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A Commentary On Imam 'Ali's Will To His Son Imam Hasan (as)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

مِنَ الوالِدِ الفانِ، المُقرِّ للزَمانِ، المُدْبِرِ العُمُرِ، المستسلمُ للدَّهر، الذامِّ للدُنيا، الساكن مَساكِنَ المَوتى، والظاعِنَ عنها" غدا، الى المَولُود المؤمِّل ما لا يُدرَكُ، السالكُ سبيلَ مَن قد هَلَكَ، غَرَضَ الاسقام، ورهينةَ الايَّام، ورَميَّةَ المصائب، وعبدَ الدنيا، وتاجرَ الغُرور، وغريمَ المنايا، واسيرَ الموت، وحليفَ الهموم، وقَرينَ الاحزان، ونَصنْبِ الآفات، وعبدَ الدنيا، وتاجرَ الغُرور، وغريمَ المنايا، واسيرَ الموت، وحليفَ الهموم، وقرينَ الاحزان، وخَليفَةَ الأموات "وصنريعَ الشهوات، وخَليفَةَ الأموات

"From an aged father who is near death, who concedes to the conquest of time, whose life is departing, who has submitted himself to the misfortunes of time, who reproaches the world, and dwells in the abode of the dead which he will leave tomorrow:

To a son who hopes for what is unattainable, who follows the path of those who have perished, prey to illnesses, a pawn in the hands of time, the target of misfortune, a slave of the world, a trader in vanities, a debtor of divine decrees and a captive of death, an ally of anxieties, a companion of sorrows, the aim of calamities, prostrated by desires, and a successor of the dead".

Commentary

In order to prepare the reader for the later guide–lines, Imam 'Ali (as) has used seven attributes for himself and fourteen adjectives for his son, every one of which could warn the wandering souls and bring them back to reality; the secret behind the difference in the number of attributes used in this letter lies in the age of the reader as well as in the ups and downs that he would encounter in the subsequent years. 1

Now we will discuss those seven attributes which Imam 'Ali(as) employs for himself but are inclusive and

involve all parents. These attributes show the degree of indifference that people have shown to that; and he uses them indicating a lot of pain. Now, here are the attributes:

1. From an Aged Father near death

It is a fact that anything created is imperishable; this is especially true in the case of man, who, according to rational and narrative reasoning is created to stay and to be ever lasting and not to be mortal.

Said the Prophet (S): "You have not been created for extinction; rather, you have been created for eternal life. You are only moved from one abode to another".2

But with no doubt, the creatures, with the passage of time, will lose their superficial appearances and their bodies will disintegrate, this superficial disintegration is referred to as destruction or mortality. This fact is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an in the following manner:

"Everyone on it must pass away. And there will endure for ever the person of your Lord, the Lord of glory and honor."

And in the Surah al-Qasas, verse 88, this notion is taken care of with the word "perishable":

"And call not with Allah any other god: there is no god but He; every thing is perishable but He; His is the judgment, and to him you shall be brought back [Qur'an 28:88].

Thus, Imam 'Ali (as) in the expression "from the aged father near death" emphasizes that he, too, like every other creature will change superficially and will move from one state into another. The only thing from him which remains is his spiritual, heavenly aspect, the eternal nature of which is emphasized in Qur'an.3

No doubt, a belief in the lack of stability in the world will stop people from indulging in false pride and negligence. And this is a constructive alert for all those who desire to be the followers of that Imam.

2. Conceding to the conquest of time

Although man is capable of dominating the earth and the time, and God has made him a dominant factor over all creation,

"Do you not see that Allah has made what is in the heavens and what is in the earth subservient to you?"4

He is a vulnerable and weak creature, a victim to the system of the truth.

"O men! You are they who stand in need of Allah, and Allah is He who is the self-sufficient, the praised one." 5

It is a fact that man can struggle with nature and disease and microbes, and can bring the natural disasters under control and can, in this way, lower the rate of casualties and increase life expectancy, but it is also the case that he cannot overpower everything. He is born to the world without his consent and lives his childhood and youth; then in old age his sight starts failing, his memory does not function properly, he becomes hard of hearing. His stamina dwindles and loses the power to move around. He finally arrives at a stage of being senile. 6 This is the conquest of time over us and our submission to it which Imam 'Ali (as) acknowledges in this sentence and in the fourth sentence. This is because, when Imam 'Ali (as) was writing this treatise, he was more than 60 years of age. At this age a man clearly recognizes his weaknesses and the predominance of time.

Nizami (the Iranian poet) says:

The vigor of life is up to the forty;

When forty has passed, your limbs disintegrate;

After the age fifty, your health goes away,

Your eyes weaken and your legs become unstable;

When sixty arrives, your body deteriorates,

When seventy arrives you are sexually impotent;

When you are eighty or ninety,

You would suffer a lot;

And if you ever become one hundred,

It would be death in the form of life;

When gray hair is seen among your hairs,

It is a clue to hopelessness;

You have inserted cotton in your ears,

And you are unwilling to take it out.

Another poet says:

Under this blue dome,

I have lived for sixty years;

When one year passes,

I always regret the pleasures of the last one;

I am surprised at the turning of the world.

Which took away from me everything that it had given me;

My knees and my arms became feeble,

My cheeks and my hairs lost their color;

I lost my strength and,

I lost my teeth one by one;

What is left behind and is heavy,

Is the amount of my wrong - doings and desires;

The Caravan bells warn us to leave.

And the fellow travelers are on the way;

I regret that I don't have a good record of good deeds;

The provision is small but journey is long;

The weight of my sins is too heavy,

Even the mountain looks small compared with my sins;

O God! My sins compared with Your Forgiveness,

Are like straw in front of a torrential flood:

If Your Grace did not assist me,

And if Your merits did not include me:

I would end up in the hell,

Having a miserable status;

I am an ignorant creature, ashamed of my sins,

I am plunged into the sea of sins;

You are the Merciful Creator, You are Self-sufficient,

You are Unique and You are the Forgiver.

Ayyadh Ibn Ghanam and Harun:

When Harun Al-Rashid was heading for Mecca, he went to the house of Ayyadh Ibn Ghanam, a pious Gnostic, at Medina, and asked him for some advice. Harun asked for some water. Ayyadh ordered the servants to bring him some water in an earthen pot. Then Ayyadh asked Harun: "Suppose you were

thirsty and you were in a desert and somebody offered you a glass of water on condition that you would give him half of your country, what would you do?"

Harun answered, "I would do what he asks for"

Then Ayyadh said: "Suppose you drank the water but you could not urinate. And suppose a doctor asked the other half of the country to heal you. Would you accept?"

Harun answered, "I would do so."

Then Ayyadh said: "This is my advice.

Life with all its deceitful looks depends on drinking water and then getting rid of it in the form of urination. These two abilities are given to us free and we are feeble and fatal. We do not have to be haughty. All we have to do is to obey Allah's commands.

3. Whose life is departing

Life is a precious commodity at man's disposal; it could be used in a profitable bargain or in a hazardous one. It is amazing that people lose it very easily but are jealous towards the wealth of the rich. The great Prophet of Islam (S) told Abu Dharr, giving him a piece of advice:

"Be more miserly of your life than you are of your dirham and dinar." 7

We should notice that any breath we inhale is a step towards our graves. Then, why shouldn't we use our breaths in the direction of doing good deeds and why shouldn't we avoid committing sins and indulging in far-fetched desires?

Imam 'Ali (as) has stated, regarding this:

"May God have mercy on the person who recognizes that each one of his breaths is a step toward his death and, therefore, hastens to perform good deeds and curtails his desires".8

Imam 'Ali (as) has stated as well:

"Day and night leave a mark on you; therefore leave a mark on them. They take from you; therefore take from them."9

Of course, if our life is spent for God, it is a big asset and a profitable bargain; or else, death is better. Imam 'Ali ibn al-Husayn (as) in the supplication of Makarim al-Akhlaq asks God:

"Let me live as long as my life is in unsparing devotion to Your obedience. But if my life becomes a pasture for Satan, then seize me to Yourself before Your hate overtakes me or Your wrath is established against me." 10

Since Imam 'Ali (as) was over sixty at the time of writing this treatise, by using the expression he wishes to warn us that we should have done lots of good deeds prior to the age of sixty. This is because, as the God's Prophet (S) has said, "A man will not have any excuse in such cases."

"The forty-year olds are like a field whose time of harvest is near. Fifty-year olds, what have you sent forward and what have you left behind? Sixty-year olds, come to the accounting (for what you have done); there is no excuse for you! Seventy-year olds, consider yourselves among the dead!"11

But it is much to be regretted that, except for the Prophet and a few vigilant individuals, we do not know the significance of this great asset.

Imam (as) has stated in this regard:

"No one knows the value of the remainder of his life save a prophet or an eminently truthful believer." 12

Some Pieces of Poetry:

One day, a young man asked an old man:

How is your life with your old age;

He answered: there is something ambiguous in this letter,

Whose meaning you will know only at the old age;

You had better tell me of your strength,

Why are you asking me about my weaknesses?

Keep your youth, since this beloved bird,

Will not stay in this bony cage for long;

The asset which I lost so easily,

You should keep it if you can;

The more I showed rebellion.

The more rebellion showed me the world:

When I lost my capital, I was left with nothing,

Since it is funny to engage in bargain with no capital;

The thief world robbed me of my treasure,

When I was asleep at the time of vigilance.

I lost my life with no benefit or loss,

See how I lost such a precious thing;

I spent it one day at the flower side in the spring,

The other day, I spent it, mourning over the faded flower;

It is a pity that my youth;

Passed away as do spring winds and the flowing river;

This land is the resting-place of the martyrs,

Take your time, observing it carefully;

Count the years you've already lost,

Do not sit counting the months of Capricorn, Scorpio and Gemini;

The dawn caravan is far away yet,

There should be a candle in this dark night;

O friend, while you are in power,

Provide the needy with what they want;

We pretended to be teachers for others,

While we did not recognize A from B.

A burnt wood could not be used as a guide candle,

We should burn a light which gives out light;

Do not waste the time treasure so easily,

Since this precious jewel has got a price;

Parvin will not waste the dear life,

Since she has her wisdom as her guide.

4. Submission to the misfortunes of Time

" المستسلم للدهر"

Sometimes a man acknowledges the enemy's superiority, but he is unwilling to surrender.

But sometimes he does not have any other option than surrender. Imam (as) confessed to the power of

the world in his expression "conceding to the conquest of time," but he was unwilling to surrender. But when he carefully observed the demolishing events in the world, he surrendered.

However, what is meant by "the misfortunes of Time" might be the hardships and troubles which people put on the way of justice and stop the progressive growth of the society. This is what they did to Imam 'Ali (as) and forced him to stop the Siffin Holy War. Imam 'Ali (as) then metaphorically attributed those in human acts to the world.

For instance, in the Sermon 32 of Nahj al-Balaghah he metaphorically states:

"O people! We are living in a time of perversity and an age of ingratitude in which a good-doer is considered an evildoer, and the wrongdoer disdainfully increases in his wrongdoing. We do not benefit from what we know, we do not ask about what we do not know, and we do not fear the sudden calamity until it befalls us."

No doubt, the attribution of perversity and ingratitude is to the people; or else Time itself could not be ungrateful.

5. Reproaching the World

"الذام للدنيا"

The world consists of the sky, the earth, and the creatures. It houses the heavenly bodies, mountains, deserts, plants, animals, and human beings together with the man-made means and instruments, so me of which are useful, others hazardous. Since this world is near to us, it is to be distinguished from the other world which we call hereafter.

A question is raised here: which part of the present world is bad which incites Imam 'Ali (as) to call himself as "a reproacher" of it?

Some have assumed that this world, as a whole, including wives, children, houses, mountains, deserts, the sea, the sky and the earth, is bad and ugly. Therefore, a wise man should disregard the whole world and through sufferings he should spend his life.

Of course, this kind of thinking stems from either a materialistic concept which considers the world as absurd, or is based on dualism: the god of good things and the god of bad. The latter has created all the evil things!

The injustice, repressions and other social hardships may cause such pessimistic attitudes in people. But in the Islamic world-view, which is based on monotheism, nothing is bad in nature and the world is

not absurd. On the one hand the Holy Qur'an states that Allah has created the whole world flawless.

"Who made good every thing that he has created". 13

"You see no incongruity in the creation of the Beneficent God". 14

On the other hand, the Qur'an rejects the absurdity of the world.

"And we did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them in sport". 15

"And We did not create the heaven and the earth and what is between them in vain". 16

The Qur'an considers every manifestation of the creation as signs indicating monotheism. 17 God swears to these signs. 18 No doubt, an absurd thing can not be used as a reason for monotheism, Imam 'Ali (as) himself, in Hikmah 131, severly rebukes anybody who reproaches the world. Thus, considering the world as bad does not coincide with the Islamic world-view, with the Holy Qur'an and with Nahj al-Balaghah. We have, therefore, to find a better explanation for Imam 'Ali's expression "reproaching the world".

Some others have said, although the world as such is not bad, loving it is bad. Imam 'Ali (as) has stated:

"Love of the world is the basis of all wrong-doing" 19

Thus, Imam 'Ali (as) does not rebuke the world itself; rather, he reproaches a liking towards it. But this explanation, too, does not seem to be true because a liking for one's wife, children, possessions, houses, life social positions, which are manifestations of the world, is an innate and natural phenomenon. God has bestowed upon man a liking for self, children, wife, life, and social status so that he could automatically try to improve life and to reproduce offspring. If this innate apparatus were not built in man, he would lose his hopes to live. Thus, how is it that this apparatus is based on some wisdom but the liking towards it is considered bad?

This is especially important when we consider that Islam is a religion of innate nature and no command is issued contrary to it.

"Then set your face upright for religion in the right state – the nature made by Allah in which He has made men, there is no altering of Allah's creation; that is the right religion". 20

A Third Explanation

What is understood from the Holy Qur'an and Nahj al-Balaghah is this: Neither is the world bad nor a liking toward it. Rather, an excessive reliance on it, which could create a deviation in justice and turn the world into an aim rather than a means, is considered improper.

When the Holy Qur'an introduces the dwellers of hell and their characteristics, it emphasizes the same fact:

"Surely those who do not hope in Our meeting and are pleased with this world's life and are content with it, and those who are heedless of Our communications."21

As we see, the main feature of these dwellers of hell is their extreme liking towards the world and their negligence towards rightfulness and justice. They have considered the world as an aim by itself and not as a means.

The Holy Qur'an, as well, blames those people who prefer the materialistic world to God or to the Prophet (S) or to the holy wars:

"Say: If your fathers and your sons and your brethren and your mates and your kinsfolk and property which you have acquired, and the slackness of trade which you fear and dwellings which you like, are dearer to you than Allah and His Apostle and striving in His way, then wait till Allah brings about His command: and Allah does not guide the transgressing people". 22

In this verse, too, the different materialistic aspects of this world, including possession, children, brothers, wives and the like, are considered bad only if they intrude on justice and rightfulness. As it is expressed in other verses, too, the world is not only good, but it is considered as an ornament and a bridge to victory.

"الْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمَلًا"

"Wealth and children are an adornment of the life of this world; and the ever-abiding, the good works, are better with your lord in reward and better in expectation".23

What is wrong is to consider the world as an aim. In this regard Allah commands the Prophet (S):

"Therefore, turn aside from him who turns his back upon our reminder and does not desire anything but this world's life. This is their goal of knowledge".24

Imam 'Ali (as), too, in Nahi al-Balaghah introduces those who are world-mongers, blaming them:

"It is an evil transaction that you consider the world to be a price for your self and a substitute for what there is with God for you."25

Thus, as we have already noticed if man enjoys different aspects of life in order to obey God, and to serve people and to collect sufficient provisions for the next world, his action is not only not considered improper, but rather, it is considered proper. Imam 'Ali (as), in Hikmah 131, in blaming the world-mongers, explicitly explains:

"The world is an abode of truth and rightfulness for those who encounter it with truth, an abode of well-being for those who understand it, an abode of self-sufficiency for those who take their provisions from it and an abode of admonishment for those who are admonished by it. (It is) the mosque of the lovers of God, the place of prayer of the angels of God, the place of descent of God's revelation and the trading place of the friends of God. They earn (God's) mercy in it and gain paradise in it."

Thus the world is not considered repulsive if the needy person is given what he needs, if a naked person is given clothes and if a hungry person is given food. These acts are deemed as God's worship.

The world would be considered ill-favored if we counted it as our final aim but it would be a proper place if it were used for obtaining God's pleasure. Imam 'Ali (as) in Nahi al-Balaghah has stated:

"It (the world) is an excellent home for one who is not content with it as a home, and (an excellent) place of residence for one who does not take it as a (permanent) residence."26

In another place, Imam 'Ali (as) emphasizes that this world is a transitory shelter, not a permanent one. The more we provide provisions for the Hereafter, the better it is.

"This world is transitory, the Hereafter is permanent. Therefore take (provisions) from your place of passage for your place of residence."27

Thus, Imam 'Ali (as) reproaches this world only if it interferes with justice and rightfulness. It is obvious that such a world deserves reproach.

People attached to wealth

Here we should make it clear why Imam 'Ali (as) has used expressions which denote reproach of this world.

The fact is that at the time of his caliphate, due to the victories that Muslims had, they became rich and enamoured with wealth; therefore, they indulged in pleasure–seeking and animal instincts, instead of protecting right and justice for others, as was practiced at the time of God's Prophet (S).28 Imam 'Ali (as) envisioned dormant dangers behind the pleasure–seeking ways of the Muslims in the newly established Muslim communities. In Imam 'Ali's estimation, such comforts would cause the fall of any community.

"And when we wish to destroy a town, we send our commandment to the people of it who lead easy lives, but they transgress therein; thus the word proves true against it, so we destroy it with utter destruction".

29

Imam 'Ali (as), in sermon 151, refers to this destructive disaster (i.e. pleasure-seeking) and emphasizes:

"You, O company of Arabs, are the targets of calamities that have drawn near; therefore, quard

yourselves against the intoxications of wealth and beware of the misfortunes of retribution". Furthermore, as it was mentioned earlier, attachment to this world entails man's fall from the path of piety; it leads man to forget God, Hereafter and rightfulness and justice.30

This led to Imam 'Ali's deprivation of his right for 24 years, i.e., caliphate on the one hand; on the other hand, within those years when he was the caliph, he was faced with internal wars, turbulences and inhumane acts of his people to the degree that he wished for an early death to terminate his hardships. Ibn Muljim cleft his forehead and Imam 'Ali (as), the bravest man in the history of Islam, stated: "By the Lord of the Ka'ba, I have won".

All this led Imam 'Ali (as) to blame the world more than anybody else and warn people against it.31

6. A Dweller of the Abode of the Dead

Due to pastimes and pleasures, men sometimes fail to comprehend clear issues.

In such cases, they should be notified. For instance, we do not think that men more powerful than us lived on the piece of land on which we now live. They are no longer remembered and we are living in their places.

The Holy Qur'an, upon the drowning of the followers of Pharaoh, emphasizes that:

"How many of the gardens and fountains, have they left! And cornfields and noble places! And goodly things wherein they rejoiced; Thus (it was), and we gave them as a heritage to another people. So the heaven and the earth did not weep for them, nor were they respited". [Qur'an 44:25-29]

Imam 'Ali (as), too, having returned from Siffin, arrived at a graveyard next to Kufa and said,

"O dwellers of desolate houses, vacant places and dark graves! O people of dust! O strangers! O people of solitude! O desolate ones! You have preceded and gone before us; we will follow and join you. As for your houses, they have been inhabited. As for your wives they have been married (to others), and as for your possessions, they have been divided (amongst others). This is the news that we have. What news do you have?"

Then Imam 'Ali (as) turned to his companions and said: "If they were allowed to speak, they would inform you that '.. the best provision (for the journey to the Hereafter) is Godwariness (2:197)"." 32

In this treatise, too, Imam 'Ali (as) says: I, as a father, am living in a place where others used to be; now they are dead. Thus my son, this too will happen to you some day.

7. Which he will leave tomorrow

"والظاعن عنها غداً"

Despite the fact that we know that nobody is eternal in this world, due to pleasure–seeking we behave as if we were going to live in this world for ever. This leads us to commit many sins. Imam 'Ali (as), however, teaches us to study the lives of our predecessors, including the Prophets and the rich. He concludes that the only eternal being is God Himself.

فَلُو اَنَّ اَحَداً يَجِدُ إلى البَقَاءِ سُلَّماً اَو لِدَفعِ المَوتِ سَبِيلاً لَكَانَ ذَلِكَ سُلَيمانُ بِنَ دَاوِدَ عليه السَّلامُ الَّذِي سُخِّر لَهُ مُلكُ" الجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ مَعَ النُبوَّةِ وَعَظِيمِ العَرِيقَةِ فَلَمَّا استَوفَى طُعمَته وَاستَكمَلَ مُدَّتَه رَمَتهُ قِسِيُّ الفَنَاءِ بِنِبَالِ المَوتِ وَاصبَحَت الجَيارُ مِنهُ خَالِيَة وَالمَسَاكِنُ مُعَطَّلَة وَوَرِثَها قَومٌ آخَرُونَ وَإِنَّ لَكُم في القُرُونِ السَابِقَةِ لَعِبْرَة! لَينَ العَمَالِقَةُ وَابنَاءُ الدِّيارُ مِنهُ خَالِيَة وَالمَسَاكِنُ مُعَطَّلَة وَوَرِثَها قَومٌ آخَرُونَ وَإِنَّ لَكُم في القُرُونِ السَابِقَةِ لَعِبْرَة! لَينَ العَمَالِقَةُ وَابنَاءُ الفَراعِنَةِ اَينَ المَرسَلِينَ وَاحْيُوا العَمَالِقَةِ المَدينَ وَاطفالُوا سُنَنَ المُرسَلِينَ وَاحْيُوا العَمَالِقَةِ اللهَ المَدائِنَ المَدائِنَ المَدائِنَ المَدائِنَ المَدائِنَ المَدائِنَ المَدائِنَ وَعَسكَرُوا العَسَاكِرَ وَمَدَّنوا المَدَائِنَ المَدائِنَ المَدائِنَ المَدَائِنَ المَدِينَ المَدِينَ المَدَائِنَ المَدَائِ

"If there was one who could find a ladder to eternal life or a way to repel death, that would have been Solomon, the son of David, to whom the dominion of the jinn and mankind was made subservient, together with (his) prophethood and great nobility. But when the subsistence assigned to him was finished, and his time was complete, the bows of annihilation struck him with the arrows of death! Lands became empty of him and (his) houses were unoccupied, and another people inherited them. Indeed there is a lesson for you in the previous generations! Where are the Amalikites and the offspring of the Amalikites? Where are the Pharaohs and their offspring?

Where are the dwellers of the cities of Rass who killed the Prophets and stifled the traditions of the Messengers, and who revived the practices of the tyrants?

Where are those who went with troops, defeated thousands, mobilized armies and built cities?"33

Imam 'Ali (as) encourages people to prepare provisions and to make themselves ready for leaving this

world and heading towards death.

تَجَهَّزُوا رَحِمَكُم الله فَقَد نُودِيَ فِيكُم بِالرَّحِيلِ واقِلّوا العَرجَةَ على الدُّنيا وَانقَلِبُوا بِصَالِحِ مَا بِحَضرَتِكُم مِنَ الزَّادِ فَإِنَّا الْمَرْدِ عَلَيهَا وَالوقُوفَ عِندَهَا واعلَمُوا أَنَّ مَلاحِظَ المَنيَّةِ نَحوَكُم المَامَكُم عَقَبَةً كَثُوداً وَمَنازِلَ مَخُوفَةً مَهُولَةً لاَبُدَّ مِنَ الورُودِ عَلَيهَا وَالوقُوفَ عِندَهَا واعلَمُوا أَنَّ مَلاحِظَ المَنيَّةِ نَحوَكُم وَلَقَد نَشِبَتْ فِيكُم وَقَد دَهَمَتكُم فِيها مُفظِعاتُ الامُورِ وَمُعضِلاتُ المَحْذُورِ فَقَطِّعُوا عَلائِقَ الدُّنيا وَلَائِيةٌ وَكَانَّكُم بِمَخالِبِها وَقَد نَشِبَتْ فِيكُم وَقَد دَهَمَتكُم فِيها مُفظِعاتُ الامُورِ وَمُعضِلاتُ المَحْذُورِ المَقورِ وَاللهِ اللهُ وَقَد نَشِبَتْ فِيكُم وَقَد دَهَمَتكُم فِيها مُفظِعاتُ الامُورِ وَمُعضِلاتُ المَحْذُورِ المَقطِيرُوا بِزَادِ التَقوَى

"May God have mercy on you; prepare yourselves, for you have been summoned for the departure! Lessen your desire to stay in this world and return with the good provisions that you have with you, for before you is a mountain pass, difficult to ascend, and terrifying, dreadful stations, from arriving and stopping at which there is no escape. Know that the looks of death are drawing near to you, and it is as if you are in its claws that have laid hold of you. Abominable affairs and distressing calamities have overwhelmed you in it. Therefore, sever the ties of this world and seek help with the provision of Godwariness." 34

It is on the basis of the above observation that Imam 'Ali (as) tells his children about his departure to warn everybody in time.

- 1. . Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah by Ibn Maytham, vol. 5, p. 3; vol.4, p.27.
- 2. . Bihar, vol. 61, p.78.
- <u>3</u>. There are different ideas on the interpretation of this verse, however, For further information refer to Al–mizan, vol. 16, pp.92–97.
- 4. . Qur'an 31:20.
- 5. . Qur'an 35:15.
- 6. . Qur'an 22:5.
- 7. . Safinah al-Bihar, vol.2, p.258.
- 8. . Ghurar al-Hikam, al-Amidi, vol. 7, p.296.
- 9. Index of Ghurar al-Hikam, al-Amidi, vol. 7, p.296.
- 10. Mafatih al-Jinan, p 800.
- 11. . Safinah al-Bihar, vol. 3, p. 257.
- 12. Index of Ghurar al-Hikam, al-Amidi, p. 277.
- 13. . Qur'an 35:15.
- 14. . Qur'an 67:3.
- 15. . Qur'an 44:38.
- 16. . Qur'an 38:27.
- 17. . Qur'an 51:20-21.
- 18. . Qur'an 91:1-7.
- 19. Ghurar al-Hikam, al-Amidi, vol. 3, p.395.
- 20. . Qur'an 30:30.
- 21. . Qur'an, 10:7
- 22. . Qur'an 9:24.
- 23. .Qur'an 18:46.
- 24. . Qur'an 53:30.
- 25. Nahj al-Balaghah, sermon 32.

- 26. . Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon 214.
- 27. Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon 194.
- 28. For this issue refer to "The reasons behind Islam Development and Muslims' deterioration", the discussion on Muslims' pleasure–seeking, pp. 375–420.
- 29. . Qur'an 17:16.
- 30. . حبُّ الدنيا راسُ كلّ خطيئة . The love of this world is the beginning of every sin.
- 31. . Refer to Mutahhari's two erudite works: A survey of Nahj al-Balaghah and Twenty lectures.
- 32. Nahj al-Balaghah, Hikmah 130.
- 33. Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon 182.
- 34. . Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon 204.

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