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Lifespan

Lifespan العُمُرُ

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العُمُرُ

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ السَّلامُ): إنَّ عُمرَكَ عَدَدُ أنفاسِكَ ، وعَلَيها رَقيبٌ يُحصيها1

1– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'Verily your lifespan is the total number of your breaths, and there is a watcher over them counting them.'[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 3434]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ السَّلامُ): إنَّهُ لَن يَستَقبِلَ أحَدُكُم يَوما مِن عُمرِهِ إلّا بِفِراقِ آخَرَ مِن أجَلِهِ2

2– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'Verily nobody will receive a single extra day to his lifespan except that another day will be taken from him from his end.'[Tanbih al-Khawatir, v. 2, p. 218]

Making the Most of One's Life

الحَثُّ عَلى اغتِنامِ العُمُرِ

.. رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): كُنْ عَلى عُمرِكَ أشَحَّ مِنكَ عَلى دِرهَمِكَ ودينارِكَ3

3– The Prophet (S) said, 'Be even more niggardly with your life than with your dirham and your dinar [i.e.

your money].'[Makarim al-Akhlaq, v. 2, p. 364, no. 2661]

4ـ الإمامُ عليٌّ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): إنَّ العُمرَ مَحدودٌ لَن يَتَجاوَزَ أحَدٌ ماقُدِّرَ لَهُ، فبادِروا قَبلَ نَفاذِ الأجَلِ.

4– The Prophet (S) said, 'Verily lifespan is fixed and no one will surpass that which has been allotted to him, so rush to make the most of it before time runs out.'[A'alam al-Din, p. 336, no. 12]

5ـ الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ السَّلامُ): ماضي يَومِكَ فائتٌ ، وآتيهِ مُتَّهَمٌ ، ووَقتُكَ مُغتَنَمٌ.

5– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'Your yesterday has passed on, your tomorrow is uncertain, and your today is to be taken advantage of.'[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 9840]

6ـ الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ السَّلامُ): ما أسرَعَ السّاعاتِ فِي اليَومِ ، وأسرَعَ الأيّامَ فِي الشَّهرِ ، وأسرَعَ الشُّهورَ فِي السَّنَةِ ، وأسرَعَ السّنينَ (السَّنَةَ) فِي العُمرِ!

6– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'How fast the hours in a day go by, and how fast the days in a month, and how fast the months in a year, and how fast the years in a lifetime!'[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 188]

7ـ الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ السَّلامُ): أيُّها النّاسُ! الآنَ الآنَ مِن قَبلِ النَّدَمِ ، ومِن قَبلِ «أن تَقولَ نَفسٌ يا حَسرَتى عَلى ما فَرَّطتُ في جَنبِ اللّهِ».

7– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'O people! [take advantage of] Now! Now before regret sets in, and before "anyone should say, 'Alas for my negligence in the vicinage of Allah!"[Qur' an 3956].[Tanbih al-Khawatir, v. 2, p. 89]

8ـ الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ السَّلامُ): رَحِمَ اللّهُ امرَأً عَلِمَ أنَّ نَفَسَهُ خُطاهُ إلى أجَلِهِ ، فبادَرَ عَمَلَهُ وقَصَّرَ أمَلَهُ.

8– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'Allah has mercy on the man who knows that his breaths are but his steps towards his end, so he hastens to perform good deeds and cuts short his high hopes.'[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 5214]

9ـ الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ السَّلامُ): اِحذَروا ضَياعَ الأعمارِ فيما لا يَبقى لَكُم ، فَفائتُها لا يَعودُ.

9– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'Be cautious of wasting away your lives in that which will not last for you, for whatever has passed of them never returns.'[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 2618]

10ـ الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ): إنَّ عُمرَكَ مَهرُ سَعادَتِكَ إن أنفَدتَهُ في طاعَةِ رَبِّكَ.

10– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Verily your lifetime is the ransom for your eternal prosperity if you spend it in the obedience of your Lord.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 3429]

He Whose Life Will Be a Proof Against Him

مَن يَكونُ عُمُرُهُ حُجَّةً عَلَيهِ

11ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): إذَا كانَ يَومُ القِيامَةِ نودِيَ: أينَ أبناءُ السِّتّينَ ؟ وهُوَالعُمرُ الّذي قالَ اللّهُ تَعالى:«أوَ لَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُم ما يَتَذَكَّرُ فيهِ مَن تَذَكَّرَ».

11– The Prophet (S) said, ‘On the Day of Resurrection, it will be announced, ‘Where are the sixty year olds’ for this is the age referring to which Allah, most High, has said, “Did we not give you a life long enough that one who is heedful might take admonition”[Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 2924]

12ـ الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ): العُمرُ الّذي أعذَرَ اللّهُ فيهِ إلَى ابنِ آدَمَ سِتّونَ سَنَةً.

12– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘The age up to which Allah accepts the excuse of His servants for certain things is sixty years.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 326]

13ـ الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ): فيالَها حَسرَةً عَلى كُلِّ ذي غَفلَةٍ أن يَكونَ عُمُرُهُ عَلَيهِ حُجَّةً ، وأن تُؤَدّيَهُ أيّامُهُ إلَى الشِّقوَةِ !

13– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘So alas for every negligent one that his age be a proof against him, and that the days of his life should lead him to perdition!’[Ghurar al-Hikam, Sermon 64]

14ـ الإمامُ الباقرُ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ): إذا أتَت عَلَى العَبدِ أربَعونَ سَنَةً قيلَ لَهُ: خُذْ حِذرَكَ ؛ فإنَّكَ غَيرُ مَعذورٍ ، ولَيسَ ابنُ أربَعينَ سَنَةً أحَقَّ بِالعُذرِ مِن ابنِ عِشرينَ سَنَةً.

14– Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) said, ‘When a man reaches forty years of age, it is said to him, ‘Be on your guard, for now you have no excuse’, and the forty-year old man is no longer as worthy of being excused as the twenty-year old man.’[al-Khisal, p. 545, no. 24]

That Which Leads to an Increase in Lifespan

ما يَزيدُ فِي العُمُرِ

15ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): أكثِرْ مِنَ الطَّهورِ يَزِدِ اللّهُ في عُمرِكَ

15– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Remain mostly in the state of purity and Allah will increase your lifespan.’[Amali al-Mufid, p. 60, no. 5]

16ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): مَن سَرَّهُ أن يُبسَطَ لَهُ في رِزقِهِ ويُنسَأَ لَهُ في أجَلِهِ فَلْيَصِلْ رَحِمَهُ

16– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Whoever would like his sustenance to be amplified and his destined end to be postponed should maintain relations with his kin.’[al-Khisal, p. 32, no. 112]

17ـ الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ الّسَلامُ): مَن أرادَ البَقاءَ ـ ولا بَقاءَ ـ فَلْيُباكِرِ الغَداءَ ، وَلْيُجَوِّدِ الحِذاءَ ، وَلْيُخَفِّفِ الرِّداءَ ، وَلْيُقِلَّ غُشْيانَ النِّساءِ.

17– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘He who wishes to remain alive – though there is no remaining forever – should eat his lunch early, wear good shoes, dress in light clothing, and lessen his sexual intercourse with women.’[‘Uyun Akhbar ar-Ridha, v. 2, p. 38, no. 112]

18ـ الإمامُ الباقرُ (عَلَيهِ الّسَلامُ): مُروا شيعَتَنا بِزِيارَةِ قَبرِ الحُسَينِ بنِ عَلِيٍّ (عَلَيهِ الّسَلامُ) ؛ فإنَّ إتيانَهُ يَزيدُ فِي الرِّزقِ ، ويَمُدُّ فِي العُمرِ ، ويَدفَعُ مَدافِعَ السُّوءِ.

18– Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) said, ‘Command our shi’aa to visit the grave of al-Husayn b. Ali (a.s.), for verily going there increases sustenance, extends one’s life, and repels evil forces.’[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 101, p. 4, no. 12]

19ـ الإمامُ الصّادقُ (عَلَيهِ الّسَلامُ): مَن حَسُنَت نِيَّتُهُ زِيدَ في عُمرِهِ

19– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘He who has good intentions is given an increase in lifespan.’[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 69, p. 408, no. 117]

20ـ الإمامُ الصّادقُ (عَلَيهِ الّسَلامُ): مَن حَسُنَ بِرُّهُ بِأهلِ بَيتِهِ زِيدَ في عُمرِهِ .

20– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘He who excels in his good treatment of his family is given an increase in his lifespan.’[Amali al-Tusi, p. 245, no. 425]

21ـ الإمامُ الصّادقُ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ): إن أحبَبتَ أن يَزيدَ اللّهُ في عُمرِكَ فسُرَّ أبَوَيكَ.

21– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘If you would like Allah to increase your lifespan then please your parents.’[al-Zuhd li al-Husayn b. Sa’aid, p. 33, no. 87]

The Believer and Asking for a Long Life

المُؤمِنُ وطَلَبُ طولِ العُمُرِ

22ـ فاطمةُ الزَّهراءُ (عَلَيهَا السّلامُ) ـ فِي المُناجاةِ ـ: اللّهُمَّ بِعِلمِكَ الغَيبَ ، وقُدرَتِكَ عَلَى الخَلقِ ، أحيِني ما عَلِمتَ الحَياةَ خَيراً لي، وتَوَفَّني إذا كانَتِ الوَفاةُ خَيراً لي.

22– Fatima al-Zahra’ (a.s.) said in her intimate supplication, ‘O Allah, by Your knowledge of the unseen, and Your power over creation, keep me alive so long as You know that life is good for me, and cause me to die when death is good for me.’[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 94, p. 225, no. 1]

23ـ الإمامُ زينُ العابدينَ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ) ـ مِن دُعائِهِ في مَكارِمِ الأخلاقِ ـ: وعَمِّرْني ما كانَ عُمري بِذْلَةً في طاعَتِكَ، فإذا كانَ عُمري مَرتَعاً لِلشَّيطانِ فَاقبِضْني إلَيكَ.

23– Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a.s.) said in his supplication for noble moral traits, ‘And let me live so long as my life is spent in Your obedience, but when my life becomes a breeding ground for Satan, then take me to You.’[al-Sahifat al-Sajjadiyya, p. 82, Supplication 20]

The Wisdom Behind Man’s Ignorance of the Span of His Life

حِكمَةُ جَهلِ الإنسانِ بِمِقدارِ عُمُرِهِ

24ـ الإمامُ الصّادقُ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ): تَأمَّل الآنَ يا مُفَضَّلُ ما سُتِرَ عَنِ الإنسانِ عِلمُهُ مِن مُدَّةِ حَياتِهِ ؛ فإنَّهُ لَو عَرَفَ مِقدارَ عُمرِهِ وكانَ قَصيرَ العُمرِ لَم يَتَهنَّأْ بِالعَيشِ مَعَ تَرَقُّبِ المَوتِ وتَوَقُّعِهِ لِوَقتٍ قَد عَرَفَهُ ، بَل كانَ يَكونُ بِمَنزِلَةِ مَن قَد فَنِيَ مالُهُ أو قارَبَ الفَناءَ ، فقَدِ استَشعَرَ الفَقرَ والوَجَلَ مِن فَناءِ مالِهِ وخَوفِ الفَقرِ ، عَلى أنَّ الّذي يَدخُلُ عَلَى الإنسانِ مِن فَناءِ العُمرِ أعظَمُ مِمّا يَدخُلُ عَلَيهِ مِن فَناءِ المالِ ، لأنَّ مَن يَقِلُّ مالُه يَأمَلُ أن يَستَخلِفَ مِنهُ فيَسكُنُ إلى ذلكَ ، ومَن أيقَنَ بِفَناءِ العُمرِ استَحكَمَ عَلَيهِ اليَأسُ ، وإن كانَ طَويلَ العُمرِ ثُمَّ عَرَفَ ذلكَ وَثِقَ بِالبَقاءِ ، وَانهَمَكَ فِي

اللَّذّاتِ والمَعاصي ، وعَمِلَ عَلى أ نَّهُ يَبلُغُ مِن ذلكَ شَهوَتَهُ ثُمَّ يَتوبُ في آخِرِ عُمرِهِ ... فإن قُلتَ: وها هُوَ الآنَ قَد سُتِرَ عَنهُ مِقدارُ حَياتِه وصارَ يَترَقَّبُ المَوتَ ، في كُلِّ ساعَةٍ يُقارِفُ الفَواحِشَ ويَنتَهِكُ المَحارِمَ ! قُلنا: إنَّ وَجهَ التَّدبيرِ في هذا البابِ هُوَ الّذي جَرى عَلَيهِ الأمرُ فيهِ ، فإن كانَ الإنسانُ مَعَ ذلكَ لا يَرعَوي ولا يَنصَرِفُ عَنِ المَساوئِ فإنَّما ذلكَ مِن مَرَحِهِ ومِن قَساوَةِ قَلبِهِ ، لا مِن خَطَأٍ فِي التَّدبيرِ.

24– Imam al–Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘Contemplate now O Mufadhal about the fact that man’s lifespan has been kept concealed from his knowledge; for verily if he was to know the span of his life, and if it were short, he would never take pleasure in living, knowing his approaching death and always in anticipation of the time that he knows.

In fact, he would be like someone whose wealth has perished or is close to perishing, so he feels a sense of poverty and terror at the thought of losing his wealth and a fear of poverty, even though that feeling which the man who knows that he is going to lose his life is much more intense, for the one whose wealth is diminishing still continues to hope that some of it will remain enabling him to live off that, whereas he who is certain of the loss of his life is taken over by despair.

And if instead his lifespan was to be long, and he knew this, he would be certain of staying alive and would therefore become absorbed in vain pleasures and sins, and would act to gratify his desires intending to repent at the end of his life…

And if you retort by saying that right now, even though his lifespan is concealed from him and he is approaching death, he still yields to vile sins and commits forbidden acts, we would reply that the way this matter has been decreed is exactly how it is at the moment, and if man, in spite of that [i.e. his ignorance of his death] does not desist from and shun sins then that is because of his own heedless merriment and the hardness of his heart, and not because of a mistake in divine planning!’[Bihar al–Anwar, v. 3, p. 83]

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