

Sixth Hadith: Love of the World

بِالسَّنَدِ الْمُتَّصِلِ إِلَى مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ يَعْقُوبَ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ يَحْيَى، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ ابْنِ مَحْبُوبٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ سِنَانَ وَعَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَبْدِيِّ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي يَعْفُورَ، عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: مَنْ أَصْبَحَ وَأَمْسَى وَالدُّنْيَا أَكْبَرَ هَمِّهِ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى الْفَقْرَ بَيْنَ عَيْنَيْهِ وَشَتَّتْ أَمْرَهُ وَلَمْ يَنْلُ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَا قَسَمَ اللَّهُ لَهُ. وَمَنْ أَصْبَحَ وَأَمْسَى وَالْآخِرَةَ أَكْبَرَ هَمِّهِ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ الْغِنَى فِي قَلْبِهِ وَجَمَعَ لَهُ أَمْرَهُ.

Muhammad ibn Ya'qub (al-Kulayni) from Muhammad ibn Yahya, from Ahmad ibn Muhammad, from Ibn Mahbub, from 'Abd Allah ibn Sinan and 'Abd al-Aziz al-Abdi from 'Abd Allah ibn Abi Ya'fur, who report Abu Abd Allah (Imam al-Sadiq) (A) to have said, "One who passes his evenings and mornings in such a way that the world be his biggest concern, God ordains poverty between his two eyes and causes his affairs to become disjointed and dissipated, while he does not attain anything except what has been apportioned for him. And as for one who passes his evenings and mornings while his biggest concern and goal be the Hereafter, God puts contentment to his heart and gives a wholeness and unity to his affairs."¹

Exposition of the Tradition

There are various interpretations of the terms 'the world' and 'the Hereafter' according to different views offered by mystics and scholars. Here, our objective is not to plunge into any involved discussion about hair-splitting definitions, an absorption, which keeps the wayfarer from proceeding towards his goal.

What is essential here is to understand the meaning of 'the disapproved world' (i.e. 'the world' in the sense in which it is necessary for the person seeking the Hereafter to shun it) and the factors that assist man and guide him on the path of salvation. These we shall discuss, God willing, in a few sections, and implore His help and guidance in this regard.

Mawlana Majlisi on the Reality of the World

The great researcher and peerless traditionist *Mawlana* Majlisi (M)² states: “Let it be known to you that that which can be deduced from all the verses of the Quran and the traditions in this regard, according to our understanding of them, is that ‘the accursed world’ is the sum total of all those things that prevent man from obeying God and keep him from His love and from seeking the Hereafter.

Therefore ‘the world’ and ‘the Hereafter’ are antithetical to each other: whatever causes His good pleasure and one’s nearness to Him belongs to ‘the Hereafter,’ even though apparently it should seem to be a matter of the world—such as the trade, the agriculture, the industry and the crafts whose purpose is to provide subsistence for one’s family for the sake of obedience to God’s command, for spending one’s income for charitable purposes and the welfare of the poor and needy, and to avoid dependence on others and beseeching their help.

All these activities are meant for the Hereafter, though people should consider them to be for the sake of the world. On the other hand, heretical exercises in spiritual self-discipline, sanctimonious deeds and the like, though they might be performed with great devotion and care, are meant for the world, as they cause alienation from God and do not bring man near to Him. Such are the deeds and the practices of the infidels and those who oppose the right path.”³

Another researcher remarks: “Your ‘world’ and ‘Hereafter’ are two inner states of your heart: that which is nearer and is concerned with the life before death is ‘the world’, and whatever that follows it and is concerned with the life after death is ‘the Hereafter’. Therefore, everything that earns you pleasure and joy and provokes your lust before death, it is ‘the world’ for you.”

The Author’s View

This pauper says: ‘the world’ may sometimes be regarded as meaning the lowest level of existence and the abode of change, transition, and annihilation. ‘The Hereafter’ signifies return from this lower mode of existence to the higher, celestial plane, one’s inner world, which is the abode of permanence, stability, and eternity. These two worlds exist for every individual. The first one is the terrestrial realm of development and emergence, which is the lower plane of observable worldly existence. The other is the hidden, inward, and celestial level of existence, which is the higher plane of being of the Hereafter.

Although worldly existence is a lower and defective realm of being, but since it is a nursery for the training of lofty souls and a school for acquiring higher spiritual stations, it is a field for cultivating the Hereafter. In this sense it is the most sublime of the realms of being and the most profitable of worlds for the lovers of God and the wayfarers of the path of the Hereafter. And were it not for this terrestrial realm of matter, the domain of physical and spiritual substantial transformation and change, and if God Almighty had not made it a realm of transition and annihilation, not a single imperfect soul would have attained its promised state of perfection nor would it have been able to reach the realm of permanence

and stability, nor the embodiments of imperfection would have been able to enter the Kingdom of God.

Accordingly, that which is mentioned in the Quran and tradition regarding the disapproval of ‘the world’ does not actually apply to the world itself, but is meant to refer to absorption in it and love and attachment for it. This shows that man has two ‘worlds’ one of them is condemned, while the other is extolled and praised.

The world, which is approved, is that which one acquires in this earthly abode, this school, and this marketplace, where higher stations and lasting spiritual merits are exchanged for transitory goods and where arrangements are made for the abiding abode. These cannot be possibly acquired without entering this world, as has been stated by the *Mawla* of the *Muwahhidun*, Amir al-Mu‘minin Imam ‘Ali (A), in one of his sermons delivered on hearing a person abuse ‘the world’:

إِنَّ الدُّنْيَا دَارُ صِدْقٍ لِمَنْ صَدَقَهَا وَدَارُ عَافِيَةٍ لِمَنْ فَهَمَ عَنْهَا وَدَارُ غِنَى لِمَنْ تَزَوَّدَ مِنْهَا وَدَارُ مَوْعِظَةٍ لِمَنْ اتَّعَظَ بِهَا. مَسْجِدُ أَحِبَّاءِ اللَّهِ وَمُصَلَّى مَلَائِكَةِ اللَّهِ وَمَهْبِطُ وَحْيِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْجَرُ أَوْلِيَاءِ اللَّهِ: اِكْتَسَبُوا فِيهَا الرَّحْمَةَ وَرَبِحُوا فِيهَا الْجَنَّةَ.

Indeed this world is the abode of truth for him who appreciates its truthfulness, a place of safety for him who understands it, a mine of treasures for him who collects provisions from it [for the next world], and a house of instructions for him who draws lessons from it. It is the shrine of worship for those who love Allah, the house of prayer for His angels, the place where the revelations of Allah descend, and the marketplace for those devoted to Him. Herein they earn His mercy and herein they acquire Paradise by way of profit.⁴

God Almighty’s words, (وَنِعَمَ دَارُ الْمُتَّقِينَ) — What a good abode is the house of the pious— relate to the world, according to the interpretation of Imam al-Baqir (A) reported in a tradition by al-Ayyashi.

Therefore, this world, being as it is the manifestation of and witness to His Beauty and Majesty, is not at all condemnable in this sense. That which is condemnable is the world of man himself in the sense of his absorption in the world of carnal nature and his attachment and love for it. That world is the source of all vices and all inward and outward sins, as reported in *al-Kafi* from Imam al-Sadiq (A):

قَالَ الْإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: رَأْسُ كُلِّ خَطِيئَةٍ حُبُّ الدُّنْيَا.

Imam al Sadiq (A) said, “The love of the world is the source of all transgressions.”⁵

And it has been reported from Imam al-Baqir (A) that he said:

مَا ذُنُوبَانِ ضَارِبَانِ فِي غَنَمٍ قَدْ فَارَقَهَا رِعَاؤُهَا: أَحَدُهُمَا فِي أَوْلَاهَا وَالْآخَرُ فِي آخِرِهَا، بِأَفْسَدَ فِيهَا مِنْ حُبِّ الْمَالِ. وَالشَّرْفُ فِي دِينِ الْمُسْلِمِ.

The harm done by two ferocious wolves, one attacking from the front and the other from the rear, to a herd without a shepherd, is less rapid than the one done by the love of the world to the faith of the faithful.⁶

Therefore, the attachment of the heart and the love of the world is synonymous with the accursed world, and the greater the attachment, the thicker the veils between man and the realms of sublimity, and denser the curtain between the heart of the human being and its Creator. It occurs in some *ahadith* that there are seventy thousand veils of light and darkness between God and His creatures. The veils of darkness may be no other than the attachments of the heart to this world, and the deeper they are, the greater the number of the veils and greater the difficulty of their removal.

Factors That Promote Worldliness

Man is the child of this physical world, nature being his mother, and he the offspring of water and dust. The love for this world is implanted in his heart since the early time of his development and growth. As he grows this love also increases. On account of the faculties of desire and the organs of deriving pleasure that have been granted to him by God Almighty for the sake of the preservation of individual and species, this love grows day by day.

Since he considers this world as a place of pleasure and luxury, and death as the end of these activities, even if he is led to believe in the Hereafter, its states, conditions, and rewards by the arguments of the *hukama'* or the traditions of the prophets (A), yet his heart remains unfamiliar with them and does not accept them, let alone obtaining certainty of their reality.

Due to these reasons, his love for this world and his attachment to it increase considerably. Since man naturally loves immortality, detests and evades decline and annihilation, and mistakes death for annihilation, even if his reason were to confirm this world as the house of transition and annihilation and that world as eternal and everlasting, his heart does not accept the findings of his reason if they have not entered the heart itself.

The main thing is that the belief should have entered the heart and the best state is that of complete certainty. It is for this reason that Ibrahim Khalil Allah (A) asked God to bestow upon him certainty, and that was granted to him. Therefore, as the hearts do not have faith in the Hereafter—like those of ours—though rationally we may posit its existence, they desire to remain in this world and are averse to the thought of dying and quitting this lower mode of existence.

But if our hearts become aware of the fact that this world is the lowest of the worlds and the house of decline and change and the realm of imperfection and destruction, and that there are other realms beyond death each of which is eternal and stable, perfect and permanent, where life is bliss and beatitude, our hearts would naturally acquire the love of that world and would abhor this world. And if one were to rise above this world and awake to the realities of that world, and observe the real inward

form of this world and the attachment to it, this world will become unbearable for him. He will detest it, desire to leave this abode of darkness and to get rid of the shackles of time and transition, an attitude which is apparent in the words of the *awliya*'.

Imam 'Ali (A), the *Mawla* of the *awliya*', said:

وَاللَّهِ، لَابْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ آنَسُ بِالْمَوْتِ مِنَ الطِّفْلِ بِثَدْيِ أُمِّهِ.

By God, the son of Abu Talib is more intimate with death than an infant with its mother's bosom. [7](#)

That great soul had considered the reality of this world from the viewpoint of *Wilayah*, and had chosen the blessed vicinity of the Most High. And were it not for the sake of the higher goals, those pure and chaste souls would not have tarried in this murky and gloomy gathering even for a single moment. To inhabit this phenomenal world of plurality, to meditate upon the worldly affairs, even with the spiritual favors, is a matter of great pain and sorrow for those absorbed in the love of God, a sorrow which we cannot even imagine.

Their lamentations, as reflected in their prayers and supplications, were on account of the pain of separation from the Beloved and His magnanimous vicinity, although there were no mundane or spiritual veils for them, and they had left behind them the subdued hell of nature and its attachments, their hearts being free of the defilements of physical nature. Nevertheless, the very presence in the confines of physical nature and the inevitable pleasures associated with it, even if they be very few, acts like a veil. It is on this account that the Holy Prophet (S) is quoted to have said:

لِيُعَانَ عَلَى قَلْبِي، وَإِنِّي لَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً.

Lest my heart should be covered by [the veils of] lust, I ask God's forgiveness seventy times a day.

Perhaps the fault of Adam (A), the father of mankind, was the result of this innate attraction towards physical nature, symbolized by the wheat, and his attention to the mundane aspect of life—something which is considered wrong by the *awliya*' and the lovers of God. If Adam (A) had remained faithful to the divine passion and had not set foot into the domain of the mundane, this entire toilsome tale, winding through the world to the Hereafter, would not have assumed such proportions.

Let it be known to you that each and every pleasure that man derives from this world leaves its trace on his heart that is indicative of its susceptibility to the physical world and a cause of its further attachment to the world. The more the enjoyments and the pleasures, the greater their impression upon the heart and the more intense its attachment to the world and love for it. This process continues until the heart completely yields to the world and its allurements.

Such a condition is the source of a great many evils. All the human transgressions, sins, and moral vices are on account of this love and attachment, as mentioned in the *hadith* quoted from *al-Kafi*. One of the greatest evils of this love, according to our Shaykh—my soul be sacrificed for him – is that if the love of the world captures the human heart and the attachments become strong, at the time of death man finds that God Almighty is separating him from his beloved and causing separation between him and the darling of his desire. As a result, he leaves the world in a state of indignation and rancor against Him.

This greatly shocking warning is enough to awaken man, that he should be extremely cautious in guarding his heart. God forbid, lest one should be indignant with the real King of kings, the Bestower of favors and the Nourisher, for none except God knows the ugly form of such a rancor and resentment.

Our honored Shaykh also related of his father that he was extremely disturbed during the last years of his life regarding his love for one of his sons. But after doing exercises in spiritual self-discipline for some time he was relieved of this attachment. He was greatly satisfied on this account before he retired to the abode of eternal bliss. May God be pleased with him.

There is a tradition in *al-Kafi*, reported on the authority of Talhah ibn Zayd, from Abu ‘Abd Allah Imam al-Sadiq (A) that he said:

مَثَلُ الدُّنْيَا كَمَثَلِ مَاءِ الْبَحْرِ؛ كُلَّمَا شَرِبَ مِنْهُ الْعَطْشَانُ أَزْدَادَ عَطَشًا حَتَّى يَقْتُلَهُ.

The example of the world is that of sea water; the more a thirsty person drinks from it, the thirstier he becomes until it kills him.⁸

The love of the world destroys man eternally, and it is the source of his affliction with inward and outward villainies.

The Holy Prophet (S) is reported to have said:

The Dirham and the Dinar have destroyed many a people before you and they will destroy you too.

Even if a person is not, supposedly, afflicted by other vices, which is improbable or rather impossible, the sole attachment to the world is sufficient to cause many an affliction. The criterion of the length of the period of detention in the world beyond the grave and the *Barzakh* is the amount of intensity of these associations and attachments.

The lesser they are, the more spacious and brighter his place in the grave and the *Barzakh*, and consequently the lesser the period of one’s detention therein. Hence the *awliya’*, according to some traditions, do not have to experience the conditions of the grave for more than three days, and that too for the sake of the inherent and natural attachment that they had in the life of this world.

Among the evil effects of the love of the world and attachment to it is that it makes man afraid of death.

The fear of death, being the product of the love of the world and attachment to it, is highly objectionable; it is different from the fear of the Day of Resurrection, which is one of the attributes of true believers. The greater part of the sufferings and pangs experienced by a dying man are on account of the severance of the worldly ties, not the fear of death itself.

A brilliant researcher and a judicious analyzer of the world of Islam, Mir Damad-karrama Allah wajhah in his *al-Qabasat*, a book of rare excellence, writes:

لَا تَخَافَنَّكَ الْمَوْتُ، فَإِنَّ مَرَارَتَهُ فِي خَوْفِهِ.

Death itself will never frighten you; its bitterness lies in being afraid of it.⁹

Another great evil caused by the love of the world is that it keeps man from religious exercises, devotional rites, and prayers, and strengthens his physical nature. It inculcates disobedience within his physical nature to the commands of his spirit. As a result it weakens his power of resolution and debilitates the will, whereas one of the main secrets and aims of worship and religious exercises is to make the body, the physical faculties, and the natural instincts subordinate to the spirit, so that the will may control them and force the body to act according to its wishes and prevent it from whatever the spirit wants it to abstain from.

If the spirit dominates the body, the domain of the body and the physical faculties is brought under the control of the spirit in a way that everything it wishes the body to perform would be performed without the slightest hardship and hindrance. One of the virtues and secrets of austere worships and laborious devotional exercises is that they are more conducive to the attainment of this goal.

Through them man can-acquire a strong will and resolution, and overcome his physical nature. If the will becomes complete and perfect and the resolution strong and powerful, the domain of the human body and its external and internal faculties acquires angelic characteristics, and he becomes similar to the angels of God who never transgress Divine commands, obey readily, without any resistance or compulsion, whatever He orders them to do, and refrain from doing whatever they are forbidden from. If the physical faculties of man come under the domination of his spirit, all hardships and hindrances disappear and a state of ease and tranquility prevails. When that happens, the 'seven realms' of physical nature will become subservient to the heavenly forces, and all the faculties will act as their functionaries.

Therefore, my dear, the strength of will power and resolution is very important and effective in that world. In fact, the strength of will is the criterion of entry into one of the levels of Paradise, which is one of the highest heavens. Unless one possesses a strong will and powerful resolution he cannot gain that heaven and that high station. It is reported in a tradition that when the virtuous are stationed in Paradise, a message will be sent to them from the Holy God, saying, "This is the message sent by the Eternal and the Immortal to the one who is also eternal and immortal:

Whatever I command to be, it comes into existence; today I bestow on you authority to command whatever you desire to bring into existence and it would come into existence.” You can see what a great authority and distinction that would be. What sort of power they have whose resolution and will shall be the manifestation of the Divine Will so that they will be able to grant the apparel of existence to non-existents. It shows that the power of will and resolution is superior to all the physical faculties. And it is also obvious that this message will not be sent out of extravagance and without proper Judgment. Those whose will is subordinated to their bestial desires and whose resolution has become dead and inert, they cannot attain this station. The Almighty’s Acts are free from extravagance and vain indulgence.

In this world everything is based on a system in which all means and ends are arranged according to an order. In that world, too, all matters will be arranged in a similar manner, or rather that world represents the highest harmony between causes and effects, means and ends. The power and authority of the will is to be cultivated in this world. This world is the sowing ground of the Hereafter; it is the substance out of which the rewards of heaven as well as the misfortunes of hell are carved out.

Therefore, each one of the worships and the rites prescribed by the *Shari’ah*, besides themselves possessing heavenly and angelic forms, are elements for building the physical paradise and procuring all the paraphernalia of heavenly life. This is confirmed by tradition and affirmed by reason. In the same way as every worship produces its own specific effects on the soul, it also, little by little, strengthens the will and perfects its strength. Therefore, the greater the effort required for a worship, the more productive it is

أَفْضَلُ الْأَعْمَالِ أَحْمَرُهَا.

The best of deeds are those, which are the most difficult. [10](#)

For instance, waking up for the sake of praying to God Almighty in the biting cold of a winter night and sacrificing the delights of sound sleep makes the soul triumphant over the body and strengthens the will. Though it is a bit difficult and unpleasant in the beginning, but after a little practice its hardship and inconvenience becomes lesser and lesser and the subservience of the body to the soul grows.

We see the people who perform it doing all this without any trouble, and if we are lazy and find it difficult, it is because we do not take action. But if we force ourselves to act, gradually the difficulty turns into ease. The people who offer the nightly prayer derive great enjoyment out of it, even more than the pleasure we derive from carnal enjoyments. The self becomes habituated through action, and goodness becomes enduring by becoming habitual.

These worships have several advantages, one of them is that the form that they acquire in that world is so beautiful that its parallel cannot be found in this world, and we are unable to visualize it. Another is that the soul acquires will power and resolution, which by itself has numerous advantages, and we have

mentioned one of them.

Yet another is that it familiarizes man with the worship and remembrance of God, bringing the unreal to the Real, and turning the heart towards the King of kings, stirring in it the love for the Beauty of the Real Beloved, and diminishing the attachment to and concern for the world and the Hereafter.

Perhaps, if this divine passion is produced and a state is achieved in which he knows the real objective of worship and the real secret of meditation and remembrance, both the worlds would lose their significance for him; the vision of the Beloved wipes out the dust of duality from the mirror of the heart, and God alone knows how magnanimously He will treat such a devotee.

Therefore, the practice of the exercises prescribed by the *Shari'ah*, the worships and the rites, and abstention from carnal desires and lusts, strengthen the human will power and resolution. On the other hand, immersion in sinful physical nature weakens human resolution and will, as mentioned earlier.

It is known to every man of conscience that man is drawn towards Absolute Perfection in accordance with his nature and inherent disposition. The better part of his heart is attracted towards Absolute Beauty and the Most Perfect in all aspects. This characteristic of man is innate in his nature and ingrained in it by God Almighty. Accordingly, the will is a means for the fulfillment of the search of the lovers of Absolute Beauty.

However, everyone, in accordance with his own state and condition, has his own idea of perfection, and he sees perfection in something towards which he is attracted. Those who work for the sake of the Hereafter perceive perfection in otherworldly stages and grades and their hearts are turned towards them. And the men of God, who, beholding perfection in His beauty and beauty in His perfection, say:

﴿إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ﴾

I have turned my face towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth. (6:79)

And they say:

﴿وَلِي مَعَ اللَّهِ حَالٌ﴾

My ecstasy lies in God.

They long for union with Him, and are in love with His Beauty. The worldlings, since they perceive perfection in worldly comforts and luxuries, those things having acquired beauty in their sight and charmed them, are naturally attracted towards them. Nevertheless, since man's natural inclination is towards absolute perfection, all the worldly attachments are basically errors of Judgment.

Therefore, the greater his mastery over worldly or otherworldly benefits, whether they are spiritual accomplishments, authority, power, or material treasures, his longing for them increases and the flame of love grows brighter and more ferocious. For example, the sensual appetites of a lusty man will increase if he is given more chances of fulfilling his sensual desires; he will desire some other fulfillment that is not available to him, and the furnace of his lust will become hotter and wilder.

In the same way, if the man ambitious for power and authority is allowed to establish his authority over one region, he will turn towards yet another. If the whole earth comes under his domination, he will think of invading other spheres in order to bring them under his dominion. He is not aware that his natural instincts crave for something else. The instinctive love and the natural quest of man is directed towards the Absolute Beloved. All substantial, physical, and intentional motions, all attentions of the heart and the inclinations of the self are directed towards the beauty of Absolute Beauty, yet human beings do not realize it.

They abuse this love, this desire, and this longing, which is meant to be the *Buraq* (the mount upon which the Prophet (S) is said to have performed the nocturnal journey through the universe called *Mi'raj*) meant for ascension to heaven, the wings to fly to union with the Absolute, by wasting it on unworthy ends and by confining it within absurd barriers and limits, thus missing their goal.

In short, since man's inclination towards absolute perfection is innate, the greater his greed for worldly allurements the more he accumulates them and the more is his heart attracted towards them. Since he mistakenly believes the world and worldly fascinations to be the desired ultimate goal his greed grows day by day and his desire for them multiplies. His need for the world increases and poverty and deprivation becomes his fate.

On the contrary, those who work for the Hereafter, their attention towards the world diminishes, their attention towards the Hereafter increases with their interest therein, and the love for this world and the interest therein diminishes in their hearts till they care no more about the world and its allurements. A sense of richness and plentitude is lodged within their hearts and the treasures of this world lose their value in their sight. Therefore, the men of God are oblivious of both the worlds and free of care for both of them. Their only need is related to Absolute Plentitude. Absence of need and presence of plentitude are infused in their hearts by the light of the Needless-in-Itself.

In the light of the above exposition, the tradition means to say that whosoever makes the world his biggest concern from morning till night, God Almighty puts poverty into his eyes. And whosoever spends his morning and evening making the Hereafter his biggest concern, God Almighty puts plentitude into his heart. It is obvious that the one whose heart attends to the, Hereafter, for him all the worldly matters become insignificant, trivial, and easy. ' He views the world as temporary, transitory; and short-lived, a place where he is for the sole purpose of educating and training himself.

He is indifferent to its sufferings and joys. His needs become few, and his dependence on the matters of

the world and its inhabitants becomes lesser, and reaches a point where he has no need of them at all. His affairs become integrated and organized, and an inalienable sense of contentment enters his heart.

Therefore, the more you look at this world with wonder and love, the more your heart will be attached to it, and your need for it will also increase proportionally to your love. A sense of poverty and privation will appear on the surface of your personality, your affairs will become disjointed and dissipated. Your heart will become anxious, melancholic, and fearful, and your affairs will not be carried out according to your wishes.

Your hope and greed will increase day by day. Grief and regret will seize you; bewilderment and despair will invade your heart. Some of these points have been alluded to in the following traditions from *al-Kafi*:

عَنْ حَفْصِ بْنِ قُرْطٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: مَنْ كَثُرَ اشْتِبَاكُهُ بِالدُّنْيَا كَانَ أَشَدَّ لِحَسْرَتِهِ عِنْدَ فِرَاقِهَا.

On the authority of Hafs ibn Qurt, Abu ‘Abd Allah (A) is reported to have said, “The greater one’s involvement with the world, the greater shall be his regret at the time of parting from it”¹¹

عَنْ ابْنِ أَبِي يَعْفُورٍ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَقُولُ: مَنْ تَعَلَّقَ قَلْبُهُ بِالدُّنْيَا تَعَلَّقَ قَلْبُهُ بِثَلَاثِ خِصَالٍ: هَمٌّ لَا يَفْنَى وَأَمَلٌ لَا يُدْرِكُ وَرَجَاءٌ لَا يُنَالُ.

Ibn Abi Ya’fur says: I heard Abu ‘Abd Allah as saying, “Whoever has a heart attached to the world, has three things attached to his heart: unremitting sadness, unfulfilled desire, and unachievable hope.”¹²

But the otherworldly, the nearer they come to the Court of the Beneficent, the more joyful and tranquil their hearts become; they become oblivious, nay disgusted, of this world and whatever is in it. If the Almighty had not decreed their terms of life, they would not have tarried for a single moment in this world. The *Mawla* of the *Muwahhidun*, Imam ‘Ali (A), says about them: “They are not sad and dejected here like the people of this world, and in the Hereafter they will be immersed in the oceans of His Mercy.” May God include you and us with them, God willing.

So, my dear, now you know about the evils of this love and attachment, and have learnt how this love can destroy a human being. It deprives the human being of his’ faith, and makes a mess of his life in the Hereafter as well as in this world. Make up your mind, and try to curtail your love and loosen the bondage to this world as far as possible. Eradicate its roots, and consider this short life in this world as insignificant.

Do not attach any value to its pleasures, mixed as they are with punishment, sorrow, and pain. Seek help from God, so that He may succor you in relieving your self from its scourge and suffering, and familiarize your heart with the noble abode that lies with Him. And whatever lies with God is better and lasting.

- [1.](#) Al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi (Tehran), Vol. IV (Arabic text with Persian translation by Sayyid Hashim Rasuli), p. 8.
- [2.](#) For maintaining readability, (M) which is an acronym for “Rahimahu(m) allah” is used throughout the book to denote “May God have mercy upon him/them.”
- [3.](#) Al-Majlisi, Bihar al- anwar.
- [4.](#) Nahj al-balaghah (e.d. Subhi al-Salih), Hikam, No. 131.
- [5.](#) Usul al-Kafi, vol. iv, p. 2
- [6.](#) Usul al-Kafi, vol. iv, p.3.
- [7.](#) Nahj al- balaghah, Khutab, No. 5.
- [8.](#) Usul al-Kafi, vol. iii, p. 205.
- [9.](#) Mir Damad, al-Qabasat, p. 72.
- [10.](#) Usul al-Kafi, vol. iv, p. 9.
- [11.](#) Usul al-Kafi, vol. iv, p. 9.
- [12.](#) Usul al-Kafi, vol. iv, p. 9

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