

Keys to the Treasures

Fuzto be Rabil Kaaba

By God of Kaaba, I have succeeded!

Keys to the Treasures¹

Illustrious advice in the form of a Will, from Imam Ali, The Commander of the Faithful, to his son, the Prince of Paradise

These exhortations are from a father who realizes the mortality of life, who is getting old, who has patiently borne reverses and calamities, who hates inordinate desires and has overcome them to his son who is young, who has the desire of leading the world to sober ways of thinking and better ways of life who is mortal and is bound by nature to follow the steps of all mortals

It was neither selfishness nor self-esteem nor any mental luxury that led me to impart this advice, but it was the sincere desire of making you see the world as I found it, look at the realities of lives as I looked at them, and do the right thing at the right time and right place as it should be done, which made me write down these exhortations to you. You will not find in them anything but truth and realities.

My dear son! You are part of my body and soul and whenever I look at you I feel as if I am looking at myself. If any calamity befalls you, I feel as if it has befallen me. Your death will make me feel as if it was my own death. Your affairs are to me like my own affairs. Therefore, I committed these pieces of advice to paper. I want you to take care of them, to pay attention to them and to guard them well.

My first and foremost advice to you, my son, is to fear Allah. Be His obedient servant. Keep His thought always fresh in your mind. Be attached to and carefully guard the principles which connect you with Him.

Accept good exhortations and refresh your mind with them. Adopt piety and kill your inordinate desires with its help. Build your character with the help of true faith in religion and Allah. Take care to provide well for your future abode. Do not barter away eternal blessing for pleasures of this mortal and fleeting world.

Develop the habit of patience against sufferings, calamities and adversities. This virtue of patience is one of the highest values of morality and nobility of character and it is the best habit which one can develop. Trust in Allah and let your mind seek His protection in every calamity and suffering because you will thus entrust yourself and your affairs to the Best Trustee and to the Mightiest Guardian.

Ask as much of His Blessings and seek as much of His Guidance as you can. Try to understand my exhortation, ponder over them deeply; do not take them lightly and do not turn away from them because the best knowledge is that which benefits the listener.

Through these pieces of advice I have tried to bring home to you the value of honest-living and high-thinking and the dangers of a vicious and sinful life, I have taken care to cover and guard every aspect of your life as it is the duty of a kind, considerate and loving father.

My dear son! The Lord who is the Master of death is also the Master of life. The Creator is the Annihilator and the One who annihilates has the power to bring everything back again to existence. The One who sends calamities has also the power to protect you from them. Remember that this world is working under the laws ordained by Him.

Thus, the best out of these pieces of advice of mine are those which tell you to fear Allah and the best thing for you to do is to seek guidance of One who has created you, Who maintains and nourishes you, Who has given you a balanced mind and a normally working body. Your invocations should be reserved for Him only, your requests and solicitations should be to Him alone and you should only be afraid of Him.

Be it known to you, my son, that nobody has given mankind such detailed information about Allah as our Holy Prophet. I advise you to have faith in his teachings, to make him your leader and to accept his guidance for your salvation.

People who have carefully studied the condition of life and the world, pass their days as if they know that they are travellers, who have to leave a place which is famine-stricken, unhealthy and uncongenial, and they have to proceed towards lands which are fertile, congenial, and where there is abundant provision of all comforts and pleasures. They do not refuse to bear any discomfort and do not grudge any expenditure by way of giving out alms and charities, and helping the poor and the needy.

Remember my son, that before you too is a hazardous journey. The journey is not only long and tedious, it is also very exhausting and you will need helpers and sustenance to reach the end of the journey – the Day of Judgement. But remember not to overload yourself with these provisions, for if this load is more than what you can conveniently bear then your journey will be very painful and tiresome.

If you find around you such poor, needy and destitute people who are willing to carry your load for you as far as the Day of Judgement then consider this to be a blessing. Engage them and pass your burden on to them. Thus relieve yourself from the heavy responsibility and liability of submitting an account on

the Day of Judgement of how you have made use of His Bounties and thus you may arrive at the end of the journey, light and fresh, and with ample provision for you there.

Have as many weight-carriers as you can so that you may not miss them when you very badly need them. Remember that all you give out in charities and good deeds are like loans which will be paid back to you. Therefore, when you are wealthy and powerful, make use of your wealth and power in such a way that you get all that back on the Day of Judgement, when you will be poor and helpless.

Realize this truth, my son, that the Lord who owns and holds the treasures of Paradise and the earth has given you permission to seek and ask for them and He has promised to grant your prayers. He has told you to pray for His Favours that they may be granted to you and to ask for His Blessings that they may be bestowed upon you. He has not appointed guards to prevent your prayers reaching Him. Nor is there any need for anybody to intercede before Him on your behalf.

He hears you whenever you call Him. He accepts your prayer whenever you pray to Him. Invoke Him to grant you your heart's desire, lay before Him the secrets of your heart, tell Him about all the calamities that have befallen you and misfortunes which face you, and beseech His help to overcome them. You may invoke His Help and Support in difficulties and distress.

Think over it that by simply granting you the privilege of praying for His Favours and Mercies, He has handed over the keys of His treasures to you. Whenever you are in need you should pray and He will confer His Bounties and Blessings. But sometimes you will find that your requests are not immediately granted, then you need not be disappointed because the grant of prayers often rests with the true purpose and intention of the implorer..... Sometimes your prayers are turned down, and this is also in your interest; because you often, unknowingly, ask for things that are really harmful to you.....

Be it known to you, my son, that you cannot have every wish of yours granted. You cannot expect to escape death, and you are passing through your days of life as others before you have passed. Therefore, control your expectations, desires and cravings. Be moderate in your demands. Earn your livelihood through scrupulously honest means. Be contented with what you get honestly and honourably and do not bring down your self-respect, for nothing in this world can compensate for the loss of self-respect, nobility and honour.

Take care, my son! Be warned that you do not make yourself a slave of anybody. Allah has created you a freeman. Do not sell away your freedom in return of anything. There is no actual gain and real value in benefits that you derive by selling your honour and self-respect or by subjugating yourself to disgrace and insults. There is no real good in wealth and power that you acquire by foul means.

Know it well, son, that there are two kinds of livelihood: one which you are searching for and the other which follows you. It will reach you even if you do not try to obtain it. Remember that the little which is given to you by Allah is going to be more useful and serviceable to you and is more honourable and respectable than what is granted by man in abundance. And what can a man give you but part of that

which Allah has granted him? To guard what you already possess is better than to beg from others. The bitterness of disappointment and poverty is in reality sweeter than the disgrace of begging.

The Merciful Lord has ordered that every poor deed of yours will be counted as one and a good deed and pious action will be rewarded tenfold. He has left the door of repentance open and if you repent He neither taunts you nor betrays you though you may fully deserve both. He accepts your penitence and pardons you and He never grudges His Forgiveness nor refuses His Mercy. Infact, He has decreed repentance as a virtue and pious deed.

Do good to your brother when he is bent upon doing harm to you. When he ignores or declines to recognize the kinship, befriend him, go to his help and try to maintain relations. If he is miserly with you and refuses to help you, be generous with him and support him financially. If he is cruel with you, be kind and considerate with him. If he harms you accept his excuses. Behave with him as if he is a master and you are a slave, and he is a benefactor and you are a beneficiary.

The greatest achievement of your character is that the hostility of your brother against you does not overcome the consideration and friendship you feel towards him, and his ill-treatment of you does not overbalance your kind treatment to him.

Treat the members of your family with love and respect because they act as wings with which you fly and as hands which support you and fight for you. They are people towards whom you turn when you are in trouble and in need.

Be it known to you, my son, that you are created for the next world and not for this. You are born to die and not to live forever. Your stay in this world is transient. You live in a place which is subject to decay and destruction. It is a place where you will have to be busy getting ready for the next world. It is a road on which you are standing. Death is following you. You cannot run away from it. However hard you may try to avoid it, it is going to catch you sooner or later.

Therefore take care that it may not catch you unaware or when you are not prepared for it, and no chance is left to you to repent the vices and sins committed and to undo the harm done by you. If death catches you unawares, then you are eternally condemned. Therefore, my dear son, always keep three things in mind: death, your deeds and the life in the Hereafter. In this way you will always be ready to face death and it will not catch you unawares.

My dear son! After having given these pieces of advice to you I entrust you to the Lord. He will help, guide and protect you in this world and the Hereafter. I beseech Him to take you under His protection in both the worlds.

Dua for The Spreading of the Earth Day

*A section of the dua, recommended for Zi'qad 25, the day referred to as 'Dahwal Arz' or 'The Spreading of the Earth' Day, when the earth was laid out on the water where the Holy Kaaba is now situated and spread out from there. Refer to (79:30). Sheikh Abbas Qummi has copied this dua from Imam Ali Reza in his book 'Keys to Heavens' through the source of Hasan bin Ali Washa. (Aulia is plural of 'wali')

O' God Who spread the earth below the Kaaba

I ask You on this blessed Day

Sanction for me the visit of Your Aulia,

At the time when my soul departs,

When they lower me in the grave,

When my activities cease and

When my life is concluded.

God remember me when I lie deep below the surface

For a long period of trial,

And when people who tend to forget have forgotten me

Offer me an eminent place to stay.

Place me amongst the friends of Your Aulia

And keep me with Your selected and well liked people.

Let my meeting with You be totally blessed,

And permit me to do good deeds before my time is up

And keep me away from sin and wrongdoing .

God help me alight on the banks of Kausar,

The Spring of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) and his Aal

And there offer me a drink

That is pleasant, refreshing and aplenty

So I never feel thirsty again,

And am not barred from staying there

And am never asked to leave

Dua e Maqatil bin Sulayman

*Shaykh Al Kaf 'ami has copied this dua from Imam Zain ul Abideen in his book 'Balad ul Amin' through the source of Maqatil bin Sulayman. Thus it is Also referred to as : Dua e Maqatil bin Sulayman.

My Allah! How should I call out to You for I am (merely) I

And how can I lose hope in You, for You are (indeed) You?

My Allah! When I do not ask of You, even then You provide,

So who should I appeal to provide for my needs?

My Allah! When I do not pray to You, even then You answer,

So who should I bank on to answer my prayers?

My Allah! When I do not beg You, even then You take pity,

So who should I beseech to take pity on me?

My Allah! Just as You parted the waters of Nile to save Musa,

I ask You to send blessings on Prophet Mohammad and his Aal

And rescue me from all difficulties

And relieve me of distress

Very soon and without any delay,

By Your Grace! By Your Mercy ! O' Most Merciful God!

1. This Advice was given by imam Ali, in the form of a Will (wasiyat) to his son, on his return from the Battle of Siffin. It is a must read for all sons, everywhere! It is listed as Letter 31, in Peak of Eloquence (Nahjul Balagha) which is a collection of sermons, letters and sayings of Imam Ali. It is presented in book form by Al Sharif Al Razi. This translation was taken from website: www.nahjulbalagha.org/ [1] . This is not the complete text of the letter and the order of some paragraphs was

changed.

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