which he may beseech by, after the obligatory ritual prayers and which would gather together for him the good of the world and the hereafter. The Imam therefore responded with this supplication[50](#):

أعوذ بوجهك الكريم وعزتك التي لا ترام وقدرتك التي لا يمتنع منها شيء من شر الدنيا والاخرة. ومن شر الاوجاع

كلها ، ولا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله العلي العظيم

Other supplications are some of the following⁵¹:

اللهم إني أسألك من كل خير أحاط به علمك وأعوذ بك من كل شر أحاط به علمك ، اللهم إني أسألك عافيتك في اموري كلها ، وأعوذ بك من خزي الدنيا وعذاب الآخرة

أعيذ نفسي ومارزقني ربي بالله الواحد الاحد الصمد الذي لم يلد ولم يكن له كفواً أحد ، واعيذ نفسي وما رزقني ربي برب الفلق من شر ما خلق ، إلى آخر السورة - ، واعيذ نفسي وما رزقني ربي برب الناس ملك الناس - إلى آخر السورة

The following supplication is for protection from forgetfulness⁵²:

سُبْحَانَ مَنْ لَا يَعْتَدِي عَلَى أَهْلِ مَمْلَكَتِهِ سُبْحَانَ مَنْ لَا يَأْخُذُ أَهْلَ الْأَرْضِ بِأَلْوَانِ الْعَذَابِ سُبْحَانَ الرَّؤُوفِ الرَّحِيمِ اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ لِي فِي قَلْبِي نُورًا وَبَصَرًا وَفَهْمًا وَعِلْمًا إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Traditions have also been transmitted that recommend the recitation of Ayat al-Kursi⁵³ and the recitation of Sura al-Ikhlās twelve times and then to spread out one's hands and raise them towards the heavens and to recite the following supplication⁵⁴:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِاسْمِكَ الْمَخْزُونِ الْمَكْنُونِ الطَّاهِرِ الطَّيِّبِ الْمُبَارَكِ ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ بِاسْمِكَ الْعَظِيمِ ، وَسُلْطَانِكَ الْقَدِيمِ .. يَا وَاهِبِ الْعَطَايَا يَا مُطْلِقِ الْأَسَارِ يَا فَكَّكَ الرِّقَابِ مِنَ النَّارِ صَلَّى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ ، وَفَكَ رَقَبَتِي مِنَ النَّارِ ، وَأَخْرَجَنِي مِنَ الدُّنْيَا آمِنًا ، وَأَدْخَلَنِي الْجَنَّةَ سَالِمًا ، وَاجْعَلْ دَعَائِي أَوْلَهُ فَلَاحًا ، وَأَوْسَطَهُ نَجَاحًا ، وَآخِرَهُ صَلَاحًا ، إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَامُ الْغُيُوبِ

It is also recommended to recite the two formulas of the faith (al-Shahadatayn), confessing to faith in the twelve Imams,⁵⁵ asking for paradise, seeking refuge in God from hell,⁵⁶ reciting Q3: 17, Q3:26, Sura al-Hamd⁵⁷ and reciting salutations on the Prophet and his purified progeny. ⁵⁸

Hence Zurara reports from the 5th Imam al-Baqir (as) as having said: 'you are obliged in favour of seeking the two obligations after every ritual prayer'. Zurara asked 'what are these two obligations?' The Imam replied: 'supplicating for paradise and seeking refuge with God from hell'.⁵⁹

Therefore the following supplication has been suggested⁶⁰:

اللهم صل على محمد وآل محمد وأجرني من النار وارزقني الجنة وزوجني من الحور العين

5) Evidence in favour of the prostration of gratitude being part of the ta'qib ritual and evidence for the various recitals and supplications that are suggested to be recited in it.

Some traditions mention a prostration while others mention two and so the author of Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya surmises that the prostration of gratitude is counted as two prostrations because of the occurrence of the rubbing of the forehead and the cheeks in the dust (which practice is known as al-ta'fir) between the two while the probable reason that this prostration is counted as one is because of the negation of raising the head from the position of prostration and hence being counted as one.⁶¹ Thus if the practice of al-ta'fir is considered as interrupting the prostration then there will be two prostrations while if it is considered to be non-interruptive, then merely one.

Abu al-Hasan al-Asadi reports Imam al-Sadiq (as) to have said: 'the worshipper prostrates after the obligatory prayer in order to thank God, (exalted is His name), for His grace with which He graced him in allowing him to successfully discharge his obligation...'⁶²

Ibn Faddal reports from Imam al-Ridha (as) who said: 'the prostration after the obligatory prayer is as gratitude to God due to the success granted to the servant for the sake of God, in discharging the obligations.'⁶³

The evidence in favour of reciting the formula al-hamdu lillahi, shukran shukra 100 times in the prostration, with this recital being interspersed with the formula shukran lilmujib after every tenth recital is as follows:

Shaykh al-Tusi reports a mursal tradition in his Misbah al-Mutahajjid from Imam al-Sajjad (as) that: he used to say in the prostration of thanksgiving a hundred times الحمد لله شكرا and after every such tenth repetition he would say شكرا للمجيب.

Then he would recite this supplication:

يا ذا المن الذي لا ينقطع أبدا ولا يحصيه غيره عددا ويا ذا المعروف الذي لا ينفذ أبدا يا كريم يا كريم يا كريم

'O Possessor of favors, which do not cease ever! Neither is anyone apart from Him able to reckon its number. O Possessor of goodness whose extent is unfathomable! O Generous, O Generous, O Generous.'

Thereafter he would supplicate, beseech humbly and implore earnestly.⁶⁴

The evidence that the phrase شكرا لله ought to be recited 100 times at most and thrice at the very least

Sulayman bin Hafs al-Marwazi reports that the Imam al-Ridha (as) wrote to him as follows: 'say in the prostration of thanksgiving a hundred times 'شكرا شكرا' and if you wish 'عفوا عفوا'.⁶⁵

Abu al-Hasan al-Asadi reports Imam al-Sadiq (as) to have said: ‘the worshipper prostrates after the obligatory prayer in order to thank God, (exalted is His name), due to His grace with which He graced him in allowing him to successfully discharge his obligation, and the least that suffices in it is to recite the formula **شكرا لله** thrice’.[66](#)

Ibn Faddal reports from Imam al-Ridha (as) who said: ‘the prostration after the obligatory prayer is as gratitude to God due to the success granted to the servant for the sake of God in discharging the obligations. The least that suffices in it of a recital is that he should say **شكرا لله** thrice’. Ibn Faddal said that he then asked the Imam: ‘what is the meaning of the servant’s expression of **شكرا لله** ?

He responded: ‘it means that the worshipper intends to say by his act of prostration: “this prostration is from me in gratitude to God due to the success He granted me for His sake, in service and in discharging His obligations”. And gratitude causes increase, hence if there was any defect in the ritual prayer which was not compensated and completed by the nawafil prayers then they would be completed by this prostration’.[67](#)

Evidence for the recommendation in favour of al-ta’fir

The mursal tradition of ‘Ali bin Yaqtin who reports from Imam al-Sadiq (as) who said: ‘God revealed to the Prophet Musa (as) saying: “do you know why I chose you above all others for My conversations?” He replied: “what is the reason O Lord?” So God revealed to him saying: “O Musa, I carefully scrutinised my servants, their outer and their inner and did not find anyone among them more humble to Me than you. O Musa, when you pray, you place your cheeks on the earth”’.[68](#)

Ishaq bin ‘Ammar reports from Imam al-Sadiq (as): ‘when Musa bin ‘Imran prayed he would not get up and leave till he had pressed his right and left cheeks on the earth’.[69](#)

Evidence for Spreading out the arms, chest and abdomen

Yahya bin ‘Abd al-Rahhman said: ‘I saw Abu al-Hasan (as), the third, perform the prostration of gratitude and he spread out his arms and pressed his chest and abdomen to the earth and so I asked him about it and he replied ‘such is necessary’.[70](#)

Some Supplications that may be recited in these prostrations

The scholar al-Kaf’ami (d 1499 AD) reports a mursal tradition from Imam ‘Ali (as) which transmits the supplication that the Imam used to recite in the prostrations. The tradition is as follows:

He (i.e., Imam ‘Ali (as)) used to say when making the two prostrations: ‘You admonished me but I did not heed the warning. You deterred me from Your proscriptions but I was not deterred. You inundated me with Your benevolence and generosity but I did not thank You! Pardon me, pardon me, and pardon

The authentic tradition which Shaykh al-Saduq reports with his chain of transmitters, from 'Abdullah bin Jundab, from Musa bin Ja'far (a.s). 'Abdullah bin Jundab asks the Imam: 'what should I recite in the prostration of thanksgiving for our companions (i.e., the Shi'as) differ among themselves about it'. The Imam replied: 'Say (the following) in your prostration of thanksgiving:

اللهم إني أشهدك وأشهد ملائكتك وأنبياك ورسلك وجميع خلقك إنك أنت الله ربي، والاسلام ديني، ومحمدا نبيا،
وعليا والحسن والحسين، وعلي بن الحسين، ومحمد بن علي، وجعفر بن محمد، وموسى بن جعفر، علي بن موسى،
ومحمد بن علي، وعلي بن محمد، والحسن بن علي، والحجة بن الحسن بن علي أئمتي بهم أتولى ومن أعدائهم أتبرء

"O Allah! Indeed I call upon you as a witness and I call upon your angels, your Prophets and Messengers and the entirety of your creation as a witness, that surely you O Allah are my Nourisher, that Islam is my religion, that Muhammad is my Prophet and that 'Ali, al- Hasan, al-Husayn, 'Ali bin al-Husayn, Muhammad bin 'Ali, Ja'far bin Muhmmad, Musa bin Ja'far, 'Ali bin Musa, Muhammad bin 'Ali, 'Ali bin Muhammad, al-Hasan bin 'Ali and the Hujjat (i.e.Proof), son of al-Hasan are my leaders. Them I love and obey and from their enemies I dissociate."[72](#)

Evidence for the last ritual of leaving the place of prayer

The 6th Imam (as) reports from his forefathers from 'Ali (as) who said: 'When the Messenger of God intended to leave (the place of prayer) after the cessation of prayer, he would pass his right hand over his forehead/brow and then say "O God, praise belongs to You, there is no God but You, Knower of the unseen and the seen. O God, remove anxiety, sadness, trials and tribulations from us, whatever of it has come to light and whatever of it remains hidden," and he (saw) said: "none from my community who does this save that God will grant him/her whatever such a person seeks"[73](#)

Here comes to an end my discussion of the ta'qib ritual with the humble hope that it shall prove interesting and beneficial to all those who read it, just as it proved interesting and beneficial to me while researching and writing it.

- [1.](#) Al-Jawhar al-Fakhriyya pg 294. Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 236-237. Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 397
- [2.](#) Ijma'iyyatu Fiqhi al-Shi'a pg 268. Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 397
- [3.](#) Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 237
- [4.](#) Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 397
- [5.](#) Al-Jawhar al-Fakhriyya pg 294. Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 237. For example, the section in Shaykh Yusuf al-Bahrani's (d 1772 AD) legal work al-Hada'iq al-Nadhira discussing the supplications that could be recited in the ta'qib that have been transmitted from the Imam extends to tens of pages!
- [6.](#) What this means is that these three rituals are the most meritorious when carried out in the above-mentioned sequence after the prayers, yet when considered individually, the tasbih is absolutely the most superior ritual of all the three. See Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 238
- [7.](#) Al-Jawhar al-Fakhriyya pg 294. Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 237, Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 397

8. Al-Jawhar al-Fakhriyya pg 294. Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 238, Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 398
9. Al-Jawhar al-Fakhriyya pg 295. Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 238, Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 397
10. Al-Jawhar al-Fakhriyya pg 295. Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 240
11. Al-Jawhar al-Fakhriyya pg 296. Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 241
12. Al-Jawhar al-Fakhriyya pg 296. Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 244
13. Al-Jawhar al-Fakhriyya pg 296. Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 241-243
14. Al-Jawhar al-Fakhriyya pg 296. Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 244
15. Minhaj al-Salihin pg 232. Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 244.
16. Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 244.
17. Cited in al-Hada'iq al-Nadhira volume 8, pg 510.
18. Al-Wasa'il chapter 1 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 5, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 237.
19. Al-Wasa'il chapter 1 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 1, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 237.
20. Cited in Al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 190.
21. Ijma'iyatu Fiqhi al-Shi'a pg 268
22. Ijma'iyatu Fiqhi al-Shi'a pg 268.
23. Mustadrak al-Wasa'il chapter 12 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 4, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 237.
24. Al-Wasa'il chapter 14 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 2, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 237-238 and in Ijma'iyatu Fiqhi al-Shi'a pg 268-269.
25. Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 238.
26. Al-Wasa'il chapter 14 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 2, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 237-238 and in Ijma'iyatu Fiqhi al-Shi'a pg 268-269.
27. Bihar volume 83, page 43, hadith 54, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 238.
28. Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 238
29. Al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 191.
30. Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 398
31. Minhaj al-Salihin pg 230.
32. Al-Wasa'il chapter 9 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 2, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 238-239.
33. Al-Wasa'il chapter 8 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 1, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 239.
34. Al-Wasa'il chapter 9 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 1.
35. Al-Wasa'il chapter 7 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 3, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 239.
36. Al-Wasa'il chapter 7 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 5, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 239.
37. Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 398.
38. Al-Wasa'il chapter 16 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 3, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 240.
39. Al-Wasa'il chapter 16 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 4, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 240.
40. Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 399
41. Al-Wasa'il chapter 15 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 1 and 2, cited in Ijma'iyatu Fiqhi al-Shi'a pg 269.
42. Al-Wasa'il chapter 15 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 3, cited in Ijma'iyatu Fiqhi al-Shi'a pg 269.
43. Al-Wasa'il chapter 15 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 6, cited in Ijma'iyatu Fiqhi al-Shi'a pg 269.
44. Al-Wasa'il chapter 1 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 10, cited in Ijma'iyatu Fiqhi al-Shi'a pg 269.
45. Al-Wasa'il chapter 5 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 1.
46. Al-Wasa'il chapter 1 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 12, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 237.
47. Al-Wasa'il chapter 1 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 6, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 236
48. Al-Wasa'il chapter 24 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 4, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 240. Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 400
49. Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 398
50. Al-Wasa'il chapter 24 on the topic of al-ta'qib, hadith number 3, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 241. Also cited in Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 399.
51. Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 399

- [52.](#) Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 400
- [53.](#) Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 399
- [54.](#) Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 399–400
- [55.](#) Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 400
- [56.](#) Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 241.
- [57.](#) Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 399
- [58.](#) Ijma'iyatu Fiqhi al-Shi'a pg 270
- [59.](#) Cited in Ijma'iyatu Fiqhi al-Shi'a pg 270
- [60.](#) Al-Mustanad fi Sharhi al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 399
- [61.](#) Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 242.
- [62.](#) Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 242.
- [63.](#) Al-Wasa'il chapter 1 on the topic of the two prostrations of gratitude, hadith number 3, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 241.
- [64.](#) Al-Wasa'il chapter 6 on the topic of the two prostrations of gratitude, hadith number 4, cited Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 243.
- [65.](#) Al-Wasa'il chapter 6 on the topic of the two prostrations of gratitude, hadith number 2.
- [66.](#) Al-Wasa'il chapter 1 on the topic of the two prostrations of gratitude, hadith number 2, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 241.
- [67.](#) Al-Wasa'il chapter 1 on the topic of the two prostrations of gratitude, hadith number 3, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 241.
- [68.](#) Al-Wasa'il chapter 3 on the topic of the two prostrations of gratitude, hadith number 1, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 242–243.
- [69.](#) Al-Wasa'il chapter 3 on the topic of the two prostrations of gratitude, hadith number 2, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 243.
- [70.](#) Al-Wasa'il chapter 4 on the topic of the two prostrations of gratitude, hadith number 2, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 243.
- [71.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il chapter 5 on the topic of the two prostrations of gratitude, hadith number 4, cited in Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 242.
- [72.](#) Al-Wasa'il Vol 7, pg 15. Also cited in Al-Urwat al-Wuthqa pg 175.
- [73.](#) Al-Zubdatu al-Fiqhiyya pg 244, cited from Mustadrak al-Wasa'il chapter 4 on the topic of the two prostrations of gratitude, hadith number 1.

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