

## Dimensions of the Manifestation of Quranic Teachings' Foundations in the Practical Conduct (Sirah) of Imam Reza (A.S.)

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### Article info

### Abstract

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The Holy Quran is the foundational source of Islamic teachings, and the Infallible Imams (A.S.), as its true exegetes, must necessarily be the objective embodiment of the revealed teachings. However, the manner of the “practical manifestation” of the Quran in the Sīrah of Imam Reza(A.S.) has rarely been subjected to systematic analysis. Employing a descriptive-analytical approach and drawing upon the theoretical framework of “the objective embodiment of the Holy Quran in the conduct of the Infallible (A.S.),” this study undertakes a qualitative content analysis of authentic narrative sources and addresses the question of how the Quran was crystallized in the devotional, ethical, and social dimensions of the Imam’s life. The findings reveal that the Razavi Sīrah constitutes an integrated system of Quranic lifestyle. In the devotional dimension, commitment to performing prayers at their earliest times, steadfastness in night prayers (ṣalāt al-layl), and constant communion with recitation accompanied by contemplation (tadabbur) transformed worship into the regulatory axis of life. In the ethical dimension, “the honoring of human beings,” irrespective of social standing, nationality, or religion, is manifested in the etiquette of presence, the avoidance of derogatory epithets, and respect toward subordinates. In the social dimension, “justice-orientedness and accountability” are crystallized in generous, concealed charitable giving (infāq), transparency in workers’ rights, respect for the financial rights of non-Muslims, and speaking truth to power. Consequently, the Sīrah of Imam Reza (A.S.) constitutes a practical and coherent model of Quranic lifestyle for the contemporary world.

**Keywords:** Imam Reza (A.S.), Individual Conduct (Sīrah), Social Conduct (Sīrah), Education, Lifestyle.

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## **1. Introduction**

The Holy Quran, as the most fundamental source of Islamic teachings, is the book of guidance for humanity towards perfection, and according to the widely transmitted Hadith al-Thaqalayn, the Infallible Imams (A.S.) are the “counterpart of the Quran” (‘adl al-Qur’ān) and its true exegetes. This eternal parity necessitates something beyond the mere verbal explication of the Quran; namely, the conduct and behavior of the Infallible Imams must constitute the embodiment and the objective, practical reflection of the revealed teachings. However, a systematic review of the research background reveals that most existing works on the relationship between the Quran and the Sīrah of Imam Reza (A.S.) either adopt a purely exegetical and theological approach or confine themselves to mentioning virtues and historical accounts. The absence of an analytical study that, employing the theoretical framework of “manifestation” (tajallī) and a comparative approach, seeks to uncover the governing system of the Razavi Sīrah in the devotional, ethical, and social domains is clearly palpable. This scholarly gap, in an era where, with the prevalence of materialistic cultures, the Quran has been forsaken and the Sunnah of the Imams abandoned, redoubles the necessity of returning to the Sīrah of the religious luminaries and extracting a practical model from their lifestyle.

## **2. Research Objectives**

The present study seeks to answer the central question of how and in what dimensions the Holy Quran was objectively manifested in the devotional, ethical, and social conduct (Sīrah) of Imam Reza (A.S.). The ultimate goal of this research is to uncover the integrated system governing the Razavi Sīrah as a “Quranic lifestyle” and to present a practical and coherent model for the contemporary world. This objective is pursued through the analytical comparison of Quranic verses with the behavioral exemplars of the Imam (A.S.) and the identification of the principles governing this correspondence.

## **3. Methodology**

This research was conducted using a descriptive-analytical approach and the method of qualitative content analysis. The research sources rest on two foundational categories: first, the verses of the Holy Quran as the theoretical foundation, and second, authentic narrative, historical, and exegetical sources of both Shi’a and Sunni traditions, with a focus on the book ‘Uyūn Akhbār Reza by Shaykh al-Ṣadūq. The selection of sources from both denominations was undertaken with the aim

of strengthening the inter-denominational validity of the findings. The theoretical framework of this research is built upon the concept of “the objective embodiment of the Quran in the conduct of the Infallible,” according to which “manifestation” (tajallī) is defined as the discovery of a systematic pattern wherein the Imam’s behaviors actualize the governing spirit of the Divine verses. The analytical process was designed and executed in three steps: extracting exemplars of the Sīrah, identifying their Quranic foundations, and finally, the analytical comparison of verse and Sīrah to uncover the principles governing the Quranic lifestyle model.

#### 4. Findings

The research findings explicate the Razavi Sīrah as an integrated Quranic system across three domains.

1. In the devotional domain, “the primacy of the Divine will” was manifested in the unwavering commitment to performing prayers at their earliest time, such that the Imam did not delay prayer even while traveling and despite the suggestions of his companions. “Perpetual spiritual wayfaring” was crystallized in the tireless perseverance in night prayers (ṣalāt al-layl) even under the most difficult political circumstances of the journey to Marw, and “Quran-centered intimacy” was manifested in the frequent completion of the Quran recitation accompanied by contemplation (tadabbur) rather than mere recitation. Furthermore, adherence to the explicit texts of the Quran regarding shortening prayers (qaṣr) and breaking the fast for the traveler demonstrated the Imam’s pure devotion to the Divine command.
2. In the ethical domain, the axis of interactions was “the honoring of the essence of humanity” based on his dignity as God’s vicegerent (khalīfat Allāh). This principle was manifested in the etiquette of presence (not stretching out one’s legs, not interrupting others’ speech), respect for subordinates (eating together with servants and rejecting any racial or class superiority by citing verse 13 of Sūrat al-Ḥujurāt), visiting the sick, and emotional intimacy with the family. A salient point was the absolute avoidance of derogatory epithets, to the extent that the Imam did not consider even the notoriety of a disliked nickname (such as Abū al-‘Atāhiyah) as a license for its use and emphasized mentioning the individual’s original name.
3. In the social domain, “justice-orientedness and accountability” was the principal characteristic. In economics, this characteristic was manifested in concealed charitable giving to fully preserve the dignity of the needy and determining the worker’s wage before the commencement of work. In the realm

of rights, respect for the financial rights of non-Muslims, even with the directive to repay the entitlements of Zoroastrian paupers from the Muslim treasury (bayt al-māl), was a prominent example. In the scholarly and political arena, “the best disputation” (jidāl aḥsan) with the scholars of other religions and the “jihād of clarification” (jihād al-tabayīn) in openly speaking truth to the corrupt power of al-Ma’ mūn, including the Imam’s historic response regarding the illegitimacy of the transfer of the caliphate, constitute the pinnacles of his social Sīrah.

## **5. Conclusion and Recommendations**

This research concludes that the Sīrah of Imam Reza (A.S.) is a practical and coherent model of a Quranic lifestyle in which worship, ethics, and social responsibility form an unbreakable bond. The theoretical contribution of this research is the formulation of this Sīrah at three levels: “Quran-centered insight” (profound understanding of the verses), “ethics-oriented character” (honoring all human beings), and “justice-expanding action” (social accountability). This three-level model can also serve as a framework for analyzing the Sīrah of the other Imams (A.S.). For the contemporary world, which grapples with a crisis of spirituality and the prevalence of a materialistic lifestyle, the Razavi Sīrah demonstrates that a systematic return to the Quran and the practical Sunnah of the Infallibles can offer solutions to educational and social dilemmas. To complement this field, it is recommended that future research apply this model to the analysis of the Sīrah of the other Imams (A.S.) and independently and extensively examine other dimensions of the Quran’s manifestation, such as the educational and political domains.

**Keywords:** Imam Reza (A.S.), Razavi Sīrah, Manifestation of the Quran, Islamic Lifestyle, Social Justice, Quranic Servitude.