

An Explanation on Imam Reza (P.B.U.H)'s Educational Methods to Promote Islamic Life Style*

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Abstract

Among the most important duties of the pure Imams are to spread Islamic teachings, to prepare the ground to deepen such education, and to educate the Islamic society so as to reach perfection and salvation. Indeed, different methods have been used to such an end, one which is to teach praying and its propagation at different occasions among the members of the Islamic society in order to promote Islamic Lifestyle. In this article, the authors have studied methodologically and analytically the prepositions in Imam Reza prayers. The aim was to find the role and applications of such an instinctual and religious tool in educating members of society and to come up with a general model which explains, from Imam Reza viewpoint, the training methods to lead people and Islamic society, i.e. Islamic Lifestyle fulfillment. For this end, using content analysis method, each prayer's speech framework and their aspects were first classified based on topic. Then they were analyzed to reach the governing system of the prayers language, to discover the training methods and the ways for their localization in the society's educational system, and to find the best methods to propagate Islamic lifestyle.

Keywords: Imam Reza, Prayers, Training, Life Style, Content Analysis

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Introduction

Despite many efforts made by researchers and scholars in the field of Islamic Sciences to rediscover the words of the infallible Imams (P.B.U.T) and to study the principles of their worldviews, much of the available works simply describe and interpret their narrated hadiths and have a dominant air of chronicle writing. However, it appears that elaborating on one's viewpoints, theoretical principles and belief structures requires the content analysis of his discourse, since getting to the core of one's thoughts and having a comprehensive understanding of his words can only be possible to a great extent through understanding his discourse, juxtaposing his words rationally and analyzing their contents. The significance of such researches lies in a more precise elaboration of the role and functions of the "Infallible Imam" in an Islamic community as well as his leadership and culture-building position. Hadiths and Narrations quoted from Imam Reza abound, part of which comprises of the prayers he taught the Islamic community for achieving desires or avoiding heavenly or earthly disasters. "Scriptures of Imam Reza"¹ is a collection of such prayers compiled by Movahed Abtahi Esfihani.²

This study sets to provide an overall view of the orientation of these prayers through the content analysis method in the first step and then to analyze the educational patterns set by the Imam with the aim of introducing an Islamic lifestyle for the Islamic community through these prayers on different occasions.

Given that the prayers uttered by Imam Reza are the words of an Infallible Imam, not of an ordinary individual, and that his words are indicative of the tradition of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) and the interpretation of the holy Quran, the practical usage of this study is that by analyzing the content of such prayers we can extract such criteria and principles that could lead the Islamic community to salvation and perfection and provide the experts with novel educational techniques.

The point to consider is the reason why content analysis method selected for the discovery of the educational patterns of the prayers quoted from Imam Reza. In fact, one of the most important characteristics of the words of the holy Imams (P.B.U.T) as the true carriers of the faith and the real addressees of the holy Quran is that their discourses have an appearance and a core. Sometimes the core itself constitutes multiple layers. Hence, it appears that the method of qualitative and quantitative content analysis could be a fitting approach for the discovery of the inner layers of the appearance and cores of the verses of Quran and the words of the holy Imams

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² Seyyed Mohammad Bagher Movahed Abtahi, *Al-Sahifa al-Jamea' le-Adeiye Ali ibn Mousa Al-Reza (A.S.) and Abna Al-arba'* (Qom: Imam al-Hadi, 1999), 170-189

(P.B.U.T). The ability to structurally expand and categorize the extracted themes and components using the content analysis tables and presenting them in the form of tables, diagrams and models are among the advantages of the aforementioned method. It could be said that this method is highly effective and practical in the fields of humanities and particularly theology that are experiencing a detailed expansion of knowledge.

The Concept of Lifestyle

As a frequently utilized term in social sciences, the word “lifestyle” maintains direct and firm associations with a range of its related discursive concepts such as: objectivity & subjectivity, culture & society, objective and subjective culture, form & content, behavior & meaning, ethics& belief etc. Lifestyle comprises of a wide variety of human daily matters, including his personal, social, material and spiritual aspects of his life, such as insights (perceptions and beliefs) and attitudes (values, desires and preferences) which are either subjective matters or internal behaviors, and external behaviors (including conscious and unconscious acts, moods and physical conditions), as well as social status and possessions which are objective matters.

As the objective manifestation of thoughts and beliefs, lifestyle highly influences individual thoughts and beliefs particularly human characteristics and thus, the formation of one's temperaments and attitudes is commonly under the influence of his/her lifestyle.

Lifestyle is defined by some as the manifestation of man's attempt to find fundamental values, or in other words, to find one's higher self and introduce it to others in his/her current culture, and some others have attributed it to life in general and all its public and personal processes.¹

Meanwhile, what makes the addressing of lifestyle in social and ideological studies significant is the consequences of selecting various styles for living which in some cases has led to many ideological, ethical and social harms in different communities while in some other cases has brought about technological, economic and cultural developments.

What has prompted Muslim scholars to deliberate about and ponder over Islamic life style is the harmful effects that Islamic communities have suffered in recent centuries from the culture and civilization of western countries who follow a non-Islamic life style. In recent years, we have borne witness to the indiscriminate and aberrant spread of some of the components and elements of western lifestyle in Islamic communities which in some cases has led to the destructive deviations of some societies; the fact that necessitates conducting more such studies.

¹ Alfred Adler, *The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler* (New York: Basic Books Inc., 1956), 32.

Advantages of Islamic lifestyle

One way to explicate a lifestyle model is to identify the components and elements that have been designated as the characteristics of that certain lifestyle by some scholars in their studies. For example, there are some western scholars who consider lifestyle as the sum of all behaviors, thoughts, emotions and social responses exhibited by individuals and therefore regard elements such as eating habits, appearance, make-up and clothing, housing style, means of transportation, leisure activities etc. as lifestyle components.¹

Chapin (1935) and Osol (1940) have focused on such items as the domicile and house appliances in their works as the components of lifestyle while Klakhon's (1985) place more importance on individual behaviors and the ways of utilizing natural resources in life² in that regard.

To sum up the componential elements of lifestyle as defined by western scholars in their works, it can be concluded that most of such elements refer to either personal or some sorts of social matters and therefore do not enjoy a fully comprehensive approach to address the needs and requirements of human beings. For example, the following components are missing from what has been mentioned by such scholars:

- One's belief system and ideology;
- Thoughts and rationales governing individual's acts;
- Orientations and human relationships at home and in society;
- Individuals' emotions and emotional relationships at home and in society;
- The quality of the satisfaction of one's secondary needs in various environments;
- Attending to one's pre-life and post-life eras;
- Attending to the position of religion in personal life
- Attending to the position of will in the formation of lifestyle
- Attending to the quality of individual acts in lifestyle

It goes without saying that those 21st century theorists who have used the term lifestyle in their works have associated the term with the concepts drawn from human-centeredness, egocentrism and consumerism approaches. Therefore, to well define the concept of lifestyle in each society, independent studies need to be conducted in accordance with the culture and beliefs of the respective society, and to extract the componential elements of lifestyle in that society, some comprehensive, prospective and hyper-social approaches should also be taken into account. It is therefore required to develop the concept and the componential elements of lifestyle in

¹ Adler, *The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler*, 32

² Saeed Mahdavi Kani, "The Concept of Lifestyle and its Range in Social Sciences," *Cultural Research*, no. 8 (2008): 34–50 (Tehran: Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution), 199-230

scientific researches and to conduct new studies in that regard by taking religious approaches into consideration.

One of the special advantages of Islamic lifestyle is that it encompasses all social, emotional, religious, economic, and other factors effective in one's life and as a perfect, transparent and fully comprehensive guideline, it attempts to plan and lead one's life from the very time before his birth up until his post-life era. It means that Islamic lifestyle is a large continuum which comprises of various layers regarding the individuals' attitudes, orientations and capabilities.

Thus, the more developed the individuals' abilities and potentials are in acquiring and understanding religious knowledge are the more advanced their lifestyle level will be and any decrease in such level indicates that he lacks the ability to understand religious knowledge and that he is deprived of the benefits of such a great blessing¹. That is why the holy Quran constantly asks the believers to strengthen their faith², and when it characterizes the hypocrites, it mentions to their proximity to infidelity and their being far away from the faith³.

In order to elaborate on what was mentioned as the advantages of Islamic lifestyle, we are going to follow with the case study of Razavi prayers in an attempt to extract the educational practices used by Imam Reza (AS) to develop and promote the Islamic lifestyle and internalize it in the society while examining the themes and concepts found in these prayers.

The Position of prayers in educational schools

Allah as the Creator and Nurturer of the Worlds, has held himself responsible for nurturing any living creature, leading all creatures with all their distinct natures to their deserved perfection and unleashes his blessings towards them with regard to their potentials and capabilities. However, in the case of human being, Allah has kindly relinquished parts of his nurturing responsibility to him and authorized him to choose between good and evil: «إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَ إِمَّا كَفُورًا» (Ensan/3).

Holy scriptures and prophets have also been sent based on the same reason, as the holy Quran says: «هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ...» (Al-Jumu'ah/2) and «بُعِثْتُ لِاتِّمَمِّ مَكَارِمِ الْأَخْلَاقِ» (Koleini, 1998:6).

After the demise of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H), the pure and infallible Imams as his successors have been the true leader for the guidance and education of mankind and used various

¹ Referring to this verse of the Quran: «الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَ أَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَ رَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا» (Maedeh, 3).

² Referring to this verse of the Quran: «يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا آمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ» (An-Nessaa, 136).

³ Referring to this verse of the Quran: «هُمْ لِلْكَفْرِ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ يَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ مَا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ» (A'le Emran, 136).

methods and models in that regard. In order to understand the nature of the educational methods employed by the Imams, first, we need to get acquainted with some general specifications of such methods.

Ethical methods

Here the aim is to help people distance themselves from evil practices and to approach virtues and in order to do this, all good and evil traits are examined one by one, and based on the holy Quran and Islamic traditions, the virtues and harms that they bring about are elaborated on, particularly the consequences that will follow from each one in the hereafter (whether the sufferings of the Hell or the endless blessings of the Heaven). Then each is attributed to one of the five decrees of the faith and with such a classification, they are examined from the viewpoint of Islamic law and Fiqh where mostly their practical demarcations are addressed, while their personal aspect (the good and evil traits) is less considered and appears as forgivable in some cases.

Irfan-based methods

Here we don't see a distinct emphasis on every individual point, instead it is attempted to refine the soul and weed out vice and sow human virtues through knowledge of the self and Allah and complete separation from all but him. In this method, the focus is more on human perfection which is the true knowledge of the self and Allah than on the consequences which follow from one's actions in the afterlife, and thus such elements as affection of and love towards the origin of existence are emphasized.

Philosophical Methods

In philosophical methods, battling moral vices and realizing human dignity occur through logic and reasoning. These methods make it clear that the virtues are existential in nature and they are the manifestations of being, while vices are non-existential in nature. "Being" is pure goodness in nature and it is highly advised that we move towards it, and to the extent one is able to approach "being" and distance himself/herself from non-existence, he/she can evolve more and get nearer to perfection.

Experimental Methods

This is a novel method promoted by new psychologists and education authorities in the modern world. Physical harms, comfort, social successes and failures are the subjects of focus in these methods and statistics and sampling is frequently used.

Although there is a wealth of studies conducted on the education methods employed by the holy Imams (P.B.U.T), there seems to be a shortage of works on "prayers" as a cultural and

promotional tool and their functions in the field of education. Consequently, this concept is yet to find its way to schools of education.

It could be argued that prayers encompass the essence of all the aforementioned methods since they regard both the consequences of one's behavior and morals in the hereafter and the punishments and rewards that follow from good or evil deeds, and the affection, affinity with Allah, knowledge of the self and divine mysticism together with the good and evil dimensions of one's deeds as well as the social effects resulting from them in the earthly life, and therefore, they effectively lead the believers to virtues and save them from evils. Imam Khomeini as the follower of the educational path of the holy Imams (P.B.U.T) in the Islamic community, regarded prayers as one of the most effective elements of changing the human being for better and said "There exists everything one needs for perfection in these prayers (those which have been uttered by or quoted from the Infallible Imams). The language of prayers is distinct from the one used for stating the decrees of Islam; It is distinct from the language of philosophy; It is distinct from the language of practical Irfan. It is a distinct language, something higher than all of them; It is an effective and transformative language"¹

Accordingly, the method of prayer might as well be called the "Islamic method" which attempts to educate humans with a special and effective while tangible language and institutionalize the Islamic lifestyle in a society as result. The concrete manifestation of such a language is found in the prayers quoted from the holy Imams (P.B.U.T).

In order to substantiate our claim, we will follow with the content analysis of the prayers quoted from Imam Reza and based on the results drawn from it, we will introduce the educational models employed by him via such method (prayers).

Content Analysis of Razavi Prayers

As mentioned earlier, the present study adopts the content analysis method to provide an accurate account of the components of Razavi prayers, but first we need to begin by introducing this method and its various techniques. Finally, the appropriate method for analyzing the contents of the Razavi Prayers will be offered and the reasons why such a method is favored will be explained.

Content analysis is applicable for the examination of the explicit contents of the messages of a text. In this method, the explicit contents of these messages are systematically and quantitatively described.

¹ Movahed Abtahi, *Al-Sahifa al-Jamea' le-Adeiyeh Ali ibn Mousa Al-Reza (A.S.) and Abna Al-arba'*, 19:212.

Accordingly, this method could be considered as a technique of transforming qualitative data into quantitative ones. Content analysis is a suitable method for answering the questions regarding the contents of a message.¹

Content analysis is a commonly used method for the analysis of qualitative data which, despite functional similarities has a different analytic principle. The required skills for conducting such an analysis are as follows: distancing oneself from the subject and critically analyzing the conditions, recognizing prejudices and avoiding them, collecting reliable data and enjoying the ability of abstract thinking.²

Content analysis is also known as the technique of “Inverted Questionnaire”. Here there is no questionnaire beforehand and the aim is to find such a questionnaire based on the answers found in the news, article and stories. In other words, in this method, the analysis of verbal documents is carried out as if filling out a questionnaire.³

Having studied all the available techniques of content analysis discussed in various works, we chose the technique of thematic content analysis which takes sentence as the unit of analysis in both the qualitative and quantitative form. Next, the respective content analysis tables were designed and then the expressive forms, orientations and focal points of the sentences of the prayers quoted from Imam Reza were extracted.

In other words, the study process was as follows:

- Counting and recording Razavi prayers in content analysis tables;
- Segmenting the sentences of the prayers based on the expressive forms used;
- Extracting the expressive forms of each sentence of the prayers;
- Extracting the main orientation of each sentence of the prayers;
- Extracting the focal points of each sentence of the prayers;
- Encoding the extracted themes;
- Categorizing the expressive forms for the extraction of statistical diagrams;
- Categorizing the recorded orientations under each expressive form for the extraction of statistical diagrams;
- Categorizing the recorded focal points under each orientation for the extraction of statistical diagrams;

¹ Klaus Krippendorff, *Foundations of Content Analysis Methodology*, trans. Hooshang Naeini (Tehran: Ravesh, 1999), 36

² Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research Method: Basic Theory, Procedures and Practices*, trans. Boyouk Mohammadi (Tehran: Institute of Humanities and Cultural Studies, 2005), 18

³ Tofigh Firozan, *Content Analysis Method* (Tehran: Agah, 1981), 211

- Working out the qualitative analyses and stating a theory based on the results of the study;

The population of the study consists of 104 prayers available in the book “Scriptures of Imam Reza” and the stages 1 to 6 of this study have been carried out in content analysis tables using Excel software. The following is a sample of the tables explained:

Table 1. *Sample of content analysis table*

Number	Prayer Text	Expressive Form	Orientation	Focal point	Encoding
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Due to the considerations of space and time, it was not possible to include all the tables in this article and thus only the results of the content analysis are discussed here.

1. Dominance of the educational approach in worshiping rituals

Every human being employs one of the expressive forms to express his intents and use them to achieve his desired goals through words. Making use of Expressive forms is completely common and similar to the context, they are in fact present in each sentence expressing its main content.

In order to analyze the content of the prayers quoted from Imam Reza, this study begins with the analysis and extraction of the expressive forms or the categories incorporated in these prayers. The diagram drawn from measuring the frequency of such expressive forms indicates what types of expressive forms were used most and least frequently by Imam Reza to express his intended meanings and what expressive forms were developed by him in that regard.¹

¹ Mohammad Jani Pour, *Soft Power and Holy Defense* (Tehran: Imam Sadiq University Press, 2012), 109-114

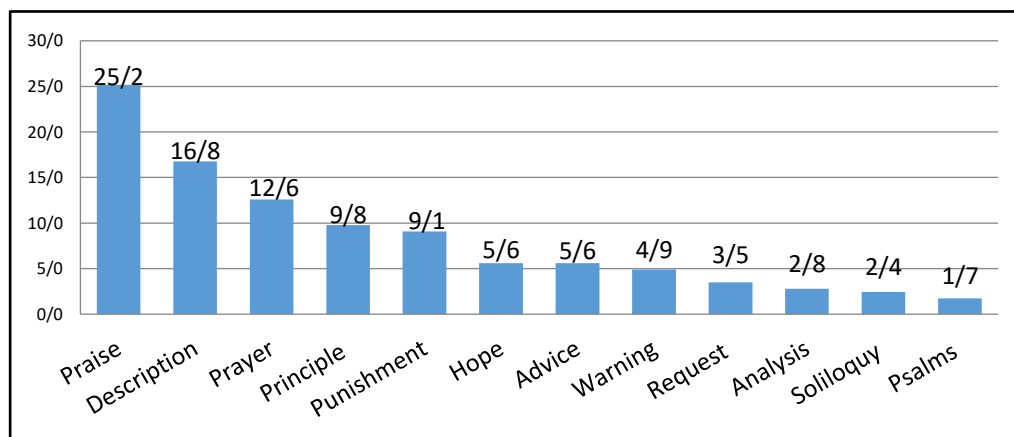


Diagram 1. Frequency of the expressive forms in Razavi Prayers

An important point which could be drawn from the content analysis of Razavi prayers is the frequency of the expressive form of “Praise” compared to other expressive forms. Praise here means those phrases by which an individual expresses his proud of befriending or accompanying a person or following a certain religion, school of thought or belief and honors it. Moreover, in many cases we see that the author or speaker begins his writing/speech with saluting and paying tribute to some people or groups and remembers them with respect.

In fact, it should be noted that praising those individuals is in some cases due to the position of those people or groups and their significance for the expression of the writer/speaker’s intentions. In other words, in some cases the writer/speaker seeks to introduce a particular person as a role model by mentioning his name and his position. This assumption is more noticeable when the characteristics and attributes of such individuals are mentioned¹

By the expressive form of “description” we mean any detailed expression which describes some characteristics or specifications of someone or something. Description may in some cases indicate merely a declarative statement and in others signals the speaker/writer’s interests in or fondness of subject, phenomenon and/or a certain person. In order to differentiate praise and description it should be noted that description lacks any value and by which an object or event is merely described while “praise” honors something or someone. In the case of description there is necessarily no desirability whereas in Praise there is. The point of view of description is neutral but that of praise is positive. Description can be positive or negative while praise is necessarily positive (Ibid).

¹ Vahid Yavari and Mohammad Janipour, *Illustration of the Future from the Perspective of the Revelation Martyrs* (Tehran: Foundation of Islamic Revolution Martyr in Partnership with Human Sciences Research Center of Imam Sadiq (A.S.) University, 2009). 85-89

2. Introducing Ahlul-Bayt (P.B.U.T) as role models through description

Based on the data extracted from the content analysis table of Imam Reza's prayers, a number of individuals and groups are praised in these prayers that are listed in diagram 2.

Praise of Ahlul-Bayt / praise of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H)/ praise of the divine prophets/ praise of Islam/ praise of the Quran/ praise of the high angels

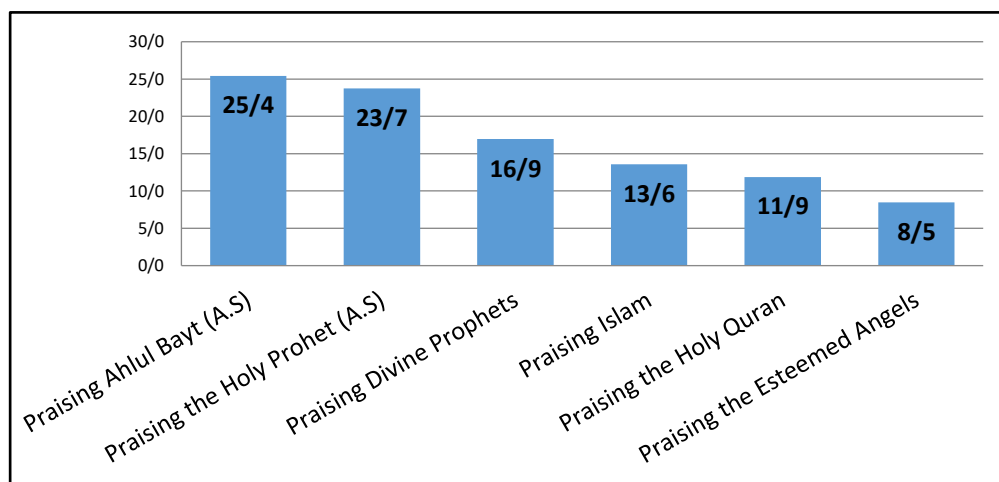


Diagram 2. *Frequency of Praises in Razavi Prayers*

The high frequency of the praises made in these prayers is surprising from this respect that the texts analyzed in this study were “prayers” and it was customarily expected that we found such prayer expressive forms as psalms and supplication more in such prayer texts, but it seems that Imam Reza sought to inform the Islamic community of his own specific goals through such a propagation instrument (prayer), as from the dawn of Islam and throughout the history afterwards, prayers have always been utilized by the holy prophet and the Infallible Imams, particularly Imam Sajad, as an important propagation tool.

According to diagram 2 which represents the frequency of the praises found in Imam Reza's prayers, more than solely addressing the material and spiritual needs of individuals, the holy Imam has reminded people of the status of Ahlul-Bayt (P.B.U.T), Islam and the holy Quran, drawing people's attention to the fact that they are the vessels of all forms of blessings and the cause of the ratification of all deficiencies and lacks.

Interestingly, there are numerous cases where Imam Reza's prayers begin, prior to expressing or requesting anything, with the praise of the Holy Prophet and the Ahlul-Bayt (P.B.U.T), directly mentioning their names in some cases¹.

¹ e.g. see prayers 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 18 etc.

There are many other cases where the exalted status of the Ahlul Bayt (P.B.U.T) in the creation and before Allah, and the fact that all the universe affairs are mediated by the Ahlul Bayt (P.B.U.T) have been emphasized so that the Islamic community recognizes the superior status of the Ahlul Bayt (P.B.U.T) in different occasions and (P.B.U.T) when facing difficulties, and to turn into them as a result (e.g. see prayers number 21, 23, 32 etc.).

For instance, what follows is part of the prayer number 21 in which Amir al-Mu'minin (A.S) is praised:

وَأَنَّ عَلِيَّاً أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَيِّدَ الْأَوْصِيَاءِ وَوَارِثَ عِلْمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ عِلْمِ الدِّينِ وَمُيَسِّرَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَمُمَيِّزَ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَمُجَاهِدَ الْمَارِقِينَ إِمَامِي وَحُجَّتِي وَعُرْوَتِي وَصِرَاطِي وَدَلِيلِي وَمَحَجَّتِي وَمَنْ لَمْ أَتَقِ بِأَعْمَالِي وَلَوْ زَكَّتْ وَلَمْ أَرَاهَا مُنْجِيَةً لِي وَلَوْ صَلَحَتْ إِلَّا بِوَلَايَتِهِ وَالْإِتِّمَامِ بِهِ وَالْإِقْرَارِ بِفَضَائِلِهِ وَالْقَبُولِ مِنْ حَمَلَتِهَا وَالتَّسْلِيمِ لِرُؤُوسِهَا وَأَقْرَبُ بَأَوْصِيَائِهِ مِنْ أَبْنَائِهِ أئِمَّةٌ وَحُجَجٌ وَأَدْلَةٌ وَسُرُجٌ وَأَعْلَامٌ وَمَنَارٌ وَسَادَةٌ وَأَبْرَارٌ.

It is clear that this expressive form along with the words and phrases indicating praise have been employed in order to introduce Ahlul-Bayt (P.B.U.T) as role models of Islamic lifestyle, bearing a completely educational approach.

3. Elaboration of the principles and basics of the Islamic doctrine

The content analysis of Razavi prayers shows that the expressive form of description is the most dominant form after that of the praise. As the frequency diagram of the expressive form of description indicates, most of the descriptions uttered in the prayers are related to the attributes and characteristics of Allah.

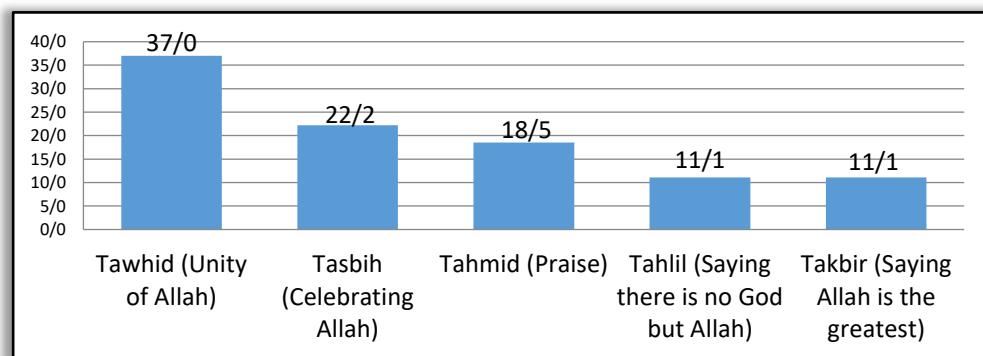


Diagram 3. Frequency of descriptions in Razavi prayers

In other words, there are numerous cases in Razavi prayers that indicate Tasbih, Tahmid, Tahlil and Takbir. For instance, regarding the Tasbih, Imam Reza (A.S) says:

«سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ» (Prayer No.3)، «سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ كَمَا يَنْبَغِي لِلَّهِ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كَمَا يَنْبَغِي لِلَّهِ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ كَمَا يَنْبَغِي لِلَّهِ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ كَمَا يَنْبَغِي لِلَّهِ، لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ كَمَا يَنْبَغِي لِلَّهِ...» (Prayer No.4).

In prayer number 6, Imam Reza Praises Allah, saying:

«اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ عَلَى مَرَدِّ نَوَازِلِ الْبَلَاءِ وَمُلِمَّاتِ الضَّرَاءِ ... وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ رَبِّ عَلَى هَبْنِي عَطَائِكَ ... وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ عَلَى إِحْسَانِكَ الْكَثِيرِ ... وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ/ رَبِّ عَلَى تَمِيمِكَ قَلِيلِ الشُّكْرِ....»

With regard to Tahlil, he says:

«لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ الْمُبِينُ» (Prayer No.19)، «يَا مَنْ لَا شَيْبَةَ لَهُ وَلَا مِثَالَ، أَنْتَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ وَلَا خَالِقَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، تُفْنِي الْمَخْلُوقِينَ وَتَبْقَى أَنْتَ، حَلَمْتَ عَمَّنْ عَصَاكَ وَفِي الْمَغْفِرَةِ رِضَاكَ» (Prayer No.40) و «لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّ آبَائِنَا الْأَوَّلِينَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَا نَعْبُدُ إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ- مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ» (Prayer No.74).

Regarding Takbir, he says:

«اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ عَلَى مَا هَدَانَا، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ عَلَى مَا رَزَقَنَا مِنْ بَهِيمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ ...» (Prayer No.62)،
«بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ لَا ذَهَبَتْ أَنْقَرَضَتْ» (Prayer No.43).

An important point to consider here is the special effort made by Imam Reza (A.S) to introduce Allah together with His attributes and characteristics. Since such descriptions do not fall in any of the four formats of Tasbih, Tahmid, Tahlil and Takbir, the present paper adopts the title “Tawhid” to accommodate all these types of description.

Some of the examples are as follows:

«سُبْحَانَ خَالِقِ النُّورِ سُبْحَانَ خَالِقِ الظُّلُمَةِ سُبْحَانَ خَالِقِ الْمِيَاهِ سُبْحَانَ خَالِقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ سُبْحَانَ خَالِقِ الْأَرْضِينَ سُبْحَانَ [خَالِقِ] الرِّيَّاحِ وَالنَّبَاتِ سُبْحَانَ خَالِقِ الْحَيَاةِ وَالْمَوْتِ سُبْحَانَ خَالِقِ الثَّرَى وَالْفَلَوَاتِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ» (Prayer No.2).

It seems that Imam Reza (A.S) intends to introduce and illustrate the creativeness of Allah in the aforementioned prayer.

In another prayer we read:

«يَا اللَّهُ يَا وَلِيَّ الْعَافِيَةِ وَرَازِقِ الْعَافِيَةِ وَالْمُنْعِمَ بِالْعَافِيَةِ وَالْمَنَّانَ بِالْعَافِيَةِ وَالْمُتَفَضِّلَ بِالْعَافِيَةِ عَلَى وَ عَلَى جَمِيعِ خَلْقِكَ رَحْمَانَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَ رَحِيمَهُمَا صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَ ارْزُقْنَا الْعَافِيَةَ وَ تَمَامَ الْعَافِيَةِ فِي شُكْرِ الْعَافِيَةِ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ» (Prayer No.15)

Here we see other Allah's attributes being introduced. An identical approach is adopted in prayers 23 and 36.

It can be concluded from the above-mentioned instances that Imam Reza has attempted to introduce the Almighty Allah and to explicate His attributes through prayers, and thus to familiarize the Islamic community with the first principle of the Islamic thought which is in itself an introduction to getting familiar with other principles; an educational approach which is a step toward the realization of the Islamic lifestyle.

4. Emphasizing the principles of *Tavalla*¹ and *Tabarra*² and the necessity of being moderate in observing them

Regarding the themes found in Imam Reza's prayers, it should be noted that they have been extracted and classified based on the content analysis of the texts of the prayers, and that they are in no way a reflection of the titles of the prayers. In other words, the titles under which these prayers are found in the book *Sahifa Al-Razaviah* have not been the basis of the study and the researchers themselves have decided on a theme(s) regarding any of the prayers. Diagram 4 provides a list of these themes along with their frequency.

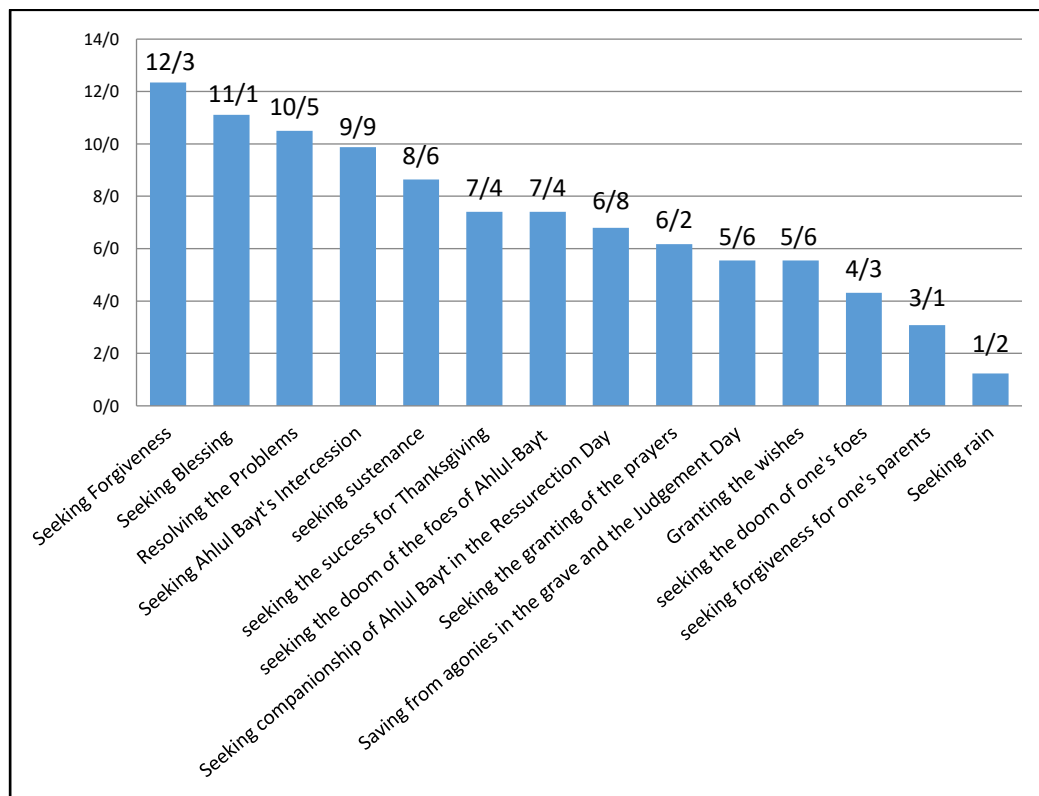


Diagram 4- Frequency of the themes of Razavi Prayers

¹ Shunning the foes of Ahlul Bayt

² Liking Ahlul Bayt and their Shiites

Earlier, when defining prayer, we argued that it refers to requesting something from Allah in a more formal way than in Psalms while it differs as well from the expressive form of “request” since “prayer” is somehow a general request but “request” is a kind of personal and private plea¹

For instance, for seeking forgiveness, Imam Reza in prayer number 7 says:

«يَا كَرِيمُ اغْفِرْ لِمَنْ فِي مَشَارِقِ الْأَرْضِ وَمَغَارِبِهَا مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ»; a prayer which indicates that Imam Reza (A.S) has supplicated such forgiveness for all believers.

What is represented by diagram 4 is a list of items sought from Allah by Imam Reza (A.S) in his prayers for the people of the Islamic community. The interesting points to consider in this list are seeking the doom of the foes of the Ahlul-Bayt (P.B.U.T) and seeking the companionship of Ahlul-Bayt (P.B.U.T) in the Resurrection Day. Although at first glance, one may argue that since these prayers have been uttered by Imam Reza, as one of the Holy Imams, they should be categorized under the expressive form of “request”, a closer look at the type of words used in and the general atmosphere of these sentences guide any reader to the conclusion that they are on behalf of every believer and they are recommendations for the general public and not for a certain person, hence they belong to the expressive form of “prayer”.

Accordingly, it can be argued that in addition to teaching prayers for the wishes of the people to be granted and their difficulties be eased, and also for asking forgiveness and sustenance from Allah, Imam Reza attempted to remind people of the special status of the holy Imams in the Islamic community so that people turn into them and distance themselves from their enemies. This concept in the Islamic knowledge is called the principle of “Tawalla and Tabarra” and is known as one of the Ancillaries of the Faith which is taught in Razavi prayers and is one of the educational models followed by his holiness.

5. Teaching principles of worship and servitude

Some other matters addressed in Razavi prayers indicate a set of principles and laws that can be interpreted as “Islamic rites or traditions”. To develop and propagate Islamic lifestyle, Imam Reza (A.S) have attempted to familiarize the Islamic community with certain rites and traditions through prayers and thus to educate them in that regard. For instance, it was emphasized by Imam Reza to begin prayers by saying Salawat and remembering the Holy Prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H) and the infallible Imams (P.B.U.T) and then calling on them to intercede to Allah on your behalf before stating your needs. This can be observed in most of the prayers uttered by his holiness and in some cases, there is a direct order to proceed as such. For example, in prayer number 32 he says:

¹ Yavari and Janipour, *Illustration of the Future from the Perspective of the Revelation Martyrs*, 78-96.

«يَا مَاجِدُ يَا وَاحِدُ يَا كَرِيمُ يَا دَائِمُ اتَّوَجَّهُ إِلَيْكَ بِمُحَمَّدٍ نَبِيِّ الرَّحْمَةِ (ص) يَا مُحَمَّدُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنِّي اتَّوَجَّهْتُ بِكَ إِلَى اللَّهِ رَبِّكَ وَرَبِّي وَرَبِّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ أَنْ تُصَلِّيَ عَلَيَّ مُحَمَّدٍ وَأَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ وَأَسْأَلُكَ نَفْحَةَ كَرِيمَتِهِ مِنْ نَفَحَاتِكَ وَفَتْحاً يَسِيراً وَرِزْقاً وَاسِعاً». (Prayer No. 32)

Observing manners when praying, praying for everyone, recognizing priorities in prayers, the priority of praying for all believers etc. are among other implicit rites and principles for the granting of prayers implied and taught in Razavi Prayers.

These rites and traditions are introduced in two ways in Razavi prayers:

a. Implicative use of select verses of Quran

For instance, he states in prayer number 45:

«إِذَا ذَهَبَ لَكَ ضَالَّةٌ أَوْ مَتَاعٌ فَقُلْ "وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِيحُ الْغَيْبِ فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ" ثُمَّ تَقُولُ اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ تَهْدِي مِنَ الضَّالَّةِ وَتُنَجِّي مِنَ الْعَمَى وَتَرُدُّ الضَّالَّةَ».

In prayer number 46, he also makes frequent use of Quran verses:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ، بِسْمِ اللَّهِ، بِسْمِ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَى مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ وَيَهْدِي لَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِكُمْ مَرَفَقًا وَيَهْدِي لَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِكُمْ رُشْدًا وَعَلَى اللَّهِ قَصْدُ السَّبِيلِ وَمِنْهَا جَائِرٌ وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَهَدَاكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ثُمَّ السَّبِيلَ يَسِّرُهُ - أَوَلَمْ يَرَأِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ فَانْتَبَذَتْ بِهِ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا فَأَجَاءَهَا الْمَخَاضُ إِلَى جِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ قَالَتْ يَا لَيْتَنِي مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسِيًّا فَنَادَاهَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَلَّا تَحْزَنِي قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا وَهَزَى إِلَيْكِ جِذْعَ النَّخْلَةِ تُسَاقِطُ عَلَيْكَ رَطْبًا جَنِيًّا فَكُلِي وَاشْرَبِي وَقَرِّي عَيْنًا فَإِمَّا تَرِينِ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا وَ....

Having referred to some verses of Quran by which Allah has encouraged people to get married and start a family, Imam Reza seeks to imply in Prayer number 90 that addresses the subject of marriage, that marriage is a form of obeying Allah's command.

b. Implicit use of the Divine Traditions

Most of the rites taught by Imam Reza in his prayers are in fact an implicit use of the divine traditions. For instance, in prayer number 30 he states:

«اللَّهُمَّ جَدِيرٌ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ بِالْأَدْعَاءِ أَنْ يَدْعُوكَ وَمَنْ وَعَدْتَهُ بِالْأَسْتِجَابَةِ أَنْ يَرْجُوكَ وَلِي اللَّهُمَّ حَاجَةٌ قَدْ عَجَزَتْ عَنْهَا حِيلَتِي وَكَلْتُ مِنْهَا طَائِفَتِي وَضَعُفْتُ عَنْ مَرَامِهَا قُدْرَتِي ...»

Here, according to Imam Reza, Allah commands people to pray and promises to grant those prayers. In this way he introduces prayer as a divine tradition and the way we are encouraged to state our wishes.

As another example we can refer to prayer number 63 which reads:

اللَّهُمَّ كَمَا سَرَّتَ عَلَيَّ مَا لَمْ أَعْلَمْ فَاعْفِرْ لِي مَا تَعَلَّمْتُ وَكَمَا وَسَّعْتَ عَلَيَّ عِلْمَكَ فَلْيَسِّعْ عَفْوَكَ وَكَمَا بَدَأْتَني بِالْإِحْسَانِ فَأَتِمَّ نِعْمَتَكَ بِالْغُفْرَانِ وَكَمَا أَكْرَمْتَنِي بِمَعْرِفَتِكَ فَاشْفَعْهَا بِمَغْفِرَتِكَ وَكَمَا عَرَفْتَنِي وَحَدَائِثِكَ فَأَكْرِمْني بِطَاعَتِكَ [لِمَاعِيَتِكَ] وَكَمَا عَصَمْتَنِي مَا لَمْ أَكُنْ أَعْتَصِمُ مِنْهُ إِلَّا بِعِصْمَتِكَ فَاعْفِرْ لِي مَا لَوْ شِئْتَ عَصَمْتَنِي مِنْهُ يَا جَوَادُ يَا كَرِيمُ يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ.

In this prayer Imam Reza also attempts to supplicate some things from Allah by referring to the deeds that He assumes as His responsibility.

6. Eliminating negligence from individuals and society

Admonition is another expressive form incorporated in Razavi prayers which is commonly expressed in two ways: articulating a question with the aim of raising awareness which stimulates thinking, or an important sentence bearing a significant reminder for the addressees.

In fact, raising awareness is the essential function of this expressive form since the reader/listener might be unaware or ignorant of something and therefore raising a question or reminding a point may help him become aware of it. This expressive form usually begins with phrases such as be aware that, be informed that etc.¹

In Razavi Prayers, this expressive form comes only in the form of declarative sentences with the aim of informing and eliminating negligence. This is another exclusive responsibility of the infallible Imams (P.B.U.T) in educating the humans; the Imams who serve as the torches of guidance for the mankind and institutionalize the Islamic lifestyle accordingly.

What is termed as the expressive form of “Admonition” in this article consists of sentences uttered by Imam Reza to raise the awareness of the people in order to get nearer to Allah and to become a true believer. For example, Imam Reza in Prayer number 8 says:

إِلَهِي بَدَتْ قُدْرَتُكَ وَكَمْ تَبَدُّ هَيْئَةُ لَكَ فَجَهْلُوكَ وَقَدَّرُوكَ وَالتَّقْدِيرُ عَلَى غَيْرِ مَا بِهِ شَبَّهُوكَ فَأَنَا بَرِيءٌ يَا إِلَهِي مِنَ الَّذِينَ بِالتَّشْبِيهِ طَلَبُوكَ لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِكَ شَيْءٌ وَلَنْ يُدْرِكُوكَ ظَاهِرٌ مَا بِهِمْ مِنْ نِعْمَتِكَ دَلَّهِمْ عَلَيْكَ لَوْ عَرَفُوكَ وَفِي خَلْقِكَ يَا إِلَهِي مَنُذُوحَةٌ أَنْ يَتَنَاولُوكَ بَلْ شَبَّهُوكَ بِخَلْقِكَ فَمَنْ نَمَّ لَمْ يَعْرِفُوكَ وَاتَّخَذُوا بَعْضَ آيَاتِكَ رَبًّا فَبِذَلِكَ وَصَفُوكَ فَتَعَالَيْتَ يَا إِلَهِي وَتَقَدَّسَتْ عَمَّا بِهِ الْمُشَبِّهُونَ نَعْتُوكَ يَا سَامِعَ كُلِّ صَوْتٍ وَيَا سَابِقَ كُلِّ قُوَّةٍ يَا مُحْيِيَ الْعِظَامِ وَهِيَ رَمِيمٌ وَمُنْشِئَهَا بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَاجْعَلْ لِي مِنْ كُلِّ هَمٍّ فَرَجًا وَمَخْرَجًا وَجَمِيعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ.

¹ Jani Pour, *Soft Power and Holy Defense*, 109-114.

The first part of the prayer is clearly aimed at informing people of the true attributes of the Almighty Allah and providing an accurate account of divine knowledge in order to eliminate negligence. It is only in the final part of the prayer that Imam Reza supplicates Allah for the granting of the believers' wishes. Similar cases are numerous in Razavi prayers, indicating that his holiness took every opportunity to propagate religious knowledge and to educate the Islamic community which paves the way for the promotion of the Islamic lifestyle.

7. Dos and Don'ts of life

Another area covered by Razavi prayers is dos and don'ts of life or in other words, advices and warnings to remind people of what they are required to do and not to do in the form of prayers. The diagram of the frequency of the advices offered in Razavi prayers is provided below:

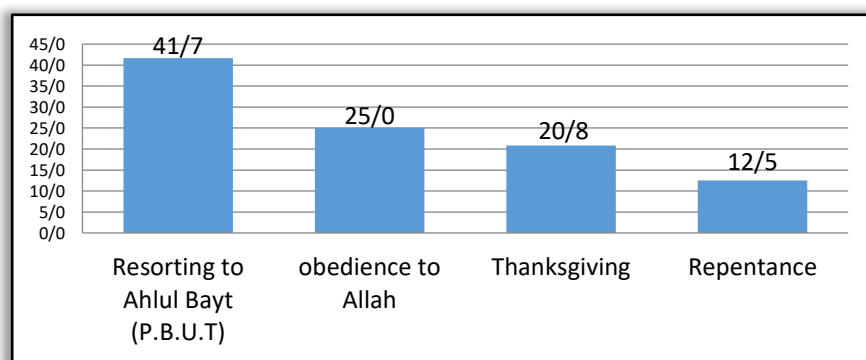


Diagram 5- Frequency of advices in Razavi Prayers

The most important advice offered in these prayers is resorting to the Infallible Ahlul-Bayt (P.B.U.T) when one faces difficulties. First Imam Reza states that resorting to Ahlul-Bayt (P.B.U.T) is a divine command. For instance, in prayer number 18 he says:

«اللَّهُمَّ يَا رَبَّ أَنْتَ عَظُمْتَ حَقًّا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ فَتَوَسَّلُوا بِنَا كَمَا أَمَرْتَ وَأَمَلُوا فَضْلَكَ وَرَحْمَتَكَ وَتَوَقَّعُوا إِحْسَانَكَ وَنِعْمَتَكَ فَاسْقِهِمْ سَقِيًّا نَافِعًا عَامًّا...»

There are some other prayers where he advises people to resort to Ahlul-Bayt (P.B.U.T). For instance, in prayer number 21 he says:

تَوَسَّلْتُ بِهِمْ إِلَيْكَ - مُتَقَرِّبًا إِلَى رَسُولِكَ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ ثُمَّ عَلَى أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَ الزَّهْرَاءِ سَيِّدَةِ نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ وَ الْحَسَنِ وَ الْحُسَيْنِ وَ عَلِيٍّ وَ مُحَمَّدٍ وَ جَعْفَرٍ وَ مُوسَى وَ عَلِيٍّ وَ مُحَمَّدٍ وَ عَلِيٍّ وَ الْحَسَنِ وَ مَنْ بَعْدَهُمْ يُقِيمُ الْحُجَّةَ إِلَى الْحُجَّةِ الْمَسْتُورَةِ مِنْ وَلَدِهِ الْمَرْجُوِّ لِلَّامَةِ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ اللَّهُمَّ فَاجْعَلْهُمْ فِي هَذَا الْيَوْمِ وَ مَا بَعْدَهُ حِصْنِي مِنَ الْمَكَارِهِ ... اللَّهُمَّ تَوَسَّلِي بِهِمْ إِلَيْكَ وَ تَقَرَّبِي بِمَحَبَّتِهِمْ وَ تَحَصَّنِي بِإِمَامَتِهِمْ افْتَحْ عَلَيَّ فِي هَذَا الْيَوْمِ أَبْوَابَ رِزْقِكَ وَ أَنْشُرْ عَلَيَّ رَحْمَتَكَ وَ حَبِّبْنِي إِلَى خَلْقِكَ وَ جَنِّبْنِي بَعْضَهُمْ وَ عَدَاوَتَهُمْ إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ.

Prayer number 23 is another such example whose third part follows the same approach and is quoted in other prayer books under the title of the “Tawassol prayer”.

Regarding repentance and its significance, Imam Reza (A.S) has addressed his “self” in Prayer number 21 and says:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي ذُنُوبِي وَكَثَرَتْهَا قَدْ أَخْلَقْتَ وَجْهِي عِنْدَكَ وَحَبَّبْتَنِي عَنْ اسْتِيْهَالِ رَحْمَتِكَ وَبَاعَدْتَنِي عَنْ [اسْتِجَارِ] [اسْتِجَارِ] اسْتِجَابِ مَغْفِرَتِكَ وَكَوَلَا تَعْلُقِي بِكَائِكَ وَتَمْسُكِي بِالرَّجَاءِ لِمَا وَعَدْتَ أَمْثَالِي مِنَ الْمُسْرِفِينَ وَأَشْبَاهِي مِنَ الْخَاطِئِينَ بِقَوْلِكَ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ وَحَدَّرْتَ الْقَانِطِينَ مِنْ رَحْمَتِكَ فَقُلْتُ وَمَنْ يَقْنَطُ مِنْ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّهِ إِلَّا الضَّالُّونَ ثُمَّ نَدَبْتَنَا بِرَحْمَتِكَ إِلَى دُعَائِكَ فَقُلْتُ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ.

It should be noted that while the infallible Imams are undoubtedly purified and totally away from any impurity, by confessing to his sins Imam Reza intends to teach people how to repent and advise them to do it. It is needless to say that such words have been employed to provide a model for the Islamic lifestyle and bear purely educational purposes.

Conclusion

After the Holy Quran, the invaluable words of the infallible Imams (P.B.U.T) are the most valued heritage of Islam and some guidelines for achieving salvation in both the world and the hereafter. Such a rich treasury has the potentials to be used in various fields of human sciences and to be considered as a basis for fundamental and applied studies, especially for the development and promotion of Islamic lifestyle as well as educational models in educational systems.

The results of the content analysis of Razavi prayers revealed that the educational aspects are dominant in such prayers and that his holiness attempted to convey important concepts to the people of the Islamic community through the promotional instrument of prayer. For instance, praising the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) and infallible Imams is among the most frequently used themes (52.2%) in Razavi prayers, indicating that Imam Reza sought to draw the attention of the Islamic community to the Ahlul-Bayt (P.B.U.T) in different occasions via prayers and to remind them of the superior status of Ahlul Bayt (P.B.U.T) in the community and before Allah. The importance of this concept is better understood when we consider that resorting to Ahlul-Bayt (P.B.U.T) and seeking their intercession has also been frequently advised (41.7%); It has also repeatedly been said in the prayers that the prayers of the believers will be granted when that of the Imams are granted. It goes without saying that all these themes have been employed by Imam Reza in his prayers with educational purposes.

The followings are among the educational patterns and methods employed by Imam Reza in his prayers:

- Emphasis on the dominance of educational-cultural approach in rites of worship with the purpose of religiously educating people;
- Introducing Ahlul-Bayt (P.B.U.T) as Islamic role models through praising them and articulating their characteristics;
- Explicating the basic Islamic principles and the true nature of Allah, human being and the universe as part of the processes of the realization of religious education;
- Introducing the Ancillaries of the Faith and placing especial emphasis on the principles of Tawalla and Tabarra and the significance of being moderate in observing them;
- Teaching the rites of worship and servitude and the most important priorities in life;
- Eliminating negligence and raising the awareness of humans when facing difficulties and hardships
- Emphasizing the dos and don'ts of life through practical advices and warnings.

It appears that an educational approach incorporating the above-mentioned components as principal strategies for the realization and evolution of religious education from the personal and social point of views can eventually lead to the institutionalization of Islamic lifestyle in the Islamic community.

Finally, it is suggested that researchers and specialists working in the area of education refer to this wealth of valuable insights and extract educational models and strategies in the form of a purposive study for the betterment of the existing educational system.

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