

**SESSION
THREE**

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SCIENCE OF ISLAMIC ETHICS

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SUMMARY of Session TWO

1. In Islam, ethical norms (akhlāq) are FIXED by the religion - the Quran and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the Ahl al-Bayt عليهم السلام.
2. Just because ethical norms are 'fixed' does not mean that they are stagnant - there **ARE** exceptions to the rule.
3. As human society is constantly evolving, what they deem to be "morally right" will also change and may contravene Divine Teachings which are fixed - in such scenarios, Divine Teachings must always take precedence even if the majority of people are opposed to it.

INTRODUCTION to the Course

“The human being stands between two extremes of either being the lowest of the low – descending lower than the wild animals or elevating themselves to the zenith of perfection in which they surpass even the greatest of angels. The journey between these extremes takes place under the shadow of purification (*tazkiyah*) and ethics (*akhlaq*) – an obligation which all Muslims must pursue.”

INTRODUCTION to the Course

“The Islamic tradition has tens of sciences which a believer tries to master, however all other branches of knowledge a Muslim seeks will obstruct their path towards spiritual insight and reaching Allāh ﷻ if they are not carried out after having first purified and taken firm control of the soul. The theory of how this is carried out is taught in the Science of Ethics (*‘Ilm al-Akhlaq*).”

INTRODUCTION to the Course

"As akhlaq is the active practice of the virtues, morality and manners which Islam has laid down through the Quran and the life of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the believer needs to have an excellent understanding of this discipline."

GREATER than the ANGELS

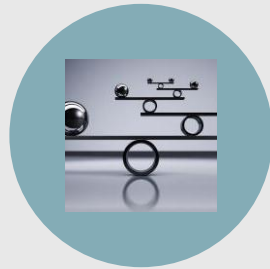
When 'Abdullah ibn Sinan asked Imam al-Sadiq عليه السلام:
"Is the human better or the angels?" The Imam
replied: "The Commander of the Faithful عليه السلام said,
'Allah, the Exalted, gave the angels **intellect**
without **desire**; He gave the animals **desire** without
intellect, and He gave **both** to the offspring of
Adam. So, a person whose *intellect* prevails over his
desire is better than the angels; while a person
whose *desire* prevails over his *intellect* is worse than
the beasts.'" (Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 60, Pg. 299, Trad.
5)

الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام) وقد سأله عبد الله بن سنان:
الملائكة أفضل أم بنو آدم؟ قال قال: أمير المؤمنين علي بن
أبي طالب (عليه السلام) إن الله عز وجل ركب في الملائكة
عقلاً بلا شهوة، وركب في البهائم شهوةً بلا عقل، وركب في
بني آدم كلتيهما، فمن غلب عقله شهوته فهو خير من
الملائكة، ومن غلبت شهوته عقله فهو شر من البهائم

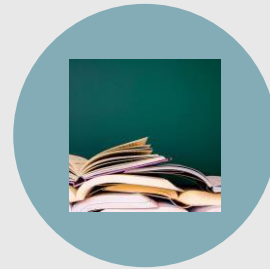
SESSION Outline



1
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE
SCIENCE OF ISLAMIC
ETHICS



2
IS ETHICS RELATIVE OR
ABSOLUTE? THE ROLE OF
RELIGION IN ETHICS



3
MORAL EXCELLENCE IN THE
SUPPLICATIONS OF THE AHL
AL-BAYT ﷺ

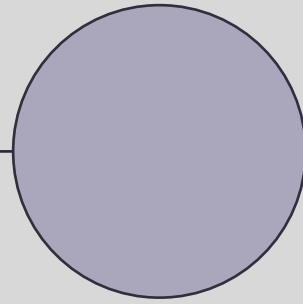


4
A REVIEW OF PASSAGES OF
THE SUPPLICATION
MAKĀRIM AL-AKHLĀQ

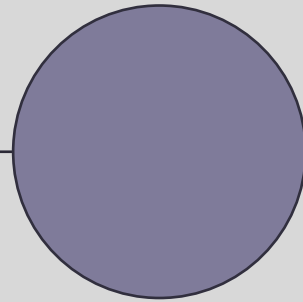
INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

“The ethical teachings of Islam need to be learnt from the Quran, the Prophet ﷺ and the Ahl al-Bayt عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ. The ONLY way we can learn and implement the Islamic morals is to work hard AND ask Allāh ﷻ for Divine Assistance them - to turn to Him through the supplications of the Prophet ﷺ and the Ahl al-Bayt عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ.”

ESSENCE of the HUMAN BEING



Physical



Spiritual



الدُّعَاءُ

“Du‘ā’”: The
Supplication

DEFINITION of DU‘Ā’

- Du‘ā’: Comes from the Arabic root “دعو” which means: *“to call someone, summon someone, appeal to, invite, etc.”*
- In the context of our discussion, we use it in the meaning of calling upon Allah ﷻ - whether to simply communicate with Allah ﷻ or to ask from Him for our material or spiritual needs.

DEFINITION of DU'Ā'



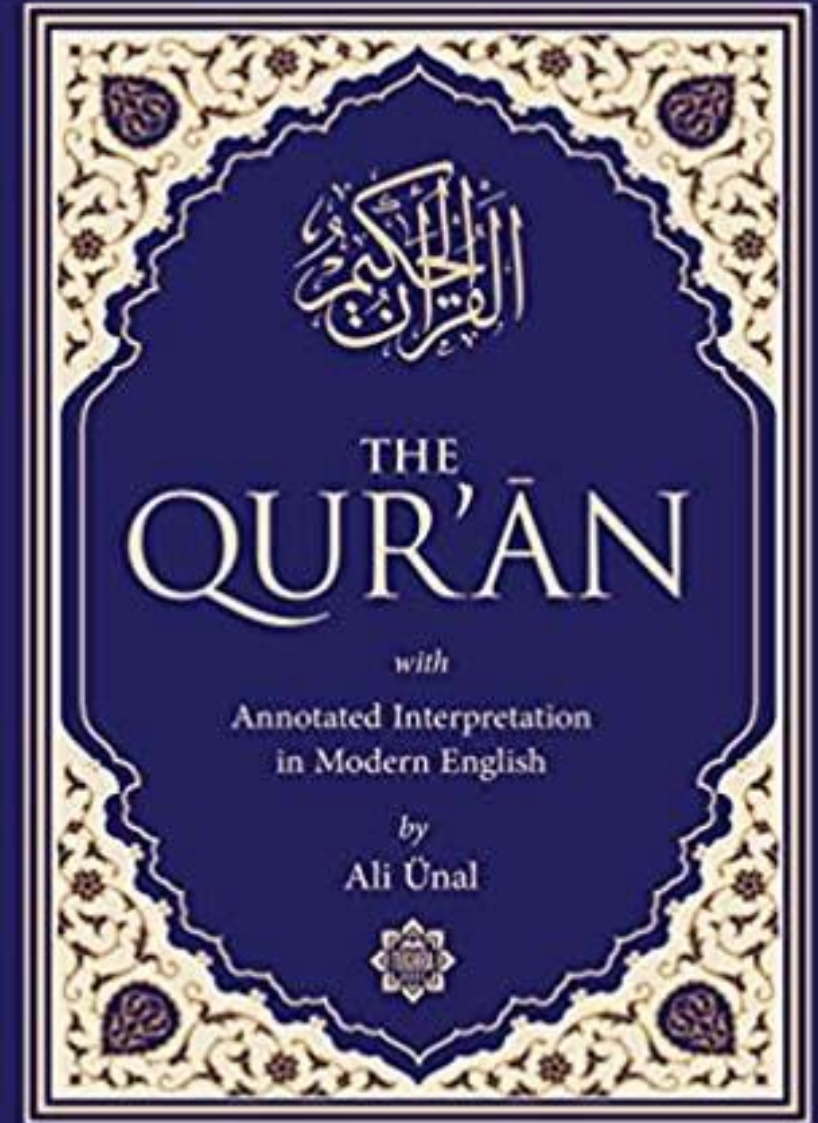
ASCENDING
Supplications

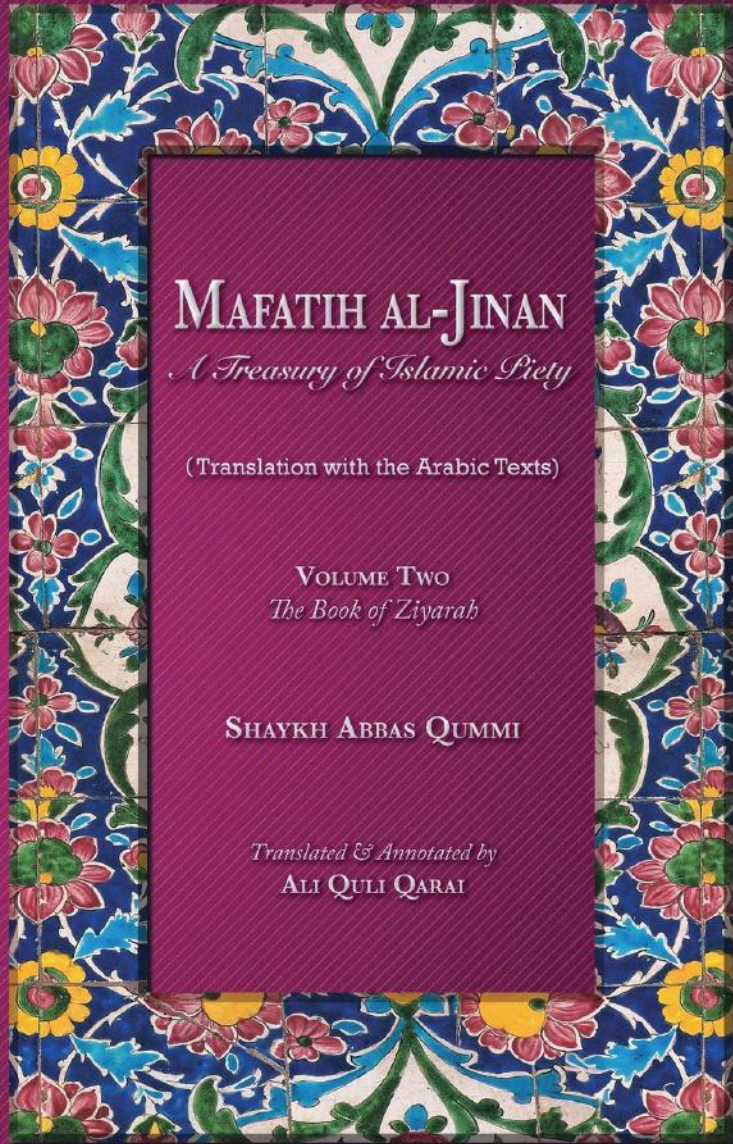


DESCENDING
Qur'an

DESCENDING WORDS

- The **Quran** is the **Descended Word of God to Humanity**
 - It contains that which Allāh ﷻ wants us to know and to strive for to implement at the personal and societal level.



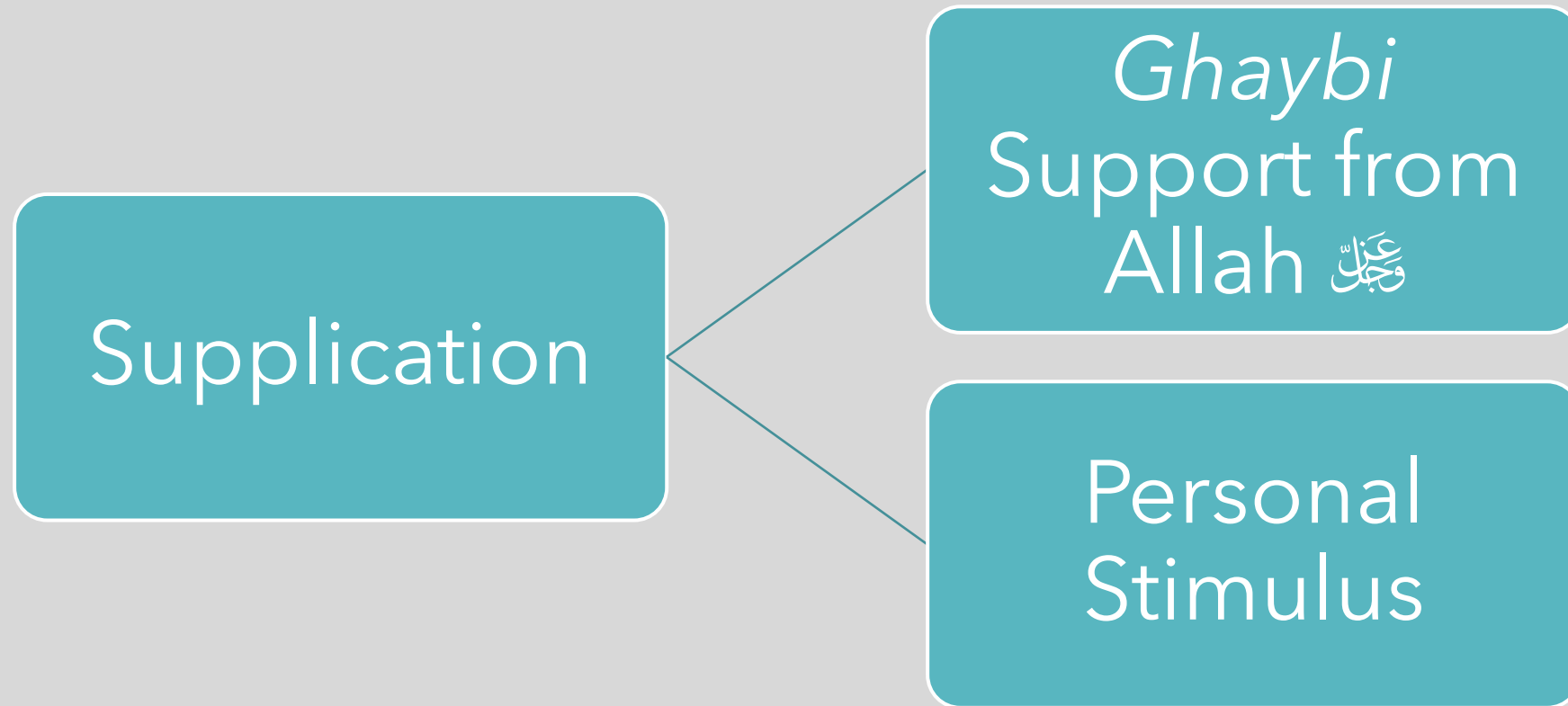


ASCENDING WORDS

- The **Supplication** is the **Ascended Word of Humanity to God**

- The traits and desires we have learnt from the Quran, Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and the Ahl al-Bayt عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ and what we are now striving to gain.

WORKINGS of the SUPPLICATION



ASKING ALLĀH for EVERYTHING in LIFE

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said:

سَلُوا اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ مَا بَدَا لَكُمْ مِنْ حَوَائِجِكُمْ حَتَّى شِئِعَ النَّعْلِ فَإِنَّهُ إِنْ لَمْ يُيَسِّرْهُ لَمْ يَتَّيَسَّرْ

“Ask Allāh, the Majestic and Glorious, for the necessities that you require, even for as much as your shoelace, because if He does not make it easily available for you then it will not be attainable.”

Biḥār al-Anwār, vol. 93, pg. 295, sec. 16, no. 23

QURAN and ASPECTS of DU'Ā'



ASPECT of the SUPPLICATION - 1 of 3

Seeking Inner Solace

أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَّرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ

Who is that that answers **the helpless one in distress** when he prays to Him, and removes the affliction from him? And *remember that it is He* has made you O *humankind*, vicegerents of the earth *to improve it and rule over it according to God's commandments*? Is there another deity besides God? How little you reflect!

Sūrah al-Naml (27) verse 62

ASPECT of the SUPPLICATION - 2 of 3

An Act of Worship ('ibādah)

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ
دَاخِرِينَ

Your Lord has said: "Call upon me *in supplication* and I will answer you."

Those who are too proud **to worship Me** will enter Hell, abased.

Sūrah al-Ghafir (40) verse 60

ASPECT of the SUPPLICATION - 3 of 3

A Way to "Change Fate"

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتَكُمْ إِنْ أَتَاكُمْ عَذَابُ اللَّهِ أَوْ أَتَتْكُمُ السَّاعَةُ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ تَدْعُونَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾ بَلْ إِيَّاهُ تَدْعُونَ فَيَكْشِفُ مَا تَدْعُونَ إِلَيْهِ إِنْ شَاءَ وَتَنْسَوْنَ مَا تُشْرِكُونَ

Say to them O Muhammad: "Do you ever consider: if some punishment of God comes upon you or the Last Hour comes upon you, do you then invoke other than God? Answer that if you are truthful and admit the voice of your conscience!" No indeed! Rather, it is Him - God - alone that you invoke, **then He may, if He wills, remove that which caused you to invoke Him** - and you forget then whatever partners you have been associating with Him.

Sūrah al-An'am (6) verses 40-41

CAUSE and EFFECT



LAW OF CAUSE AND EFFECT

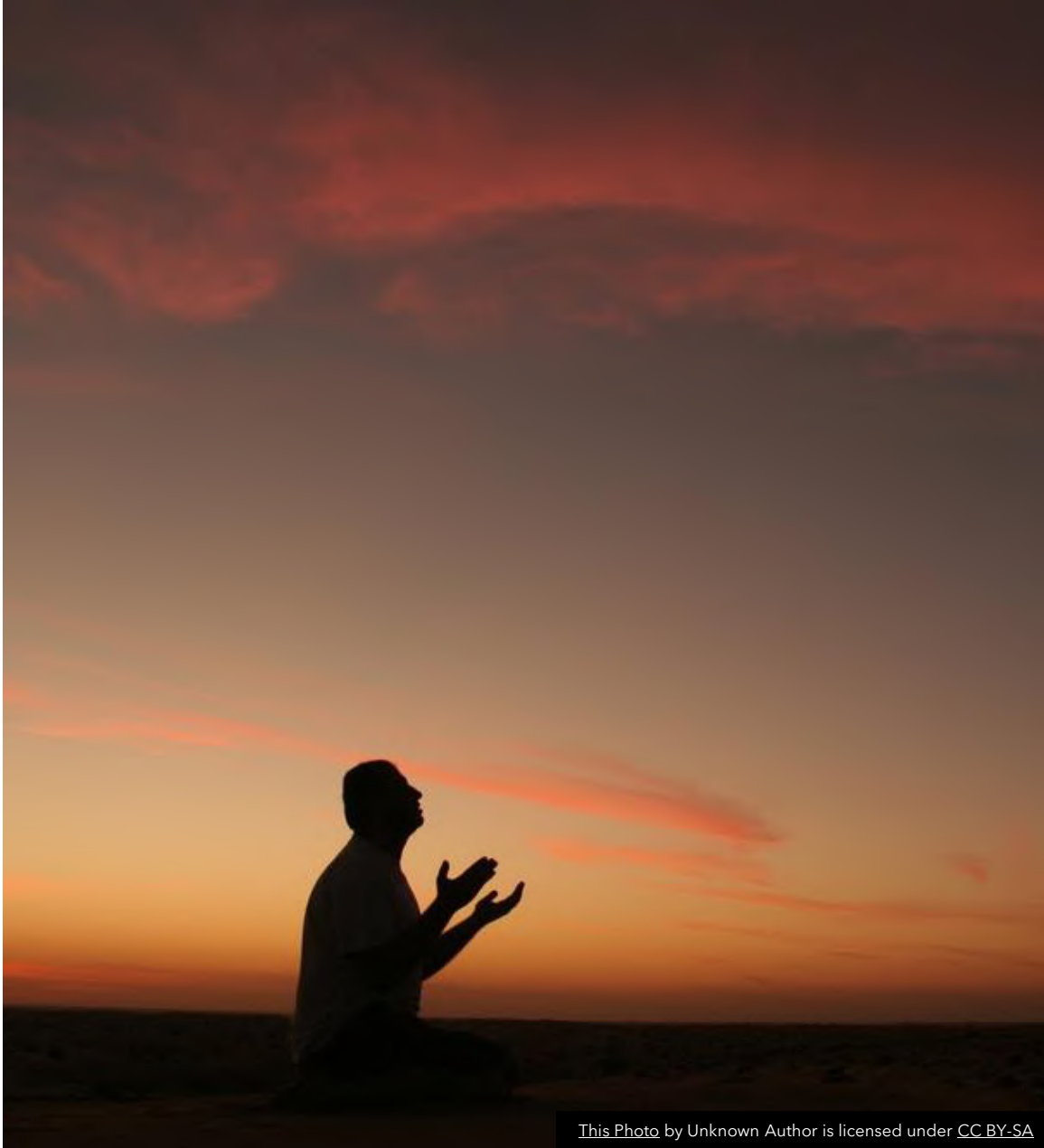
عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: أَبِي اللَّهِ أَنْ يَجْرِيَ الْأَشْيَاءَ إِلَّا بِأَسْبَابِهَا، فَجَعَلَ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ سَبَبًا

It has been narrated that Imam Ja'far al-al-Ṣādiq, peace be upon him, said: "Allāh does not 'like' to permit things to take place except by their causes; thus, He made a cause for everything."

Biḥār al-Anwār, v. 2, pg. 90

ISLAMIC
ETHICS
IN THE
SUPPLICATIONS





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PRAYING for PERFECTION

وَأَكْفُفْ أَيْدِينَا عَنِ الظُّلْمِ وَالسَّرِقَةِ

Withhold our hands from oppression
and larceny,

وَأَغْضُضْ أَبْصَارَنَا عَنِ الْفُجُورِ وَالْخِيَانَةِ

Turn our sights away from
licentiousness and treachery,

وَأَسَدِّدْ أَسْمَاعَنَا عَنِ اللَّغْوِ وَالْغِيْبَةِ

And block our hearings against
vainness and backbiting...

PRAYING for PERFECTION

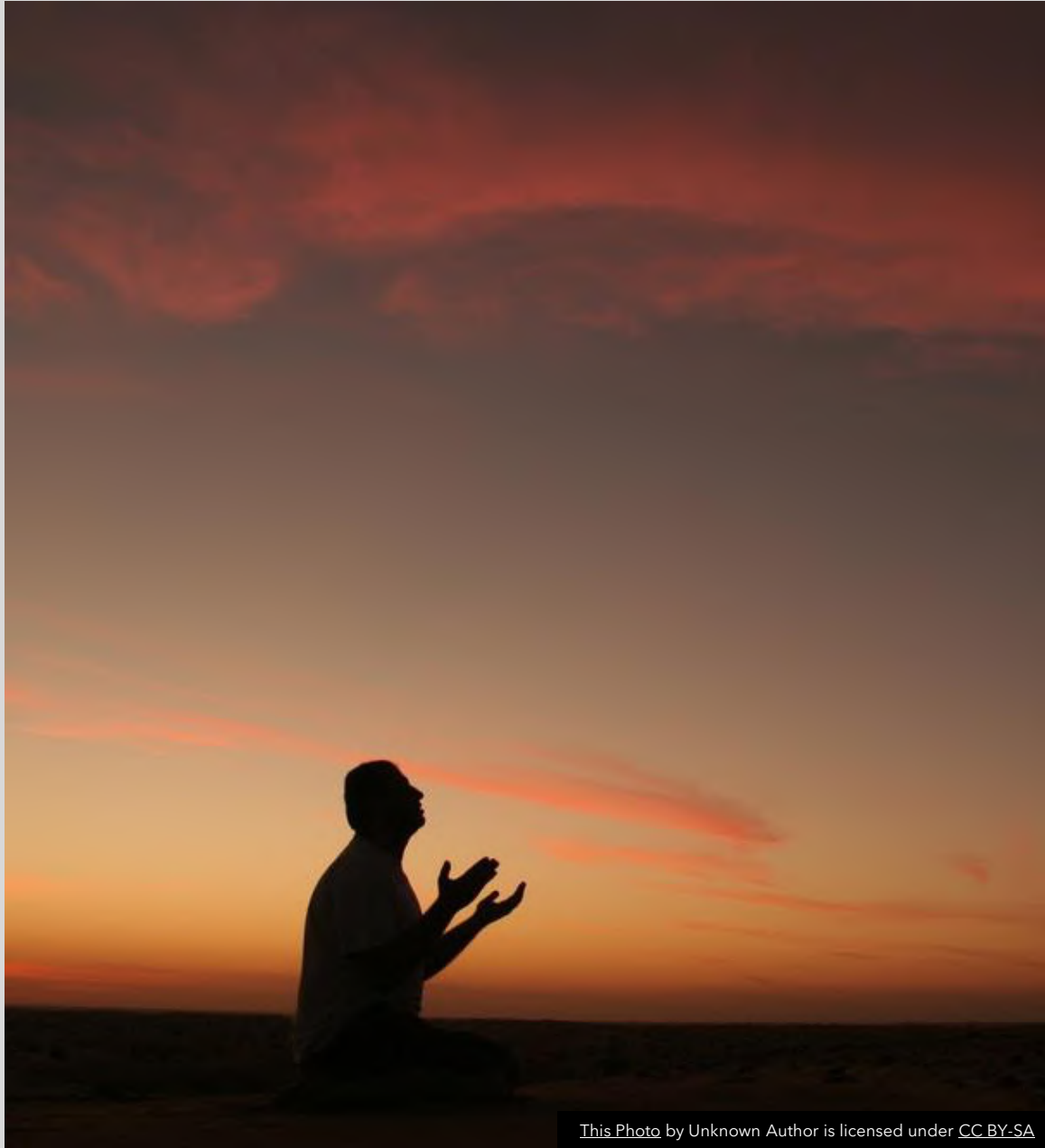
إِشْفِ بِهِ صُدُورَنَا

Through him (the 12th Imam),
cleanse our spiritual chests,

وَأَذْهِبْ بِهِ غَيْظَ قُلُوبِنَا

And remove the stains of anger
and hatred from our hearts...





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PRAYING for PERFECTION

اللَّهُمَّ ادْخِلْ عَلَى أَهْلِ الْقُبُورِ
السُّرُورَ

O Allāh, gladden the
people of the
graves!

CONCLUSION of ETHICS IN SUPPLICATION

The supplication provides the believer with the ability to develop their spiritual connection to Allah ﷻ and at the same time, provides them with the personal stimulus, through **reading, reflecting** and **resolving** to **revert** their lives to be what the One they are calling upon is looking for. It also becomes the blueprint for them to work towards and strive to attain what they are asking - knowing that they will NOT be able to achieve it without the help of Allah ﷻ AND their own personal efforts.

CONCLUSION of ETHICS IN SUPPLICATION

“Making a supplication” does not mean that we step aside and let Allah ﷻ do everything - but rather, **ALONG SIDE** our efforts of ensuring that we have done our best and used all available means to attain what we desire, we realize that our hands are tied, and we can not go any further. By turning to Allah ﷻ at the initial stage, we revive the **spirit of hope and movement** in ourselves and seek help from that great source to help us complete the task at hand.

CONCLUSION of ETHICS IN SUPPLICATION

The role of supplications of the Ahlul Bayt in our own personal quest to elevate our ethics and morality is realized when we recognize that the supplications are there to **TEACH** us what we should be aiming for while at the same time, we are **ASKING** Allāh for the best of what we appeal to Him for. Through the combination of these as well as then **RESOLVING** to live the teachings of the dū‘ā’, we embark on the journey of ethics and morality.

SESSION Four: Friday December 24th, 2021



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A REVIEW OF PASSAGES OF THE
SUPPLICATION *MAKĀRIM AL-AKHLĀQ*