

Masterpieces of Rhetoric Method (Nahj Al-Balagha)

Selected, prepared, and introduced in a broad study by

George Gerdak

Al-Ghadeer Center for Islamic Studies

Translated by

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روائع نهج البلاغة باللغة الانكليزية

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Imam Ali

Masterpieces

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Preface

Imam Ali bin Abi Talib may Allah's greeting be to him - is the Imam of eloquents and scholastic as he is the Imam of the pious; the masterpiece of whose is Nahj Al-Balaghah that represents, on the grounds of Arabic style, a rank coming after that of the Holy Quran. Throughout thirteen centuries, the Arab styles have related to it, have built up on its foundation, have quoted their firebrands from it, and that their good styles revive within the framework of his magic eloquence.

Imam Ali was improvising his speeches, reciting them at people meetings as summeries of a contemplations and at their circles as addresses increasing inside the self; the tongue utters them spontaneously and thus come precise (under the Creator's speech and above that of the created).

At the end of the fourth century A.H. Al-Sharif Al-Radhi chose samples of his sermons, letters, and short sayings, and gathered them in a book called Nahj Al-Balaghah. The name indicates that these chosen samples represent a method in eloquence and performance that leads, if taken as an example, to rhetoric as it is a revelation of the self and reality, and a delivery to the receiver. This is the objective of the great creative literature.

From the day the book was selected, scholars and literary men devoted themselves to reading and explaining it; thus the explanations became numerous and various, some of which reached several volumes that requires, only to be acquainted with, time and effort people often do not have within these days. Hence came the need for a book that facilitates knowledge of the "Nahj" for the common reader by selecting samples and explaining them.

The famous author George Gerdak attempted to carry out this task: he works throughout years to simplify difficulties for the reader so as to collect within a book masterpieces of Nahj Al-Balagha; he classifies them according to its topics on them one hand, and according to time of appearance on the other hand, and explains what is strange and difficult out of their expressions.

Once more, throughout these masterpieces which he chooses, organizes and explains, he introduces an excellent study on the "Allawiyān Personality" adding it to his well-known five-study series.

This book satisfies a need for the common reader, the students of schools and universities, and the specialized reader as well, at this time when man does not find an opportunity for reading, amid several businesses and the control of audiovisual mass media.

Al-Ghadeer Center for studies is interested to introduce this book in its new dress after its edition has been sold out wishing to achieve the benefit it aims.

Al-Ghadeer Center for Islamic Studies

On Imam's Borders between Mind and heart

He has been hard rumbling, roaring like thunder during woe nights. The fountain is a fountain, day and night are not considered in its run.

Anyone who traces memoirs of true great men in history, apart from being from the Orient or the Occident, or being ancient or contemporary, he realizes an unhidden phenomenon: that they, despite the differences in their intellectual fields, the varieties of their beliefs in subjects of mental activities, are talented literary men, varying in strength and weakness. They vary in being a creative producer, to being taster whose taste draws him near to production and creation, as if literary sense in its wide horizons, meanings, and forms, is linked to every overwhelming talent in every kind of great activities.

A single sight at prophets, for example, is enough to decide this phenomenon in minds. David, Sulaiman, Ishiya, Irmiya, Jacob, Jesus christ, and Mohammed are nothing but literary men granted a literary talent as being one of their gifted other special talents, Those are they, Napoleon the leader, Plato the philo-sopher, Bascal the mathematician, Pastor the biologist, Al-Khayam the arithmaticain, Nehro the statesmen, Dighol the Politician, Ibn Khaldoon the historian, they are literary men having in literature what raises them to the high level of its leaders. Each one of them has a kind of some mental activities determined by nature and talent; then the aesthetic tendency cultivated the forms in which it was expressed all of sudden, it is of pure literature.

This truth becomes strikingly evident in the personality of Ali bin Abi Talib, then he is the Imam in literature, as he is the Imam in the rights he affirmed what he taught and guided, his evidence in that is "Nahj Al-Balagha" on the grounds of Arabic rhetoric, a rank coming after that of Holy Quran; the Arab styles, throughout thirteen centuries, have related to it, have built up on its construction, have quoted from it, and that their good styles revive within the framework of his magic eloquence.

As to eloquence Ali connected its last to its next; he joined the masterpieces of the pure pre-islamic eloquence which is united directly with nature sound with the purified clear islamic one which is united with sound nature and stornig logic: in a union whose elements can not be separated from one another. He had gained the rhetoric of

the pre-Islamic era as well as the charm of prophetic eloquence - which made some to describe his speech as (under the Crator's speech and above that of the created).

But it is not a surprise as Ali had been prepared by all means that fit him to this status among people of eloquence. He grew up in an environment where hurrey nature becomes sound and pure. He also lived with the wisest man Mohammed bin Abdullah, being addressed from the Prophet his message in its all ardour and strength. Add to that his massive predispositions and great talents; and so reasons of excellence get together firm instinct and environment likewise.

As for intelligence, exceeding intelligence, one finds, in every expression of Nahj Ab-Balagha, a great work, it is a living intelligence, able, broad, doesn't miss fathomless Depths. When he works on a topic he encompasses it in every dimension, so that no side escapes, no much or little is passed over; he dives into its depth, and turns around it highly, scours it heavily, and he realizes the hidden causes and what is the farthest mystery; as he also recognizes the truest results caused by these reasons; what is the most in closeness and the most remote in farness.

On of the conditions of rare Allawiyan intelligence is this logical sequence that one can see in Nahj Al-Balaghah wherever he heads for. This cohesion between the idea and the other one is to the extent that every one of them is the natural result of the precedent and the cause to the follower to its next. In these ideas one does not find what can be dispensed with in the topic he treats. Rather one can not find any idea which the research can stand erect without it. He, owing to his huge extent, does not use a word unless that word entails one to contemplate and scrutinize, and no phrase unless it opens, before the sights, horizons beyond horizons.

What vast roads of contemplation and sight his speech reveals to you: "People are enemies of what they do not know", or his saying: "The worth of every one is in the things he does well", or "Impiety is a weak fortress." What a marvellous summerized one is that: "One who keeps light will overtake! "What grand meaning in the four phrases, and what they contain of words classified highly, or rather say revealed directly.

What sharpness of intelligence, a comprehension of the topic, and a depth in recognition shows this fantastic revelation on the nature of envier and description of his self, and the truth of his condition: "I

have not seen a wrongful person more like the wronged such as the envier, continuous breath, worried heart, accompanying sadness. Furious at the one who has no sin, a stingy with what he does not possesses.”

The generating of ideas continues in Nahj Al-Balagha from ideas, and so you find an end less collection nonetheless they do not accumulate; rather they get together and be resulted from one another. No difference between what he writes and what he improvises. A fountain is a fountaing night and day are not considered in his run.

His improvised sermons are miracles of ideas determined by a wise mind, accuracy and sound logic. You get surprised before this amount of great precision and accuracy, when you know that Ali did not prepare his sermons even before their delivering in minutes or moments.

They are raising in his mentality, going ahead upon his tongue, spontaneously, without hardship or effort, like flash which gleams without taking or giving evidence before glimmering and like athunder bolt when it roars without preparing itself for storming or roaring. And like the wind when it blows, twists, tends, and sweeps, and orients to a goal, then it returns to its devious ways and nothing pushes it to go and come but the law of occurrence and logic of occasion in its existing limits, neither before nor after.

One of the phenomena of strong accurate intelligence in Nahj Al-Balaghah is those limits within which Ali was curbing the sentiments of deep sadness when it agitates and storms His large emotion does not drown him in a surrounding of sorrows and far depressions before the power of reason appears clearly and glit-teringly, and then it is an obeyed commander.

As to Ali’s exceeding intelligence, comprehensive in his method, he varies the research and description and masters in every topic, does not restrict his intellectual effort to one topic or means of research. He speaks with the logic of the experienced wise about circumstances of this world and people’s affairs, natures of individuals and societies. He describes lightening, thunder, the earth and the sky. He elaborates his speech on living nature phenomena, he describes the secrets of creation of bats, ants, peacock, grasshopper, and likes. He put codes for societies, and laws for morals. He excels in speaking on the cosmos creation and masterpieces of existence. You do not find in all

Arabic literature this amount you find in Nahj Al-Balaghah of where masterpieces of sound intellect and accurate logic in such a rare style.

As for imagination in Nahj Al-Balaghah it is broad, long, fluttering winged at all horizons. And owing to this strong imagination of which many wise men and nations' intellectuals are deprived, Ali was taking, out of his intelligence and experiences, his pure objective meanings; then he utters them glowing, moving in a frame on whose sides the kinds are fixed in a wonderful colours. The meaning, whatsoever it is dryly intellectual, it does not pass Ali's mentality except it grows wings crushing the feature of its stagnation and grants it with motion and life.

Ali's imagination is an example of genius one based on the ground of reality; it surrounds this reality, shows and reveals it, and makes for it extensions out of its source and nature, and shapes it with many colours of its material and colour; hence the truth increases evidently and that seeker falls on it or it falls on him!

Ali was distinguished with by strong far - sightedness, then by conscious memory storing and expanding. He undergoes, during his life stages, sentiments caused by the crudeness of the ill-willed and slyness of cheaters; and also compassionate sentiments he was surrounded with by fidelity of good people and faithfulness of the sincere. Strong elements were made easy for him, nourishing his inventive imagination so they co-operate to serve this imagination and get together in wonderful living portraits, in its prominence and activity, concentrating on pure realism, which extend and twigs with leaves and fruits.

Then you can, if you like, change the elements of the strong imagination in Nahj Al-Balaghah to coloured portraits, for its intense realism, its broad field, its wing's extension, and its lines' prominence. What a wonderful imagination the Imam has when he addresses people of Basrah; he had a pain from them after the battle of Al-Jamal, saying: "Your city would certainly be drowned so much as though I see its mosque like the bosom of a bird in a deep sea. Or like this magical simile: "troubles like the parts of dark night." Or this moving picture. "I am but like the axis of the mill. It rotates around me while I remain in my position."

Or this grand portrait which he likens the extensions of the houses of Basrah's people to trunks of elephants and that balconies appear to him like vultures' wings: "Woe to your inhabited streets and decorated

houses with wings like the wings of vultures and trunks like the trunks of elephants”.

One of the features of broad imagination is the power of likening. Likening in Imam’s literature is a quality filled with life. If you want an example, see the condition of the person in power who is envied by people and they wish to what he enjoys, but he better knows his dangerous and tearful and warning; though he terrifies others with what he mounted, yet he is afraid of being assassinated by him. Then see afterwards to Ali, how he depict this meaning, saying: “the holder of power is like the rider on a lion - he is envied for his position but he better knows his place”.

If you want another example, listen to him likening the condition of a man who was, as Imam sees, attempting against an enemy with what makes hurt to himself, saying: “you are like one who pierces a spear through himself in order to kill the person sitting behind him”. The rearman is the man sitting at the back of the rider. Take then this outstanding manner in likening the liar: “You should avoid making friends with a liar because he is like a mirage, making you see far thing near, and near things far.”

As to the artistic theory saying that whatever is ugly in nature becomes beautiful in art, if it is right, the indication of which lies in the speech of Ibn Abi Talib in his description of those who deserted this world, How terrifying is death, and how ugly its face. How wonderful is the speech of Ibn Abi Talib and how beautiful is its effect. It is a saying which takes much portion of deep passion, and much more of fertile imagination. Thus it becomes a portrait out of great art pictures so that nothing approached to it but the portraits of art genius in Europe when they depicted death and its fear with colour, tune and poetry.

After Ali reminds living people of death, and establishes the relation between death and them, he awakens them telling they are drawing near to the house of solitude, uttering this in a state with loneliness full of dark colour and sad tone: “It is as though every one of you has reached the place of his loneliness. So what a place of loneliness it is what a solitary place of staying, and a solitary exile.” Then he shakes them with what they are coming across quickly, but unconsciously using broken successive phrases as if they have the whangings of beating drums warning, saying “How fast are the hours in the day, how fast are the days in the month, how fast are the months

in the year, and how fast are the years in life. “Afterwards he gives off, in their intellects, that wonderful picture which the mind bids and emotion lights, and that jumping imagination incarnate its elements; then he gives these successive movements: it is consistant of tearing eyes, bemoaning sounds, and ailing organs, saying: “days between them and you are also bemoaning you and reciting elegies over you”. Then he returns and gives off his imagination and emotion, hence they create this ever-lasting protrait as one of the living poetical portraits.

But they have been quenched the cup of death
Which has changed their speech into dumbness, their
Hearing into deafness and their movements into stillness.
It seems as though they are fallen in slumber. They are
Neighbour not entertaining each other, or
Friends who do not meet each other. The bonds of
their knowing each other have been worn out and
the connection of their friendship have been cut
asunder. Everyone of them is therefor alone although
they are a group, and they are deserted, even though
friends. They don't hope to see a morning after a night
or an evening after a day. The night or the day
in which they departed has become eternal for them.

Then he says this terrifying speech: “They do not know who comes to them; do not pay heed to those who weep over them and do not respond to those who call them.”

Have you ever seen this creativity in picturing the horror of death, solitude of grave, description of its inhabitants in his saying: “They are neighbours not entertain each other, or friends who do not meet each other.” Then have you realized this terrifying picture of the eternity of death which nothing can draw but Ali's genius: “The night or the day when they departed has become eternal for them.” And like these masterpieces in the Nahj much more.

This sharp intelligence fertile imagination in Imam's literature are unified as the unity of nature to nature with the roaring emotion which provides them with flame of life. So the idea moves, and bloods run through its veins much hotly. Thus it addresses in you your emotion so much as it addresses your mind because it rises from a mind which is provided with warmth by emotion. It is difficult for man to enjoy a work of imagination or thought in the fields of literature and other lofty arts, if emotion does not have an active participation in

producing this work. The human nature can not be satisfied, naturally, unless it is a production of this overall of complex. This complete literary work can be seen in Nahj Al-Balagha. You find yourself pushed in a sweeping current of hot emotions when you move from place to another in Nahj Al-Balagha.

Does it not soak your heart with sympathy and kindness when you listen to Ali saying: "if a mountain loves me it will crumble down." Or "the forfeiture of friends is a dreariness".

Or "O' my Allah! I beseech thee to take revenge on Quraysh and those who are assisting them, for they have cut my kinship and overturned my cup, and they said to me it is just to take your right and it is right to be deprived of it so endure it with sadness or kill yourself in grief" I looked around but found no one to assist me, protect or help me except my household.

Take this speech on the occasion of the burial of Supreme Lady Fatimah, addressing his cousin the Holy prophet:

"O' Prophet of Allah, Allah's greetings are sent by me and your daughter who has resided behind you has hastened to succeed you. O' Prophet of Allah, my patience on your pure (daughter) has been exhausted, and my power of endurance has weakened, except that I have ground for consolation in having endured the great hardship and heart-rending event of your demise!" "As to my grief, it knows no bonds, and as to my nights, they will remain sleepless till Allah chooses for me the abode in which you are now residing."

Then take this news:

It has been narrated by Nawf Al-Bikali that Amir Al-Muminin Ali delivered this sermon at Kufa standing on a stone which Ja'dah Ibn Hubayrah Al-Makhzumi has placed for him. He had a woolen apparel on his body, the belt of his sword was made of leaves, and the sandals on his feet too were of palm leaves.

"Beware, what has been approaching of this world has fled, what has been fleeing is approaching behind, are going ahead. The virtuous people of Allah have made up their minds to leave and they have purchased, with a little perishable (pleasure) of this world, for a lot of such (reward) in the next world that will remain. What loss did our brothers whose blood was shed in Siffin had suffered by not being alive today? Only that they are not suffering choking on swallowings and not drinking turbid water. Surely they have met Allah and He has bestowed upon them their rewards and he has lodged them in the safe

residence after their fear, where are my brethren who took the (right) path and trod in rightness. Where is Ammar? Where is Ibn Al-Tayyihan? Where is Dhu'sh - Shahadatayn? And where are their likes and their comrades who had pledged themselves to die for the goal.

Then he wiped his hand over his honoured beard and wept for a long time!

Zirar ibn Hamzah Al-Zabi related and said: I stand witness that I have seen him - namely Imam - on several occasions when night had spread and he was standing in his niche holding his beard, groaning like a man bitten by a snake and weeping as a grieved man, saying.

O'world, O'world! Give me up. Why do you present yourself to me? Or are eager for me? You may not get that opportunity to impress me. Deceive some other person. I have no concern with you. I have divorced you thrice whereafter there is no restitution. Your life is short, your importance is little and your hope is mean Alas! The provision is little, the way is long, the journey is far and the goal is hard to reach.

This hot emotion, which Imam has known in his life, accompanies him wherever he goes and tends to in Nahj Al-Balaghah. It accompanies him when he bears upon anger and resentment as it does when it arouses sympathy and content.

When he saw his champion's disappointment at supporting the right, while the others support the wrong and surround it with weapons and spirits, he anguishes, complains, blames and scoldes, and was hard, shattering, roaring like thundr in the woe nights! Sufficient is to read the sermon of Al-Jihad which begins with his saying:

“O' people, your bodies are together, but your desires are divergent. Your talk softens hard stoned mountains etc,” to realize what a revolting, agonized emotion that which provides this sermon with the outburst and beating of life.

It is inadequate to mention examples of the pouring of living emotion which diffuses warmth in Imam's deeds. It is in his doings, his sermons and sayings - which is an essential criterion. You are not to do anything but to open this book so that you can know colours of Ibn Abi Talib's emotion, with pouring strength and deep depth.

Existential Unity

What was at a distance in it was merged in a unity whose sides are perpetuity and eternity.

Literature is originality in thinking, sense, imagination and taste, and it connects between its author and other creatures in an absolute existential unity; then it expresses itself with a life rising on principles of this unity, and with an aesthetic style, which is a living incarnation of the interaction between the author and the cosmos.

As science has been dividing, art has been uniting. When science was seeing things as they are creatures that should be separated and scattered, art was looking at things as they are creatures divided outwardly by integrated in their sources and reality which leads to the idea of cosmic comprehensiveness and complete association among the different existence aspects. Literature has but this comprehensiveness!

If philosophers have discerned existence unity during late periods, the literary man had discerned it since man has been, and since the seeds of art and sensations of literature had been at his bottoms. That is because the evidence of philosopher is his reason and syllogism both of which are limited considering the living human structure. The evidence of an author is his feeling and inspiration, both of which is a quick flaming appearance of whole existence. Then, the philosopher's viewpoint at the cosmos as an interacting integrated unity is but a superficial view in comparison with the author's one. The philosopher witnesses, watches analogizes then records. His mean is the mind alone; the mind is a thing of the living human, rather say it is a side of him. The author interacts with the cosmos and life in a direct, continuous interaction as he senses and asks inspiration with his mind, feeling, imagination, temper and taste as a whole, namely with his whole existence. He is, therefore, prior and deeper. So the author is the philosopher's master: his master and guide since he has existed and his master and guide forever!

If this is the matter, and it is as such, Ali bin Abi Talib is a great one of this society in viewpoint and style: the society of eternal authors who look at the stars of the sky, the sands of desert, the water of seas, the garment of nature they discover suddenly that they are things of their selves, these selves which feel that there is in the cosmos one

thorough existential power that has been since eternity in perpetuity and will remain forever.

Michael Na'eemah, who represents the artist's power to feel deeply of pantheism in our contemporary Arabic literature, says: "Rather how could he been author who doesn't sense his roots in perpetuity and eternity, and senses what has passed and what will come, this sense this feeling of sublime beauty which warps up all creatures, inspite of the differences in their aspects in one scarf, is what you can see in the masterpieces of literature genius, whatever the topics of these masterpieces varies whatever their conditions differ from each other. So if you hear the voice of the great poet speaking on Christ's mouth, saying: "Think of the lilies of the field, how they grow; but I tell you that even Sulaiman in his glory was not dressing as one of them!", then you have heard one of the greatest voice, the cosmos, has heard realized the most interesting sight piercing the bottoms of the whole beauty and you will wonder: "How can dust, reocks and clouds of sky bring such a splendor and beauty, the beauty of field lilies while they are growing, if this panthism had not been, and if beauty had not been the axis of the one existence, and the joint of its parts from beginning to end? It is, at the same time, the theme of thinking and feeling to the artist, the small creator!

Likewise is the wonderfal saying of christ when some people came to him with a prostitute who had made herself opened to punishment according to their laws:

Anyone of you who has not committed asin should come and throw stones at this prostitute!"

When you hear the great poet saying of Sulaiman bin David's tongue:

"A generation goes, another one comes, the earth exists for ever. The sun rises and sets, then it hastens to its position from which it goes out. The wind goes towards the south, and rotates to the north, rotates and circles in its journey then returns its circles! All rivers head for the sea, the sea is not full, then they belong to the position from which the rivers flow there so as to flow again:

And when you hear him saying:

"I am the flower of sharon and the lily of vallyes, like a lily among thorns, so my sweetheart among girls like an apple in the trees of wood, so my love among the boys. I longed for, then I sat in his shadow, and his fruit is sweet in my mouth. Flowers have appeared in

the earth, and time of harvest came, the voice of pigeon has been heard in our land.”

“O’ my dove which is in the pits of rock and secrets of castles, show me your countenance, make me hear your voice, as your voice is nice and your visage sweet, until the day breezes and shadows are defeated. O’ my love return and be like a deer or some stag on Bater Mount.

“Beautiful you are, O’ my sweat heart! Beautiful you are and your eyes are like two doves behind your veil, your hair is like a herd of goats, appearing from Jal’ad Mount.

Your lips are like a bunch of scarlet, your speech is sweet. Your cheeks are like one-half promgranate behind your veil. Your neck is like David’s tower built for weapons a thousand shields were footened to it all the shields of tyrants. Until the day breezes and shadows vanquished go ahead to Al-Mar Mount and Al-Labban Hill come with me from Lebanon, O’bride. Look with me from Lebanon, from Amanah’s head from Harmoon’s head, from folds of lions, from mountains of tigers. Your lips drop honey, O’ bride, and beneath your tongue, a honey and yogurt the fragrance of your dress is like that of Lebanon.

“Fountain of Paradise, a well of living water and rivers from Lebanon, O’ north wind blow, O’ South come, and breeze upon my paradise so that its sweets are poured!”

If you heard that, and realized it rightly, you understood that Sulaiman drinks his poetry from the same fountain from which Christ has been satisfied, even if the topic differs.

Also one of that is the saying of Victor Hugo, one the great genius artists after the French Revolution, it is a dialogue among the planets in which the poet makes us see the human as being lost, and that he together with the earth he live on, are to disappear, because they are diminishing inside the wideness of the one wonderful cosmos:

What is this worthless weak voice which whispers?

O’ earth, what is the aim of your circling in your narrow, finite horizon?

Are you but a grain of sand accompanied by a whit of ash?

As to me, I am in the blue huge sky, drawing a huge frame, so the spacial distance, being frightened and terrified, my beauty is deformed!

And my halo, which changes nights' paleness into sanguineous redness like balls of gold rising and decreasing, interchanging in the holder's hand,

They go away, collect, and catch seven of the great huge moons!

And here is the sun answering:

Be silent, there in a corner of skies, O' planets, you are my citizens!

Be quiet! I am the guardian and you are citizens.

You are like two cars running side by side to enter the door.

Within the smallest volcano I have, Mars and the earth they Enter without catching sides of the entrance!

Here are the stars of the small bear glittering like

Seven livnig eyes, having suns instead of grains!

Here is the road of galaxy drawing a beautiful,

Flourishing forest full of sky stars!

O' lower planets, my position is extremely far from yours,

So that my fixed bright stars, which are similar to groups of spreading islands in water,

And my numerous suns, with respect to your incapable weak eyesight,

In a distant corner in the sky, similar to a sad desert in which sound disappears,

Are not but a slight of red ashes has spread at night!

Here are the stars of another galaxy depicting worlds that are not less than those worlds, spreading in the air; that surrounding which has no sand or stone in its sides, and its waves go, yet do not ever return to its seashores. Lastly here is the god speaking:

"I need not to do anything but to blow and so everything becomes dark."⁽¹⁾

And here is what Ali bin Abi Talib says of the peacock's description:

"The most amazing among them in its creation is the peacock which Allah has created in the most precise symmetry, and piled up its hues in the best arrangement with wings whose ends are inter-leaved together and whose tail is long. When it moves to its female it spreads out folded tail and raises it up so as to overshadow its head. You would imagine its feathers to be sticks of silver and what he has grown on it like suns and their halos of pure gold and green emeralds. If you liken it them to what land germinates, you would say that it is a

bouquet collected of every flowers of spring. If you likened them to clothes, they would be like embroidered garments or amazing variegated clothes of Yemen. If you liken it to ornaments you would say, like stones of different colours with encompassed with ornamented silver: the peacock walks with vanity and pride, browsing through its tail and wings laughs admiring the beauty of its dress and the hues of its scarf,. But when it casts its glance at its legs it cries loudly with a voice which indicated its call for help and displays its true grief, because its legs are thin like the legs of Indo-Persian cross - bred cocks. On the place of its comb it has a green ornamented crest the loophole of its neck is like a pitcher, its goblet and its stretch upto its belly is like the hair-dye of Yemen in colour or like a silk cloth put on a polished mirror.

Along the opening of its ears there is a line of bright white with the color of daisy bright white with its whiteness it shines on the black background. There is hardly a hue from which it has not taken a bit and improved it further by regular polish, lustre, silken brightness and brilliance. It is therefore like scattered blossoms which have not been seasoned by the rains of spring or the sun of summer. It may shed its plumage and puts off its dress. They all fall away one by one and grow again. They fall away from the feather stems like the falling of leaves from twigs, and then they begin to join together and grow till they return to the state that existed before their falling away. They don't change its previous colours, nor does any color occur in the other than its own place. If you carefully look at one of the hairs of its feathers it would look like a red rose, another time an emerald green and sometimes a golden yellow. How can sharpness of intellect reach the description of this, or how can the faculty of mind get to it or the utterances of describers manage to tell of it.

And here is a slight of his speaking on the creation of the sky and the earth:

He brought forth creatures by His omnipotence, Dispersed winds through His compassion, and Has made firm the shaking earth with rocks. When Almighty Then originated the horizons, expanse of firmament and strata of winds, He flowed into it Water whose waves were stormy and whose surges leapt one over the other. He loaded it on dashing wind and breaking typhoons. Then Almighty created forth wind and made its movement sterile, Perpetuate its position, intensified its motion and spread it far and wide. Then He ordered the

wind to raise up deep waters and to intensify the waves of the oceans. So the wind churned it like the churning of curd and pushed it fiercely into the firmament throwing its front position on the rear and its motionless to its heaving.

I appeal to you not to waste these excellent masterpieces which Imam's genius reveals to the human being and portrait for him how the grand and fine creatures are equal, so are the sun and the moon, the water and stone, the big and the small one, the easy and the difficult thing, in the meaning of existence. And how they all take part in the description of being, so they are integrated co-operating to produce the great chant the chant of the one existence which the big lofty tree can not be glorified at the expense of the small growing plant, and it is inadequate to glorify the broad sea and scorn the stream whose water is lost among herbs and stones.

Ali says:

“You actuate your mind until it Reachs its extremity it will not lead you anywhere, Except that the Originator of ant is the Originator of the date-palm and that not the strong and the delicate and he heavy and the light and the strong and the weak in his creation but the same, So is the sky, the air, the winds and the water. Therefore, look at the sun, the moon, vegetation, plants, water, stone, the alternation of this night and day, the pouring forth of these streams, the large number of the mountains, the height of these peaks ... etc.”

Then listen to him saying:

“You do not get any boon except by forfeituring another and no one of you advances a day in age except by canelling another of his life. Nothing more is added to his eating unless it reduces what was there before. No effect appears for him unless a mark disappears. Nothing is renewed to one unless a new thing of what he has becomes old. No new crop comes up unless a crop has been reaped. Ancestors had gone whose branches we are”.

It is the one existence speaking about itself on Ali's tong we:

In my memory this simile between an extract of Amroa Al-Qais (peotical works), and many extracts of Ibn Abi Talib's literature; they all pour out into the meaning of thorough existential unity. Then it adds to it by a unique start to overcome the oppressor and aggressor, to support the weak of plants, the land, the animal, and low land until existence straightens up strong and brilliant.

The cosmic poet Amroa Al-Qais tells first in summary:

“I sat for that flash watching from which place rain comes, and how wonderful what I saw! Rain came from four sides, extremely heavily. I saw it from a distance; its right was, as I think, on Qatan Mount, its left of Al-sitar and yadbal mount. Water went streaming heavily here and there, hence its floods overturn trees in a violent manner, and it passes with splashes by Al-Qanan Mount. Thus obliging its ibexes to descend.

Afterwards the poet says:

O’ Tayma, deserted with its palms’ stems, no castle left but rock-buildings,

Thubair, during downpour like an old man covered with a garment,

The peak of Mujaimer at morning due to rain, flood like spindle’s circle,

The barren desert threw everything, so came Yemeni with coloured dresses,

Valley’s birds, morning, and like ecstasy of bright nectar,

Beasts at evening as fit they were drowned on its remote borders like roots of onion.

You see that Amroa Al-Qais watches how rain makes all palm trees of Tayma fall, and sweeps its buildings so that nothing was left but that of great rocks. As for Thubair Mount, proud of its highness over low surrounding land, rain covered it except its head and hence it seemed like some people head wrapped in a striped garment. Rain continues its circumambulate round the mountain, then it throws all its weights in deserts which stayed for a time barren, having no plant or water, but it grows herbs, coloured flowers similar to coloured sweet clothes that a yemeni merchant spreads before people’s eyes. Rain did well to these barren deserts; so they became brilliant meadows, where birds sing highly ecstatically. As for beasts which were allowing themselves to prey upon weak animals and birds, rain has humiliated them and drowned them, so they flooded on water like roots of land onion.

Thus rain seems in the great pre-islamic poet’s thought, which pursues its journey till the end, as if it represents power of controlling existence. He is strong, just, compassionate, supporting the weak represented by low land and small birds, so it fills the valley with plants, flowers, and colour, and brings happiness to the hearts of birds, so they glee and sing. It plays with the strong, represented by

mountains, which it restrains from every side and weakens their concern. It destroys the violent attackers represented by wild animals, so it subdues and drowns them, and makes them worthless.

Here is Ali, who feels of rain what Amroa Al-Qais had feel of it as representing the felt just compassionate power, as he says in the end of a long speech:

“When cloud threw down all the water it has loaded up Allah grew vegetation on the plain earth and herbage on dry mountains. As a result, the earth felt pleased with its decorated gardens and boast of her dress of soft vegetation and the ornaments of its blossoms. Allah made all this as means of sustenance for the people and feed for the cattle.”

And Ali sums up the distant idea in what Amroa’ Al-Qais witnessed at the doing of rain to the mountains and beasts with this word: “Whoever feels proude over time, time humiliates him.”

These masterpieces which passed in this chapter, stem from one source despite the difference in their topics, the voriety of their goals, and the disparity of their circumstances. They all have this originality in thought, sense imagination, and taste which connect between its author and the whole creatures within an absolute existential unity.

I think wherever you go in Ali bin Abi Talib’s literature you feel this originality which always prompts him to recognize the hidden connections latent behind aspects of life and death, behind the forms which differ at the one fixed truth wich does not differ. His forceful integrated disposition is but the disposition of the true literary man who wants to intensify existence in his mind and heart alike, on basics that have no room for new and old.

It is evident from Nahj Al-Balaghah that Ibn Abi Talib’s sociological and ethical theories, directly or indirectly, stem from this one comprehensive look to the existence. How close is death to life in the norm of existence. How close are the two sides of good and evil. How often do sadness and happiness come together in one heart at the same time, so do idleness and activity in one body. Many a remote one be nearer than a near one” - in Ibn Abi Talib’s literature - and many a hope may lead to deprivation”, and a trade may lead to loss.” It is not surprising the possibility of Ibn Abi Talib’s saying on people: “Whoever digs a hole for his brother will fall in it, and whoever violates another’s veil, the defects of his house revealed, and whoever prides himself on people will be humillialed.

The one existential circle decides on people, things, and creatures as a whole to be subjected to its balanced basis which Imam realized in his intuition, mind, and taste alike, in an amazing realization, what it conveys of clarity. Then due to its plentifulness in supplying its realizer with power on revelation, so he expresses this realization with words forming mathematical principals that deal with phenomena and penetrate them to the fixed deep existential origins behind them.

Hence Ibn Abi Talib equals with the peaks of existence on one level in viewing the one life, in the deep feeling of one existence, and then his literature is a successive cries starting from a genius heart hoping to penetrate things to see its bottoms, so as to be sure of this realization, and to understand that what differs each other is constant on a basis, and what differs being stemmed from an origin, and what was at a distance was connected in a unity whose sides are perpetuity and eternity.

Style and Oratorical Genius

Such an eloquence if it speaks of rebuke it will pounce on the tongue of storm violently! And if it threatens spoil and spoilers it will explode into volcanoes having lights and sounds. And if it calls for contemplation, it will associate with your source of sense and origin of thought and so it drives you to what it wants and connects you with the cosmos fitly.

Form incorporates with meaning as heat does with fire, light with the sun, air with air; you are not before it but like a person before the flood while it slopes, the sea as it surges and the wind as it encircles.

But when he speaks to you on the splendour of existence and beauty of creation it writes, on your heart, with an ink of the stars of the sky.

Some expression has the gleam of flash, and the smile of the sky during the nights of winter.

This is as to the subject. As for style, Ali bin Abi Talib is the magician of performance literature can not be without style, and the structure is innate to meaning, and the image is not less than the substance. And which art with its conditions of directing is less in concern than the conditions of the subject.

Ali bin Abi Talib's portion of artistic taste, or the aesthetic sense, is rare in existence. This taste was the natural controlling measure for his literary disposition, as for his disposition, it is one of those who have talent and originality, who see, hence feel and realize then their tongues start ahead with what their hearts surge and the perceptions of their sens to show in a spontaneous rush. Therefore Ali's literature was characterized by faithfulness and so was his life. Faithfulness is but the first feature of the unique art and the measure of style which does not deceive.

The conditions of rhetoric, which is the fitness of speech for the situation, has not come together for an Arabic literary man as they had for Ali bin Abi Talib. His composition is an ideal for this rhetoric after the Quran. It is succinct with clarity, strong, vigorous, perfectly harmonized related to what is between its expressions, meanings, aims agreement, sweet, in tone at the air, having a musical effect. It eases and softens at positions which do not need hardship. It becomes hard and violent in other positions especially the hour of speaking on hypocrites, trickers, and this world seekers at the expense of the poor

and the oppressed, and holders of lost rights. Ali's style is frank like his heart and mind, faithful like his intention, so it is not surprising to be a method for rhetoric.

Ali's style reached a level in sincerity that even rhyme became above artificiality and affectation. So it is, despite the plentifulness of interchanging, rhymed sentences, far from artistry and nearer to be of overflowing disposition.

Look to this rhymed speech and what it contains of soundness of disposition: "Allah knows the uproar of beasts in the deserts, the sins of people in seclusions, the clashes of whales in deep seas and the popple of waters by stormy winds". Or to this speech of one of his sermons: "So is the sky and the air, the winds and the water, so look at the sun and the moon, vegetation and plants, water and stone, the succession of this night and day, the springing of these seas, the large number of the mountains, the height of their peaks, the diversity of these languages, and the variety of tongues...etc". I plea to you to keep this rhyme which flows spontaneously then he decorated them with piercing stars and ran through them a shining sun and an effulgent moon in a revolving orbit and a moving ceiling...etc." If you try to change a rhymed word in all these wonders with another unrhymed one will know how its shining fades and its beauty faints, and taste loses its originality and accuracy which are the evidence and measure. Rhyme in these Allawiyen speeches is an aristic necessity which disposition requires, that disposition which intermixed with artificality highly as if they are of one metal which changes into poetry, having rhythms and tunes accompanying meaning with verbal images of their atmosphere and nature.

There are marvels in Imam's rhyme which add melody on melody, in a nice way and dissolves the effect in effect in refrains which nothing is more rhythmical on hearing than them, or more loved in reverberation. An example of that is what we have mentioned of his rhymes before. Then here are these words, delicious to the ear and taste alike: "I am a new day, and I am a witness upon you, hence do through me what is good and say what is good."

If we say that Ali's style has frankness of meaning, eloquence of performance, soundness of taste, we indicate to the reader to return to this Masterpieces of Nahj Al-Balaghah to see how Ali's words explode from sources whose bottoms are for in their material, and in which a wonderful artistis dress it undulates and runs. Take thses nice

expressions of his speech: “Man is hidden under his tongue” and his saying: “longanimity is a kinsfolk”, or his saying: that whose trunk softened his branches thickened or his saying:

“Every container becomes narrower with what is put in it except the container of knowledge as it becomes wider, or his saying “if a mountain loves me, it will crumble” or in these wonderful sayings: “knowledge guards you, while you have to guard wealth. Many a man is enchanted by good speech of him. When this world advances to anyone (with its favours) it attributes to him other’s merits; and when it turns away from him it deprives him of his own merits” All people should be equal in right before you. Do good and do not despise any part of it because the small part of it is big and the little amount of it is much.

The warehouse of wealth have perished although they are alive no rich person has been relished with but with which a poor has suffered of hunger.

Then listen to this expression which reaches the peak of artistic beauty as he wanted to describe his ability in disposing of kufah city however he likes he said: “Nothing (is left to me) but kufah I grasp it and spread it out).

You can see, in these sayings, an originality of thought and expression; this originality which always accompanies the true literary man and He does not miss it unless he has missed the literary character itself.

Ali’s style reaches the peak of beauty in oratorical situations, namely the situations in which his vigorous sentiments break out, his imagination glows hot pictures of the events of life that he had experienced popple in it. Thus rhetoric fills his heart, and flows out on his tongue like the outflowing of seas. His style is characterized, in the situations like these by repetition seeking avowal and influence, and the use of synonyms, the choosing of lucid resounding words. Somethime the different kinds of expression alternate varying from statement to interrogation exclamation, to condemnation. Places of stop are strong, and healing to the psyche. This has the meaning of rhetoric and the spirit of art. Take an example of which, the famous jihad sermon, with which Ali addressed people when Sufyan bin Awf Al-Asadi raided upon Al-Anbar city in Iraq and killed his governor there:

This is the brother of Ghamid whose horses have reached Alanbaar and killed Hassan ibn Hassan Al-Bakri. They have removed your horses from their armory garrison, and killed righteous men of you.

“I have been told that the person of them has been breaking into the house of Muslim women and allied women taking off her anklet and her bracelet her necklace and her earrings; then they got back laden with wealth no one of them wounded and no blood of them was shed. If any Muslim dies of grief after all this he is not to be blamed but rather to me the matter is worthy of death.

How strange! how strange! By Allah it put one’s heart to death and brings grief to see the agreement of those people on their wrong and your dispersion from your right. Woe and grief befall you. As you have become a target at which arrowa are shot. You are raided on and don’t raid on, you are invaded but you don’t invade. Allah is disobeyed and you are contented with it.

Look to Imam’s ability in these summed up words. He advances gradually in stirring his hearers’ feeling till he reaches with them to what he wants. He proceeded through way having eloquence of performance and power of influence. He tells his people of Sufyan bin Awf’s invasion of Al-Anbar, which implies dishonour that afflict them. Then he fells them that this aggressor killed Amir Al-Muminin’s governor among others, and he is not satisfied, rather he inserted his sword in many necks of their men and families.

In the second paragraph of the sermon, Imam went to the position of Zeal for the hearers, to the impulse of determination and ardour of every Arab’s self, that is woman’s honour. Ali knows that some Arabs do not sacrifice themselves but to protect a woman’s reputation a young woman’s honour, yet he scolds those people for sitting without protecting the woman whose shelter was violated by invaders and they went safely without any wound or loss of life.

Then he shows what feels of astonishment and confusion, about a strange matter as his enemies cling to the wrong and support it, they adopt evil and so invade Al-Anbar to practice it, while his champions slacken in assisiting the right, they let it down and fail to defend it.

It is natural that Imam gets angry in such a situation, so his phrase carries all the anger agitated in his self, hence it comes hotly, severe, rhymed, tornapart, malcontant “Woe and grief befall you. You have become the target at which arrows are shot. You are raided on you do

not raidon. You are invaded and you do not invade. Allah is being disobeyed you are contented with it.

His passion may arouse and break, some of which crowds the other like these successive torn up words: "I never felt weak, coward, nor did I betray or being languid." And this passion may be burnt with a rebellious pain which comes from people for whom he wanted welfare. While they didn't want it for them-selves due to aheadlessness in their minds, and weakness in their determination, so he addresses them with this furious, rebellious speech, saying: "What is the matter with me! I see you wakeful but sleeping, present but absent, hearing but deaf and speaking but dumb...etc."

Arab orators are many, and oratory is one of literary arts which had been known during periods of pre-islamic and Islam, especially in the era of the Prophet and Prudent Caliphes as they were in need of it. Yet the great orator of the Mohammedon era is the Prophet, without dispute. As for the prudent Caliphes and the following of Arab periods as a whole, no one reached the extent Ali bin Abi Talib has reached in this respect. The esay uttering, which Ali had, was an element of his character, so was the powerful eloquence for what is included of the elements of disposition and artificiality a like. However Allah facilitated for him the complete equipment which oratory requires of other constituents that we mentioned before. Allah characterized him with sound nature, sublime taste, and fascinating eloquence, then provisions of knowledge which Ali was distinguished from his mates, right evidence, irrefutable power of persuasion, and rare genius in improvisation. Add to that his truthfulness which has no limits, which is a necessity in every successful serman, as well as his numerous painful experiences which revealed, to his great mind, people's natures, morals, and society's features and impulses. Then there is the solid belief which is hard to be complied with, and that deep pain mingled with deep sympathy, and purity of heart, soundness of conscience and nobility of aim.

It is hard to find, in the personalities of history, one who gathered all these conditions that make their holder a unique orator, except Ali bin Abi Talib and very few people. You are not to do anything but to review these conditions, then review famous orators in the two worlds the eastern and the western, so as to realize that our speech is right with no exaggeration.

Ibn Abi Talib, on pulpit, is calm, very confident in himself and in the justice of his speech. Then he has a strong acumen, quick-witted, discovers people's inner selves, the desires of spirits, and the bottoms of hearts, his heart is overflowing with feelings of liberty, humanity, and virtues. When his magical tongue started off in what his heart arose, he furnished people with it stirs in them sleeping virtues and faint feelings.

As for his oratorical composition, it can not be described except that it is the basis of Arabic rhetoric. Abu Hilal Al-Askari, author of "Al-Sina'atayn" says: "The importance is not in mentioning the meanings only, but it is in the goodness of expression, as well as its purity, its fineness, its splendour, its honesty, its clarity, and plenty of its sweets and water, in addition to rightness of formulation and structure, and emptiness of the crookedness of versification or formation.

Some words are grand as it pulls the tails of purple, proudly and arrogantly. Some words have a clatter like creeping soldiers in tinplates. Some are like a two-edged sword. Some are like a thick veil which throws on some feeling so as to shelter sharpness and reduce their hardship. Some have the smile of sky in the nights of winter! Some speech works like lash, some flows like a pure spring.

All this is true of Ali's sermons in their vocabulary and expressions. In addition, a sermon becomes better if it is impressed by these verbal features, on the view of "Al-Sina'atayn's" author. How is it if they were like Ibn Abi Talib's sermons which comprise the splendour of these characteristics of expression with the splendour of meaning and its powerfulness and grandeur.

Here is something of what we have said in the third volume of our book "Imam Ali: the voice of Humanitarian Justice" as to Imam's eloquence, especially in his sermons:

It is a method for rhetoric taking, from thought, imagination, and feeling, masterpieces connected with sublime artistic taste as long as man remains, and his imagination, feeling and thought remain, interrelated consistent with its masterpieces, balanced, exploding with blazing sense and distant perception, flowing with the agony of reality, heat of truth, and the eagerness to know what is beyond this reality, harmonious comprising of beauty of topic and that of directing to the limit that the expression mingles with significance, or form with meaning, as heat mingles with fire, light with the sun, air with air; you

are not before it but the way a person is before the flood while it slopes, the sea as it surges, and the wind as it encircles. Or like one in front of the natural event which must be necessarily as it is existent of unity that one cannot separate its ingredients except he wants wipe off its existence and make it without existence.

An eloquence when it speaks of rebuke it pounces on the tongue of storm violently! And when it threatens spoil and spoilers it will explode into volcanoes having lights and sounds! And when it elaborates in a logic it will address minds and feelings, and locks every door or every proof except what it proves expatiatingly and when it calls for contemplation it associates the source of your senses and the origin of your thought, and so it drives you to what it wants and connects you with the cosmos fitly, and unifies in you the powers for discovery strongly. And if it indulges you, you will recognize a father's compassion, logic of paternity, truthfulness of human fidelity, and the heat of love that starts and does not end! As to when it speaks to you of the splendour of existence beauties of creation and perfections of the cosmos, it writes on your heart with an ink of the stars of sky!

It is an eloquence of the rhetoric, and a revelation of the revelation. It is an eloquence that connected with the roots of Arabic eloquence: what has been and will be, so that one, describing its author, said that his speech is under the Creator's speech and above that of the created.

All Ali's sermons exclude indications of personality as though their meanings and expressions are preoccupations of his psyche itself, and the events of his time which flames in his heart like fire burning in its stove under the blowing of the north wind. Hence he improvises the sermon with flowing sense, rich feeling, and a vigorous direction strikingly beautiful.

So were Ali's improvised sayings: they are at the very strong manner that an improvised saying could be as for truthfulness, depth of thought, and technicality of expression so that the moment his lips utter them it went a proverb.

One of his improvised masterpieces is his saying to a man who praised him so much although he did not admire him: "I am below what you express and above what you feel in your heart".

Likewise when he decided to do a great task by himself, where his companions hesitated and failed, they came to him, referring to the enemies, and said: "O' Amiralmuamineen we save you them he said

you cannot save me yourselves, so how can you save me others? Before me, people used to complain of the inequity of their rulers but now I complain of the inequity of my people; as if I am the led and they are the leaders”.

And when Muawiyah’s companions killed Mohammed bin Abi Bakr, and the news of his murder reached him, he said: “Our grief over him is in so much as their joy for it, as they have been lessened a hated and we have been lessened a beloved.

He was asked: which of the two is better: justice or generosity? He replied: Justice puts things in their places while generosity takes them out of their directions; justice is a general ruler while generosity is an accidental benefit. So, justice superior and better improvising, he said describing a believer.

“A believer, his cheerfulness is in his face his sorrow is in his heart the most broad - chested (tolerant), and a very humble - hearted. He hates high position and detest reputation renown. His grief is long, his concern is far - reaching, his silence is much, and all time he is occupied. He is grateful and enduring, of bright demeanour, and of soft temperament!”

And an ignorant stubborn man asked him about a dilemma, at once he replied: Ask me for understanding but do not ask me for obstinacy, because the ignorant person who tries to learn is like a learned man, but the learned arbitrary man is like the ignorant stubborn.

In summery Ali bin Abi Talib is a great literary man, grew up on experiencing life, on flexibility with the styles of eloquence, so he has owned what art requires: of originality in the author’s personality, And the special education in which personality grows and originality condenses.

As for language, our beloved Arabic language which Marshlosh , in the first volume of his book A Trip to the East, uttered this intelligent saying: “Arabic language is the richest, the most expressive, the most, and the most amiable in effect among other languages of the world. With the structures of its verbs, it follows the flight of thought and portrays it accurately; with the tunes of its sonic syllables it imitates the cries of animals, growling of escaping water, swarming of wind and bombing of thunder.” As for this language, as Marshlosh mentioned its features and what he did not mention, you

could find its origins and branches, the beauty of its colours and magic of its eloquence in Imam Ali's literature.

It was a literature serving man and culture.

The Cosmic Justice And what Ali Represents of it

The Equivalence in Existence

Ali felt that this great cosmos is cooperating, Vouching, one aspect of that is when the wind rises it moves the twigs powerfully, and when it Rises it plucks out the trees and the elements would arouse for it; and when it falls and flew over the land lightly, the surfaces of water would be intoxicated and things, below them, would quiet he also realized that comprehensive power of existence cultivates straws of plant with a law by which it cultivates green leaves and plant which flattened over its stem and swayed for the wind. Ibn Abi Talib overthrew the merchants' theory by a speech he has taken from the soul of existence, as if he is participating by it the cosmos in expressing what is in his conscience!

A man Casts one sight at the outer cosmos and its states: the fixed stars in the immensity of existence, the swimming planets in the horizons of eternity, the rising sun, the casual cloud, the hastening wind, the mountains rising, and the seas brittled by shells or on whose faces the night lain down - all this is enough to be confident that the cosmos has a law, and its conditions have a code as well, both of which lie under the senses and exist with every measure.

One sight a man casts at what surrounds him of close nature and its states: at the summer as its heat increases and its wind falls, the autumn whose forests dispirited and whose winds wail alternately and whose horizons of sky frown, the winter when its atmospheres thunder and disturbed with flashes, and its rains burst forth with waves crowded with waves and whose clouds mingle so that they even conceal, the signs of the earth and the sky, the spring which steetches the world with dewy horizons, rich rivers, cultivation, water and coloured paradises all this is enough for a man to be confident that this nature has a law, its conditions have a code as well, both of which lie under the senses and exist with every measure.

One testing look a man casts at this and that is enough to guide him that these codes and laws are true, firm, and just, its stern logic performs these characteristics. They have alone what justifier the existence of this great cosmos.

Ibn Abi Talib cast that sight at the cosmos, and so realized directly what these codes have of truthfulness, firmness and justice. He was shaken at what he has seen and understood, flew in his blood, ran in

his being, and clamoured into him a sense and a thinking; then his lips moved saying: “indeed with right the heavens and earth existed”. If you tried to gather truthfulness, firmness and justice in one word, you would not find a word containing all these except the word ‘the right’ - because of what is unified of its signification with the spirit of these three words.

Ibn Abi Talib realized in his depths that comparison is true originality and consequently between heaven and earth, which existed with the right, and they stretched with the three inseparable faces, truthfulness, firmness, and justice, and between the state which must be a small picture of this cosmos, existing on firm sound bases. So he lived in his mind and conscience this comparison spontaneously, with no space for a penetrating feeling or a strange thinking; then presently he says:

The greatest of these rights that Allah has made obligatory is the right of the ruler over the ruled and the right of the ruled over the ruler. This is an obligation which Allah has imposed on for each other. He has made it as a discipline of their harmony. Consequently, the ruled cannot prosper unless the rulers are sound, and the rulers cannot be sound without the ruled’s righteousness. If the ruled render the rights of the ruler and the ruler renders their rights, then justice is practiced among them, signs of justice become clear and the rules took their course freely the continuance of government will be hoped. But if the ruled triumph over the ruler i.e. disobey, or the ruler does injustice to the ruled. Overthere, disagreement appears evry-where signs of injustice appear, the ways of the islamic “sunnah” are forsaken. Then desires are acted on, the islamic rules dispensed with, diseases of spirits become numerous and no annoyance is felt for disregarding a great right, nor in committ-ing a big wrong, there virtuous people are humiliated the vicious persons are honoured, and there Allah’s debts on his servants become very great.

I plea to you to consider this precision of the general large relations. Among the elements of state through Ali’s tongue. Then between the good productive works and stability of these elements on the bases of right; or say of truthfulness, firmness, and justice, the three aspects of the right with which the heavens and the earth existed.

Ali felt that this great cosmos is cooperating, integrating, therefore when the wind intensified it would move the twigs

powerfully, and when it startled it would pluck out the trees and the elements would arouse for it; and when it softened and flew over the land lightly, the surfaces of water would be intoxicated and things below them would cooled down.

Ali felt that if the sun cast its light over the earth the marks of the earth would appear to the eyes and minds, and if it clears out, it would put on it a veil of darkness. He felt that plant grows, flourishes, foliates, and may fruit - and it is a thing which differs, in shape and aim, from the rays of day, the body of air, the drop of water, the dust of land; but it does not grow nor foliate except by this ray, this body, this drop, this dust.

He felt also that the water whose “waves were stormy and whose surges leapt one over the other” as he says is but “loaded on dashing wind and breaking typhoons” and that the wind which “Allah blew its motion and spread it wide” is ordered - despite this far source - to raise up deep waters and to intensify the waves of the oceans; pushed it fiercely into the firmament throwing its front position on the rear and the stationary on the flowing till its level was raised”. And one of the decoration of the earth, and joy of hearts are these stars and planets, light of piercing star the shining sun and luminous moon.

Ibn Abi Talib felt from an of that, that this cosmos, which is on the right, is but one whose elements are connected with each other in a cooperating and supporting manner, and that its powers have right imposed for some over some others and they are equivalent in all of its sides, inseparable by force of their existence and continuance.

He realized into his depths that reciprocation is true root and branch between these jointed cooperating elements and human beings who have to be cooperating and equivalent by force of their existence and continuance. They are of this cosmos things; what happens to all of its elements happens to them out of genius of joining forces which Ali sees it to be imposed on them; without which they do not live nor remain. Therefore he enfolds the world of solid nature and that of human being in one rational flash and one tremor of sensation, so as to explore the justice of this cosmos existing on a unity of truthfulness, firmness, and justice, applying this code in which he shares the cosmos in impressing, what is in its conscience saying:

“Then as a part of His rights, He imposed certain rights for certain people on some others. He made them so as to equate with one

another. Some of these rights imply other rights. Some of which don't fall due except with some others.

And also from this source is his great saying, in which he decides that the continuance of any beneficence is conditional on what is Imposed on its holder of a natural duty toward his human brothers, and that failure of carrying out this duty is enough to remove and exterminat them:

“If favours of Allah abound to a person people's needs towards him also abound. Therefore, he who fulfils for Allah all that is obliged on him in this regard will preserve them in continuance and perpetuity, while he who does not fulfil them will expose them to elimination and extinction.

There is in these two sayings, which express the justice of the univers, and people-being of its creatures what dosen't need much clarification.

The people's rights, on Ali's tongue, equal one another. They are like the rights of water on wind, the plant on water, water on the sun, and the sun on the law of existence. This norm, which impose on man not to be entitled to any right unless he renders others' rights, is not but the just norm of existence which is founded on this justice.

The reader is to look out this matter soundly, then let him say his view on what he sees. If he did so he would grasp, undoubtedly that this norm, which Ibn Abi Talib has taken it to the roots of cosmic justice, is firm, and does not change itself or be overruled by any irregularities.

The elements of this cosmos do not take but to the amount they give, and some of them do not gain but to the amount which other lose. If the earth took light and warmth from the sun it would give existence the same amount it has taken (out of its age). likewise when it takes from the night a shadow to be covered with. If flower took, from the many elements of the cosmos, what gives it life, growth, and nice fragrance, light and air would take of its colour, the same amount they have given, so that when its formation integrated and reached the peak of its life, the amount it gives of its age grew greater; therefore life and death pull it back and forth until it commits its leaves and stem to death as to earth it swallows whatever it had granted it.

And the sea does not retrieve to its abdomen but what it has given the sky of clouds and the land of rain.

So is the human in his special life. He does not get any pleasure but by losing another he pays, intentionally or not, to compensate for what he has taken. He does not come to life unless it is decided that he will die. Ali says: "He who is the holder of death is the holder of life."

And about this wise balance of the law of life in its wideness and orbits, its earth and sky, its solid and living creatures, Ibn Abi Talib expresses through this word which gathers soundness of thought, violence of observation, and genius of simplicity: "no benefaction is gotten but by losing another".

The lookers are to see this saying, so if they did they would be certain that it is the reality which manifest itself through words similar to amathematical basis that could not be deviated from.

As for general life, there is not one concern of man's that deviation from this basis which Ali bin Abi Talib extracts from the matter of great cosmos. Your right on your society is that this society should evaluate what you give, in quantity and quality, then to take from it the same amount you gave. But if you got less reward than you gave, your lot at that time had gone to someone else, and that one is enjoying of a goodness you are its owner, no doubt, and you are, as a result, compelled and prejudiced. But if you took more reward than you gave, the other's lot had gone to you, and that someone else hungers from what you ate, and you are hence compelling and oppressing. The existence of an oppressed and an oppressor in society is a corruption for it and a defect in the standards of social justice which could not be right unless it entered in a profitable frame of cosmic justice. Wrong cannot be a basis, rather the right is the basis. And "the right cannot be cancelled by anything" in the law of cosmos! It is as such Ibn Abi Talib's faith.

Looking at the great and bright aspect of cosmic justice did not distract Ali from looking at what is hidden and serious. His concern is that of genius poets, where accurate things represent for them, in form and meaning, what great things represent; they do not distinguish between large or a small thing, as they are one in origin and in significance as well.

What attracts on lookers has no more consideration in their minds and hearts than that which is concealed in the hideout and among shadows. Many a look flows sensations in the being of those more

than that fountains of speech can. Many a hint by which they realize clear by what they can not see in a thousand declaration!

Many a flower under the wing of a rock may enjoy the greatness of the existence where they do not enjoy of a great tree. Rather many a small thing in their view is grander than a large one, and a little is more than a plenty! I see it adequate to mention in this respect a bit of a long saying I referred regarding the speech about the stance of the holder of great sense and comprehensive thought towards the cosmos whose hidden and apparent things are equal in indicating the grandeur it has, I said:

“As if I see that this nature represents, for the poet, the beauty of freedom to which he longs for as it sends the wind whenever and however it likes. With no concern whether people resent against it or were satisfied contently! It gush the fountains from the rock when it likes, and from the limp of dust as well, and flows it silently in the plain and throws it from the heights of mountains. It protrude from its chest trees, rocks, peaks and valleys in the way it wants, with no concern that lilies may grow beside thorns or the needles of poison may hang green wood roses with fragrant perfume. It does not restrict itself to a knowledge which scorns dry straws and glorifies green leaves, or ridicule from small vermins looking out from the holes of rocks, so as to glorify the fierceness of strong beasts that prey upon the weak.”⁽²⁾

by this sight and feeling Ibn Abi Talib has faced the aspects of the one existence in the two natures: the silent and the living, he felt obviously and deeply alike that the comprehensive power of existence cultivates straws of the plant with a law by which it cultivates the green leaf and plant which flattened over its stem and swayed in the wind. It looks after the small trees of land as it does with vast great trees. As for beast, insects, grasshoppers, and small birds, nature has not worked, in cultivating them, a lesser portion than it has done in cultivating huge beasts and the eagle of sky. Every creature has its place in the wideness of existence, and everything has right in this existence. Thus the lofty mountain did not prevent Ibn Abi Talib from seeing stone and the atom of dust. It did not pass him as was looking at the peacock to pay attention to the humble ant creeping into the hideouts of the land between its ruins and its stones, so that it is, therefore, a grand creation and an ample thing. Ali did not see in the peacock and ant, which the day interests them, a thing exceeding, in

the meaning of existence and its value, over what he saw in bats which the night was made day for them and were held by the light which is extending for everything. Yet he was seeing in them some ambiguities of wisdom so much as he sees in the great creatures. This creature, in Ali's procedure, is sufficient to have breath of life, that is, to be surviving, so that the power of inclusive existence secures for it a basic portion that protects it from the danger of death before its time. The cosmic justice did not establish the living of creatures unless it sets its existence with that which keeps it surviving. This what is meant by the genius of the standard accurate observation of Ali's in his saying: "For everyone having breath of life is a foodstuff, and for every grain is an eater."

But if there was an obstacle between the starved and his foodstuff, between the grain and its eater, this prevention is an aggression against the standards of cosmic justice, and a slander against the value of life and meaning of existence. Ali says: "By Allah, even if I am given all the domains of the seven stars in order that I may disobey Allah to the extent of stripping an aunt of a grain of barley I would not do it."

As for aggression against the standards of cosmic justice, the punishment for it is existent due to the nature of this general justice itself which judges the doer in a manner having no laxity nor severity, but justice and reward.

So was the grand Allawiyah look to the meaning of the one life, in its plenty and scantiness, in its largeness and smallness. The cosmic justice, which adjust the relations among creatures, cultivated them in their different states, and fulfilled, among them, mutual works, reciprocal rights, and equal duties, did not distinguish between an aspect of life and another one, did not order a strong one to transgress over a weak one as the strong one has the means of aggression, did not agree for the many to oppress the rights of the few as the many have been granted with features of richness. It, therefore, does not forgive the oppression of the few under the pretext of the interest of the many. He who aggrieves a living being, in Ibn Abi Talib's procedure, is as though he aggrieved all living beings. And he who kills a self as though he has killed the whole of people. And he who hurts a living being is as if he has hurt all of the living being above the face of the earth. Life is life in (Ali's) procedure and its respect is the origin over which the branches develop.

In the theories of a large number of thinkers and legislators and in the views of most of those who call themselves politicians, aggression can be used over the few number of people for the sake of the many. And in their consideration goodness is not measured except by the safety of the many number, then in reaching what they like of prosperity. If a thousand people were killed in an accident of aggression the matter is grave. If two thousands were killed the matter is graver, and so on. But if one man was killed by the same accident the case is easy and the matter is simple. As the many of the notebooks of souls' merchants then would not be dropped. But for tables of multiplication, and processes of addition and division, it is easy to adjust them in one mathematical process.

But Ibn Abi Talib crushes the theories of those merchants, in a saying he takes directly from the spirit of existence in which there is no value for numbers in the meaning of life, rather for life itself:

“By Allah, even if they had wilfully killed only one individual without any fault he has committed. It would have been lawful for me to kill the whole of that army.”

Here, it is clear the matter is not “killing the whole army”, rather cementation the idea of respecting life in the minds of the holders of authority, and paying their attentions to the idea that killing one self, willy and intentionally, equals the killing of all creatures.

If we compared Ali bin Abi Talib's view in this respect with the views of many thinkers who saw that standards of justice do not move except by force and muchness, it would be noticeable for us how they drop while he elevates, how they are coarse and harsh while his horizon extends and the values of life will be higher on his hands. While some of those drum and repeat continually as they have discovered views and theories that permit for the strong one to be proud of his power only, and for the many to expand their expectations with this richness only - in all this there is an aggression against the law of just life - and the will of the able, developing, benevolent humn, we see that Ibn Abi Talib shows what is more sublime of the standard of life itself as it is a fact, and the standard of human will as it is a blessing, and so he says with the simplicity of the great man. “Many a small thing makes up for a large one! Then he clarifies in a grander, nicer saying:

“No person, however great his position in the matter of truth is above, to be helped to fulfil the obligations placed on him by Allah.

And, no man, however small he may be regarded by others, and however humble he may appear before eyes, is too low to help or to be helped in this matter.”

In these two sayings Ibn Abi Talib shows one of the aspects of cosmic justice that appears when you examine closely, and asserts a truth often hidden from the minds which restrict themselves in a narrow horizon.

Ali states that sparkling, pompos manifestations in terms of existential reality are not but a scantiness out of existence, worthless having no value nor importance; ordinary people, the foolish, the stupid and those who applaud for whatever is glossy, worthless, and meaningless may be dazzled by these manifestations, but this collapse will before long vanish suddenly when the sun of truth appears, and its great light sweeps what the ordinary assumed light, while it is a deception for the eyes, and when the wind of just existence storms with the storm of light straws. There are, out of present history, numerous indications about this confusion in the measures of the individuals and groups, and it is a confusion which involves consequences that hurt civilization life, and man as it has a deviation from the standards of cosmic justice.

If you lived in a period during the middle Ages in Europe, for example, you would see occasionally caravans of people followed by caravans at one of general square in this city or that, so as to acclaim and applaud a creature of people whose clothes are embroidered, whose head folded with emerald and aquamarine and stringed precious stones. And you would see a man walking by himself on the platform, and whose step is furious, whose sight is violent, and he did not pay attention to the concern of those who were applauding and neither did they. They are acclaiming the life of a “great” one, but he is not “great”. Then the sun rose afterwards, so it dominated over the darkness, and showed things in their actual positions. So what do you see then? You see that those people who were applauding and acclaiming - they are, in this position, standing as nothingness - but were applauding for a worthless creature - called Louis the Fourteenth, for example, or for one of the villains called Charles the Fifth, or for an extremely small one called Charles the first, or for others who carry names followed by numbers ... indicating scantiness. Then what becomes clear afterwards? It becomes clear that the man of the platform whom people did not applaud or acclaim for his life is

but a true great person called Mollier, or Milton, or Gallilo. And days elapse, and the holders of names followed by numbers are not but worthlessness. And the walkers on the platform, who have no numbers for their names, for whom no one applaud, are not but all greatness.

Forgetfulness folds up the worthless, and folds up with them those “nothingness” out of those who applaud and acclaim. And those appear on the top of existence, and humanity places them (out of itself) at the stances of suns before darkness. And very few people appear, who understand them and evaluate them in their great prestige. They got worth out of their heat like the land getting warmth of the light of noon, and realized what Ali bin Abi Talib grasped when he said: “Often a small thing is more beneficial than a large one.”

It is the cosmic justice which weighs every being with its great balance and places it in its very position, no cheating nor deception, not flattery! It is the cosmic justice in which no value diminished at it, and no worthlessness rises high!

Ibn Abi Talib did not call this “little” as small except because it was as such in the people’s in sights and their views at that time. He did not call this “little” as much except for the same cause. He knows they are wrong, and what they see as “little” may not be as such. And what they see as large may be light in the measure of the right. As for him, he was feeling the value of life powerfully and evidently, felt its capabilities in all creatures, feeling that the cosmos has a just will in estimating life wherever it was, and in respecting the livings as they are so he utters wise phrases to which we referred. And he uttered many others; so that when overdoers exaggerate and deny that the simple has such a value and such capabilities for development, he faced them saying: “Most of the right is in what you deny”.

There is another truth Ali asserts in this saying: “... no man, however small he may be regarded by others, and however humble he may appear before eyes, is less than offering help or being helped in this matter” that is, every man can benefit his society and benefit as well, whatever his talent is, and however scanty his capabilities are.

And in this insight the man whose chance of talents is scanty there is an illustration in Ali’s mind of a deep believing in the cosmic justice which makes of drops of water a huge sea of granules of sands deserts and wildernesses, and it makes every little lie inside the plenty, and every small depend on the large.

It has an illustration of the nature of benevolent life, which feels pity for its sons, and puts each one in a frame of its blessing; it does not aggrieve him, nor does it treat him severely.

It also has an evidence about this profound sympathy by which Ali was immersing the living beings, so he did not see in them but people who worth to enjoy life to the brim, benefit from its blessing, cooperate and get help.

You can find an image of this Allawiyah insight, which is confident of the justice of cosmos and goodness of life, and believing in man's capabilities - whoever he was - to become a noble thing as he was, in Jean jack Rousseau's literature which turns around an axis of confidence in the justice of nature and goodness of life.

As though I saw Ibn Abi Talib specialize those who "are regarded small by others, and appear humble before eyes" with the most portion of his attention the hour he addressed people saying: Allah has not created you vainly", or the hour he excelled in describing his confidence of the benevolent human nature facing people in this compassionate view: "you are empty of evil till you has not gone astray". That is you all are benevolent and useful, originally and marginally unless you deviate from the right intentionally.

To ascertain this side of cosmic justice in Ibn Abi Talib's faith, and I mean the complete equalization in every right and duty between that who has little and that who has much, and the small and the big, he indicates that the centre of this justice but equals (with him) all beings, with no difference between a man and another. Their human nature is one, and their case in the balance of existence is one as well; they are not distinguished except by what they do and what they serve. As to that who performs and serves, then the law of existence itself will repay him. Yet to that who is idle arrogant, and extorter, then this law itself will punish him with what he deserves. Ali says: "no one prevents him from punishing another, not distract Him from another; anger does not keep Him from mercy, and mercy does not prevent Him from punishing."

In this respect we return with some detail to what we mentioned that Ali bin Abi Talib showed the veil from the existential genius which makes of the nature of things itself a higher judge that gives and deprives, punishes and repays, so creatures bear, due to their nature of formation, the ability to prosecute their selves by their selves, complying with the will of just cosmos.

Ibn Abi Talib sees that existence is equally balanced not a thing of it decreases here except that another thing of it. Increases there instead, and both decrease and increase are equal: no increase except by the (same) amount of decrease, and no decrease except by the (same) amount of increase. It is worth saying that the theory speaking of this balance in the things of existence is but one of the great outcomes which the activity of human thought has reached in its great creeping to discover the secrets of the cosmos, and it is also a starting-point in this field.

It is worth saying as well that a number of previous thinkers could not pay attention to this truth, and that a number denied it, and that a party of those thinkers saw it, realized many of its details believed in it, and called for it. Members of this party themselves differ too in the power of observation and representation, then in the power of expressing at what they witnessed and trusted. Some of them watched this balance in some of the aspects of creatures, so they declared that in a way having some clarification of the truth. Some others saw it in all the aspects of silent cosmos but they did not sense for it tangible outcomes in the stream of existence, did not find for it a corresponding line in the aspects of the living cosmos. Some others witnessed it in the living nature, sensed for it tangible outcomes in the stream of existence, saw of it a corresponding line in the living creatures, and declared it in a clear statement and confident speech. From this party is Ali bin Abi Talib. Rather say he is at the top of this party of the former thinkers because he has been about to prove this theory on a sound accurate course that does not conflict, nor contradict, and no escape for some of it from the other. Rather say he has done that and excelled.

Perhaps Ibn Abi Talib's position towards what he has witnessed and seen of the aspects of balance in the existence, is more sublime than the positions of his alike thinkers from the practical viewpoint because of what he has insisted on ascertaining this truth, so as to arrive at the results follow from it in people's life, as individuals and

groups. This reality is entirely in harmony with the centre of the Allawiyah philosophy which is Man.

We have said that Ali sees that existence is balanced, not a thing decreases here of it except another increases there instead, and that this decrease and this increase are equal: no increase is except with the amount of decrease, and no decrease except with the amount of increase. He, in the first place, says, drawing man's attention to this truth using the most sticking thing to him, that is, by the existence of himself: (He doesn't receive a day of his age except by deserting another of his appointed own age.

Is there any thought in man's intellect that is able to refute this truth which shows the counterpoise of existence in a simpler way that one could see out of the state of existence? Then is there a mathematical basis of the bases of geometry and algebra, more sticking to firm truths, more indicative on the absolute reality, and more succinct in revealing the firm and the absolute than this masterpiece by which Ibn Abi Talib portrays the counterpoise of existence through the living creature and his days?

If a speaker says to me that this idea is known, known to people, all people, then about which new truth does bin Abi Talib. Reveals in your claim? I said: the disclosure of hidden truths does not entail keeping silent of overt truths if these were an origin for those, or those an origin for these, or if the general method entails regulating the details alike what is hidden of them or appears. Ali bin Abi Talib, whose views cling to each belief, then all of his beliefs cling in a wonderful intellectual unity, did not utter this known saying "which is known by people, all people", and did not utter a more outstanding saying with the same meaning, i.e., "The breaths of one are his steps towards his death", but to return and establish on what he said in a detailed structure so as to prove the theory of equivalence in existence.

He who said "he doesn't receive a day of his age except by deserting another of his own age" and "the breaths of one are his steps towards his death", but mentioned that so as to return to disclose a truth, more distant from people's minds, and more hidden from their observation, but it flows with the two former sayings: "one doesn't get abenevolent except by losing another.

I think that you have known what lies in this saying: the power of observation, the ability to reveal, the frankness of

thought, and the clarity of statement. And to regulate the substance of this phrase in pictures and forms, which differ externally but unify in meaning and essence, Ali says: “Many a single repase prevent several repases” and that who is wasted by near ones the far ones are offered to him. And “Many a distant one is nearer than a near one” and “Love is an obtained kinship”, and “He who overloaded himself beyond his ability will fail”, and “He who does good deeds will not lose his reward” and “Whatever you earn beyond your basic needs you are warehousing for others.”

In these phrases, and in many others, there is an obvious summery of the details of the theory of existential balance as Ali bin Abi Talib sees. It despite the difference of its close topics, move in its scope, and its distant aim is around axes, namely the balance of the cosmos: so that on decrease here unless an equaling increase there, and vise versa.

Ibin Abi Talib realized this extential truth powerfully and deeply, experienced it, declared it in each period of his life or each saying of his, whether that was in the direct mood or the indirect one. He does not recognize this aspect of cosmic justice but to recognize another aspect reflecting it in a particular form or say emanates from it outflowingly that is to what we are with respect of speech as nature itself involves criterion, so it rewards and punishes and nothing among the aspects of cosmic justice is more prominent than this aspect in indicating it.

Ali saw that there is no even one thing of the thing of the cosmos has been found for naught, rather its existence has a purpose and as aim. He saw that each one of creatures has a function it performs, and over each one of man’s organs there is a duty on which just cosmos protests, asks about it, and renders an account on it. On the basis of these reality the things of existence are equal due to their existence. As to the small and the big are similar to this measure. Ali says: “Allah holds you responsible for the small before the big things”. And so he says that because the majority of people don’t pay attention to this small thing so he draw their attention to it by bringing it forward over the big thing in its entailing a punishment or a reward, so us to be reassured to the occurrence of the process of equalization between them in minds and hearts.

But if the cosmos protests against man in what it has imposed on his limbs, asks him about them, renders him responsible of small and big things, and reward him for what he has done: whether it was good or evil, it is not necessary, in Ali's observation, that the process of protest, settling an account, and reward to be carried out outside man's domain himself. And that this composite process, the one although containing a complex-ity, is carried out always, as Ali sees, within the creature's limits whatever it was. And as such it is accomplished with regard to man as he is one of the creatures. Ali says: "there is a watcher over you of yourselves; your limbs are watchmen." The guard is the observer. This observer does not spare any effort in seeing, recording, punishing, and repaying.

And in unique moments of brilliance of the discovering reason and penetrating intellect, bright colours appear to Ibn Abi Talib, s eyes of this one of the aspects of cosmic justice; you could not react towards them but to be surprised at this reason and this intellect. Does not Ibn Abi Talib speak with the language of the scholars of the modern age, as he speaks with the language of this justice itself the hour he states this truth: "Whoever ruins his morals agonizes himself." Then does not he speak with these two languages alike as he says: "The doubted person is a bout to say 'take me'" and as he says as well: "keep yourself away from every demerit even though you may be driven to it by a desire, because you earn of what you have humilliated yourself."

And there are many many masterpieces like these. Some of these masterpieces are: "Man's death from his sins is more than his death at his appointed time", and "No Chivalry is with a liar, no cmfort with jealousy, no dignity with revenge, and no rightness with overlooking consultation" and "If a man possesses a good disposition wait its sisters of him."

Thus Ali Ibn Abi Talib realized that the cosmos is one, just, firm in its unity and justice, making in the nature of creatures themselves the power to account, the ability to punish and reward. And thus he expressed what he realized wonderfully.

But there are other aspects other than these aspects of cosmic justice which Ali examined, checked their forms, and colours. So what are these aspects.

The Profound affection

Ali realized that the logic of affection is higher than that of the law, that man's kindness to man and other creatures is but the argument of life against death, and existence on non-existence.

And Ali's attitude towards woman has not been that one which some had depicted.

If it has been of the justice of cosmos and balance in existence that blaze of summer and sequezing clouds of winter meet on one level that rivulets, tornadoes and soft breezes exterminate in one truth, and that nature carries in itself, in each one of its manifestations, the law of reward and punishment; so one aspect of this justice too, and of this balance is that the powers of nature deal with each other and interpenetrate; whether they were the elements of the inanimate or those of life and equally as well what is resulted from this or separated from that.

And because man's characteristics, morals, inclinations, and sensations are resulted from the elements of life which merge and so constitute what we call man's personality, so they are dealing with each other interpenetrating, and what proves that is the long observation and accurate comparison, then the bases of modern science which observes, balances, and establishes its discoveries on foundations and bases.

It has been mentioned that man in Ali Ibn Abi Talib's doctrine is the ideal picture of the ideal cosmos. It is attributed to him this saying in which he addresses man:

You suppose yourself a tiny body

And within you the greater world is enfolded

It is natural in such a condition that Ali insists on asking whatever concerns man of that which belong to his time and the capabilities of his age. It is also natural that he insists on revealing what lies in this "body within which the greater world is enfolded" of the aspects of cosmic justice, and the equivalence of existence within the frame round which his views turned.

Directly and deeply Ali sensed that there are among creatures, connections that do not vanish except by the vanishing of these creatures and anything that decreases these connections, decreases

also the meaning of existence itself. If man is one of these creatures, so is connected with them as a relation of existence. And if that was - and it is as such - so the connection of a creature with its like is more fitting and priorer. But if this creature was of the living beings, then what fastens him to the living beings of his kind is firmer and stronger. As to man - the head of living creatures - his connection with his brother man is the first necessity for his existence as an individual and a group.

When Ali states that the righteous society is the one in which social justice predominate in its broader meanings and nobler forms, he is but establishing a law or what is of the law. But this law does not become clear in his mind and does not become a necessity except because it is a natural outcome of what we called the spirit of comprehensive cosmic justice which imposes the existence of this law. Hence we see Ibn Abi Talib insisting intensely on looking beyond these laws and protecting them through what is more sublime than them, the humanitarian sympathy.

Sympathy is nothing but this deep material and spiritual inclination to perfection and sublimity. It is then a moral necessity since it is an existential necessity.

The first page that Ali spreads of the pages of sympathy begins with reminding people that they are all brothers, so he describes them as 'my brothers' in a clear address while he is the prince of them. Then he adds that by reminding the rulers that they are people's brothers, all people, and that this fraternity entails compassion by necessity, saying to his masters over his armies: "It is obligatory on the ruler that the distinction he achieves, or the wealth with which he has been exclusively endowed, should not make him change his behaviour towards those under his authority, and that the riches Allah has bestowed on him should increase him in nearness to his slaves and kindness to his brethren."

And what he mentions to himself and his officers, that they and people are brothers by affection and sympathy, he returns and states it in a comprehensive wisdom directing towards all human beings without difference or distinction: "You are brother-ren, dirty natures and bad conscience have separated you." He, thus, places dirtiness of nature and evil of conscience in a side, and the sympathy of heart and affection of the soul in another side. And as it was of the existential

right of man to enjoy man's sympathy, so nature which carries in itself the values and standards has to compensate a righteous person whom the neighbours, the relatives, and the family have missed, and did not enfold him with the dress of sympathy, for this loss with more kindness and sympathy he gets from the distant ones, so Ali says: "He who is wasted by near ones is dear to remote ones."

He, intending to cultivate this fraternity existing on human sympathy, does not accept even small faults as they have a tentative deviation from the generosity of sympathy: "know then, had it not been for some deficiencies, you would be the preferred in this matter."

If known laws were allowing Ibn Abi Talib to fight the conspirators against him, he does not do so except after he respects all sides of kindness in his soul and heart, and after he agitates all the connections of human brotherhood in the souls and hearts of his enemy fighters. And if he has done it in the end he is but doing it unwillingly not voluntarily, sadly and in tears, not happily and laughingly, and then his feeling of victory after the battle, is more painful and bitter than his opponents' feeling of defeat.

And if known laws were allowing Ibn Abi Talib to leave the transgressors against him after his death at the hands of supporters and sons to fight and punish due to a perversity they used and strived to, so the compassion for man - which is to him beyond every law - drives him compulsorily to address his supporters sons with this great saying: "Do not fight the Kharijites after me, because that who had sought right but fail to hit, is not like that who sought wrong and hit it."

Due to this factor of deep sympathy he connects a person's happiness with that of his neighbour, i.e, with humanity's happiness as a whole, since a person's neighbour has neighbours, and what rights he owes him they owe other people. And of his happiness too is the prevalence of this sympathy over him, therefore other's sons will acquire this kindness that his sons get: "Educate orphan in the manner you educate your sons." Every-one should sense the spirit of basic justice which excel the positivistic laws in value and beauty because it carries humani-tarian warmth and joins morals with the logic of heart, not the logic of submission to the law: "The young among you should follow the elders while the elders should be kind to the young."

If the inability to obtain virtues is a defect, the logic of sympathy in Ali's language renders the unable person to acquire people's fraternity as the most defective: "The most helpless of all men is he who cannot gain brothers." Ali adds to this inability another helplessness that is the tendency towards dispute and quarrelling, saying: "Be careful of dispute and quarrelling." Rather what is prior is softness of speech since it enables to fasten the relations between a heart, as the source of sympathy, and the other heart: "Softness of speech is of generosity." There is nothing among tendencies of heart which is near to comfort than one's feeling that he has loving brothers among all people; if Ibn Abi Talib felt pain from the evils of his time he regards bread - which the means of survival truthfulness - which is the centre of survival, and people's fraternity in one position; he says describing the people of his time: "people are about to lose three things: a legitimately - earned pence, a voracious tongue, and a brother to whom one feels at ease."

If estrangement is a great severity as it entails loneliness the most intense of it is the hour man misses his brothers and dears since he then misses hearts of whose kindness he is proud, and with whose sympathy he lives: "A stranger is he who has no beloved" and forfeiture of lovers an alienation".

We have to refer to Ibn Abi Talib's attitude towards woman in these fields woman is a half of human beings is this half void of kindness to the other half? And is the other half asked to deviate from the standards of cosmic justice that requires man's kindness to man?

Many interpreted some of Ali's sayings about woman in a way by which they wanted wisecrack and entertainment more than they wanted to show Ali's position towards her. They insisted on some words he said in circumstances the most prominent feature of which was a hostility of a certain woman to him while he has not done evil and did not order except to do a favour. It slipped away from them that like these sayings which were the result of a limited condition in itself, aiming to clarify the causes of the conflict between two extremely different mentalities, he but said of men what is more forceful and severe. Hence he does not mean all men, and in their all conditions. And he, when he uttered these sayings on woman, he did not mean all women, and in all their conditions. Those persons who caused disasters which befell him and the goodness through him, were

subjected to such sayings whether they were men or women having men's power and authority. If he attacked these and these of men and women, he was but attacking in them certain positions in which they stood against right and justice as well as their supporters. And this disclaims the allegation of offence to the woman by Ali. I ask those whom the matter concerns to mention one word in which Ali offends woman and was not being directed to a certain person in a certain situation, or motivated by this person in this situation. He attacked woman when she has been the cause of a turmoil, and attacked man in such situation. Hence he attacks turmoil no more!

Yet Ali's position towards woman has been as a human being such as his attitude toward man, without difference and discrimination. Has not there been, in his profound sadness on his wife being dead, an evidence of his sense of woman's value as a human being having all man's rights and assumes all his duties, and at the basis of these rights and duties is to enjoy human kindness, and others are to enjoy his kindness as well.

Had not people during the pre-Islamic period and afterward been optimistic at boy's birth and become happy, and been pessimistic at girl's birth and become sad?

Had not Al-Farazdak's attitude towards woman been an expression of the position of his age on woman, and it was an age connected with Ibn Abi Talib's time, the hour his wife died, and he loved her as they claimed, and so he said of her this surprising saying:

The easiest lost, if death befalls him

Of man's friends, is he who is veiled

That is the cheapest lost one of man's companions and acquaintance is that who wears a veil, and he means woman. Woman, in his heart and at his language, is not worth crying on or being sad for, Why? For nothing but because she is woman!

And Ali, has not he been one of the sons of that time? But he was the most penetrating in thought, the most honourable in view, and the deepest in sense, and he said among other speeches in this respect, blaming the companions of that reckless intellect: "Some of them like boys and dislike girls, etc". so boys and girls are on one standing with Ali, they are associated by a human's nature merely.

In addition to that, Ali, who feels pity on people generally and the weak of them particular, imposes on compassionate nature to be

most sympathetic to woman as she is oppressed, if not weak, so he says: "Support the oppressed, and prevent and punish doting oppressor, and do good to your women." He says in another place: I command you to dissuade from evil and to do good to your woman." Ibn Abi Talib made the rings of this integrated procedure follow one another in his call that all people, then people and the whole creatures should warp them-selves in the warmth of sympathy, so he says of knowledge - and we have known the value of knowledge in his belief: "The head of knowledge is gentleness." He does not see in many sins what is more terrifying than that they lead to severity due to its being accustomed to, so then they are the reason for a cold aversion that replaces in hearts warm sympathy, so he says: "tears haven't dried out except for severity of hearts, hearts haven't hardened except for committing plenty of sins". And if you were not one of sin committers, you would be of the class of sympathy; and it is your right to sacrifice-by this sympathy-whatever you possess to support your brother, man: "If you had certitude of your brother, so grant him your money and hands, and show him goodness."

At last, Ali utters a group of sayings that center around the orbit of calling people to be devoted to people in kindness and sympathy. They are trully considered one of the most great sublime ethical tradition man possesses of them are these master-pieces: "Behave well with him who behaves ill with you, give to him who deprives you. Do good to all people as you like it to be done to you. Do good to him who offends you. Grant favour to him who deprives you...etc."

To achieve this compassionate call, Ibn Abi Talib partici-pates beasts, places and people in a mutual right of sympathy; so he says: "Fear Allah in the matter of His creatures and his cities because you will be questioned even About lands and beasts."

Thus, man's kindness to man and all creatures is but the argument of life on death; rather it is a will of the will of just existence!

Truthfulness of life

And this truthfulness is a pledge of, and to, you, since it is the spirit of beauty and right, and the will of able, triumphant life!

Perhaps the most prominent of the aspects of cosmic justice, in the world of inanimate and animate, and in whatever relates to the nature of existence, and features of creatures, is the absolute pure truthfulness. Perhaps truthfulness is the pivot of the earth, the orbit, the night and day. With truthfulness alone the four seasons follow one another, rain falls, and the sun shines. With it as well, the earth keeps its word when it grows what is above it: each in its time: no advancement and no delay. With it the codes of nature and the laws of life are established. The wind does not flow except with truthfulness, bloods do not ran through veins except with truthfulness, and the living creatures are not born except by a faithful sincere law.

This absolute pure truthfulness on which the law of survival encircle is the first and greatest fountain from which the justice of the cosmos flows and to which it returns.

And since Ali Ibn Abi Talib was very keen on observation of the truthfulness of existence, highly interacted with it, he made his first concern with people is to purify them on the ground of what he conceives, senses and sees. Purification in its right meaning and remote significance is not but the deep sense of the value of life and character of existence. And since this meaning is the unique significance for the great purification, truthfulness to the self, and to every material and spiritual being, is the pivot on which purification encircles, as we have seen it to be the pivot of cosmic justice. Hence, many of the bases, over which people agreed without thinking over the great codes of existence, are renounced as apart of sound discipline, whereas people assume them as disciplinary bases due to their mere agreement upon them. Thus, too, whatever disagrees with the spirit of the right, the spirit of goodness, and that of beauty, is banished from sound discipline of purification. Disciple based on other than its great principles, is a superficial collusion over ugly lying. It is, in its remote principles, a deep sense of beautiful faithfulness, which makes it integrate honestly with the uprising of flowing victorious life.

Therefore, the pivot of purification to Ibn Abi Talib was man's protection from lying, or say protecting him, when he is a live, from the coldness of death.

Man's protection from lying requires in the first place glorifying truthfulness directly in every situation, showing it as a prominent living necessity before every living creature, and directing people towards it retired to themselves or in groups.

And in this topic, Ali bin Abi Talib appears as a giant who sees what others do not see, who refers to what they are unaware of, practices what others cannot now practice, and he wants them to be able to do it. Ali says:

“Beware of loosening your morals and changing them, maintain one tongue.” And destroying thing means breaking it, and changing it means overturning it from one state to another. He intends to remind true person of the danger which his truthfulness is subjected to if he lies even for one time. For if the truthful person lies once, his honesty is broken, like anything which breaks if it falls on the ground one time. So are hypocrisy and double standard which are two sorts of the kinds of lying He says too: “Be truthful people. Do things without dissemblance. Respect the right truthful person, and humiliate the wrong liar. Be truthful in speaking, give back the entrusted things, and keep the vow. He who wants a glory by falsity Allah inherit him humility in a right. If you were truthful we would reward you, and if you were a liar we would punish you. He who lacks truthfulness in his speech is afflicted of his most precious moral, sharp sword at the hand of a brave man doesn't bring bring for himglory more than faithfulness these master pieces about truthfulness are but samples out for other hundreds by which bin Abi Talib constitutes the base of his great ethical law.

Then take this masterpiece where the share of penetrating conscious mind grows in its weare. He says: “Lying leads to degeneration”. We need not elaborate on showing what lies in this word of a fact that draws beyond it a series on unending facts. And we need not elaborate on portraying what this word refer out of a psychological fact which days do not increase it but firmness. And there are many like this masterpiece of them: “Lying is not suitable in seriousness and in joke, even that one promises his child, then he does not keep it!” As for the meaning to which the first half of this

Allaywiyan masterpiece refer, it was the subject of much dispute among philosophers of ethics, especially the Europeans. In fact those agreed unanimously that truthfulness is a life, lying is a death. But they disputed about whether it is allowable to lie in case of necessity or not? Some of them agree, some others disagree. And every party has their evidence.

However, Ali bin Abi Talib takes a decisive position towards which his phrase arouses, a decisive position which is in harmony with his great code in morals, this faith which we recur to remind the reader that it is resulted from what Ali has sensed and realized, out of the comprehensive justice of the cosmos, so he says without hesitation: “The evidence of faith is you should prefer truth when it harms you to falsehood when it benefits you; and that your speech should not be more than your action.”

It is clear that Ibn Abi Talib does not see in lying what benefits, and in truthfulness what may harm, so he speaks to people in a range of the scope of their conception so that his speech to them leaves on them an intelligent effect. To ascertain that he says: “Keep to truthfulness in all your concerns”. He too says: “Be on your guard against falsehood since a truthful person is on the edge of salvation and dignity, while the liar is on the edge of ignominy and degradation.” As for the meaning that the second half of the phrase mentions: “Nor one promises his child, then he does not keep it”, it is a great attention to an educational truth which life itself determines, as well as the psychological sources upon which man grows up and progress. It is sufficient that it refers that child is brought up by practical example not by advice, and this view is the pivot of Jean Jack Rousseau’s educational philosophy.

Truthfulness with life entails simplicity and detests from complexity, since every fact is simple as such as the sun is shining and the night dark as on indication of this warm simplicity, as it is a living, spontaneous outcome of truthfulness, we say that Ibn Abi Talib hates arrogance as it is not a true nature; rather dignity is truthfulness; then the arrogant person, in his view, is one who rises above his nature itself, and he says: “So not be like him who feels superiority to the son of his own mother.” He, at the same time, dislikes modesty if it is intentional, since it is not then a true nature; rather the feeling that man is equal to every man in his dignity is the truthfulness. Hence he

addresses him whose modesty leads him to humiliate himself, saying to him: “Beware of humiliating yourself”. Then he follows that with a more wonderful saying: “Do not accompany, in a travel, him who does not see your superiority to him like what you see of his superiority to you!”

I do not know, in the principles of the protectors of man’s dignity as a man who is not arrogant or humiliated, rather is truthful only, that excels this word of Ibn Abi Talib or that equals it in value: “Man is man’s mirror!”

And from his sayings that indicates the necessity of taking life easy and simply are: “How bad it is to bend down at the time of need and to be harsh in sufficiency. To praise more than what is deserved is sycophancy; to do it less than, is either because of inability to express oneself or of envy. Do not say what you do not know. Do not do the good hypocritically, and do not leave it shyly. O’ son of Adam, whatever you earn beyond your basic needs you store it for others. “He does not keep silent for good so as to be proud of it, nor does he speak to tyrannize over others. He who overload himself more than he could, failed. There is no good in an ignoble helper. As though I saw Ibn Abi Talib not leaving a side, which his feeling and thinking have realized out of the concerns of life and man, unless he uttered for it a masterpiece that sums up a complete law. This is what he did the hour he liked to direct people towards taking life truthfully and simply, so he said this word full of the warmth of the spontaneity of life: “When your brothers visit you do not save up anything of what is at home and do not bother to bring what is beyond the door!”

When Ali concludes his long speech about the necessity of truthfulness with life directly, then about simplicity without which truthfulness could not exist, and it could not exist without truthfulness, he pursues his way in showing the concepts of discipline which correlate in his belief and connect as if they were a picture of all creatures of the cosmos, in which truthfulness remains its first orbit, even though they speak of other aspects of morals. He advises man to disregard other’s shortcomings, for this contains a mercy from the over looker and an education to the wrong-doer by conduct and example which is more influential than correcting him through advice and hate. He says: “The most honorable work of a honest person is his over looking what he knows. Likewise he advises of forbearance and

endurance as they are the result of ambition, then an advance towards self's noble-mindedness" Forbearance and endurance are twins brought about by high courage". He hates backbiting as it is a way of hypocrisy, offence and evilness as a whole: "Avoid backbiting for it is the food of the dogs of people of Hell". Cheating is like backbiting, both of which come of dirty natures: "Beware of cheating as it is the nature of sordid people". And as he saw that one lie is not allowed, for truthfulness is broken by it, he sees that every sin, however slight and unimportant in his committer's claim, is but so severe because it is a sin, rather it is more influential on man's dignity if its committers belittled it, that a great sin which its committer repents at once: "The worst sin is that which its committer takes lightly". And Ali forbids you from hastiness in saying and doing as it leads to fall, and a courteous man should not allow himself to have any short coming: "I forbid you from haste in saying and doing." He likes you to apologize for every sin you have committed as a correction for one's manners, but he awakens you in a genius observation and statement to the fact that man does not apologize for a good action, then he should not do what forces him to apologize: "You should avoid what you may have to apologize for it is not apologized for a good action. To prevent preoccupation with people's defects, and negligence of one's defects - which leads to bad manners and path negatively and positively - Ali says: "The greatest defect is to find fault with from which you suffer". And "He who sees into his own defects abstains from looking into other's defects." If a bad thing comes to you from a source, you first have to disapprove it, and if you could not do that, you are to disapprove it lest you should be a partner in it: "He who approves a bad thing is a partner in it". If kindness among people is a moral necessity since it is an existential necessity as we have stated in the former chapter, so the logic of mind and heart orders that your kindness, on Him who gave you the power to speak and gave charity to, is more and broader. In that Ali says: "Do not try the sharpness of your tongue against Him who has given you the power to speak, nor the eloquence of your speaking against Him who showed you the right path." Then he says: "The reward of him who honoured you is not to humble him; the reward of him who pleases you is not to displease him."

He attacks greed pride and envy as they are a way to moral decline: “Greed, vanity and envy are incentives to falling into sins.” If the ancient moralists censured stinginess, it is as such in their view because of being a bad feature in itself. However, as for Ibn Abi Talib, who observes morals with a more comprehensive insight and a deeper thought, stinginess is not bad in itself as much as it is bad for it includes all the defects, as it drives its doer to every evil in manners and behaviour. The miser is hypocritical, aggressors backbiting, gealous, lowly, forging, greedy, selfish and unjust. Ali says: “Miserliness contains all other evil vices.”

The speech lengthens and elaborates if we like to mention the details of Ibn Abi Talib’s code in morals and the self’s discipline; they are too many, they did not leave any activity of man’s activities except that they portrayed and directed it. If I say that such a task is long, wide, and tiresome, then I mean what I say.

The reader need not but to learn about the masterpieces which we took from Ibn Abi Talib’s literature in this book, so as to be certain that volumes may be narrow in studying his belief of morals and the self’s education as well as in what these chosen extracts entail of explanation and commentary. It is enough to refer to the matter that these Allawyah masterpieces are one of the most honourable of man’s heritage, and of the greatest in capacity and depth.

However we have to refer to the masterpiece of masterpieces in the great discipline as it is a deep sense of the value of life, the self’s dignity, and the perfection of existence. Very few of the excellent persons like Budha, Christ, Bethoven, and their likes are those who realized that the mark of courtsy lies in the first place between man and himself. It does not exist between man and what is outside him except it is an obvious natural outcome of the first case. Ibn Abi Talib has realized this truth powerfully and clearly, with no ambiguity or vagueness. He expressent it in a comprehensive manner. Ali says of the necessity of man’s respect to himself and his works without the presence of an observer on him: “Beware of committing a sin in solitude.” And he says in the same sense: “Avoid every such action which is performed in secret and from which shame is felt in the open. Also avoid that action about which if the doer is questioned he renounces it.” And here is what he says of the relationship between one’s secret and overtness, or between what we called the masterpiece

of courtesy and what we call 'an outcome' of it: "Whoever set right his inward self, Allah sets right his outward self."

From the masterpieces of the chinese wiseman Confucius on the self's courtesy is this word: "Eat at your dining table as if you eat at a king's dining table." It is clear he likes to respect yourself in an absolute way that is not connected with any situation or occasion, so that it is worth that you behave when you are alone as you behave while you are before a king. Such a meaning Ali says in a new shape: "You should adorn yourself to your brother like him who adorns himself for a stranger as he likes to see him in the best appearance."

In every case he likes you to preach your brother so as to help him to convey from a good to a better stance in manners, taste, and path. But the true spirit of courtesy prevents you from injuring or hurting him by advising him publicly; rather this spirit requires that you should be soft and gentle, then you do not advise except stealthily, do not preach except secretly. Ali says: "Whoever preaches his brother secretly adorns him, and whoever preaches him publicly shames him."

However situation you had, you have to be truthful with yourself, life and people. You live with this truthfulness, and without it you perish. You protect the safety of your soul, your heart, and your body with this truthfulness and without it you lose it. With truthfulness you love, is loved (by others), and is trusted in you without it you bring to yourself overness, hatred, and all evil vices, and people see you as worthless and mean. And this truthfulness is a pledge from, and upon, you since it is the will of the able, victorious life - which is a will that ordain you to see your pledge every day. And Ibn Abi Talib says: "Every man has to think deeply over his covenant everyday."

The goodness of Existence

and Revolutionary nature of life

Very often do we see him make the revolutionary nature of life entirely out of the goodness of existence, and the goodness of existence is the whole result of the revolutionary of life!

And the revolution said: I am the puller down, the builder!

It is not the right of the just cosmos but to be compassionate good. It has no nature but to grant gifts. It does not take what it has given except to give it back good and new. The goodness of existence is an entity of its entity, and an essence of its essence. And Ali's knowledge of it is this knowledge.

And his sense of its good is his sense of its justice, no less, no more on that knowledge he spoke of this good, and increased the speech, and we have mentioned several things from his sayings about the good of existence. Perhaps what we have mentioned of these true masterpieces could be summarized now in a word he said as if he summed up his doctrine, which believes in the goodness of existence: Allah is not more generous about what He is asked than him about which He is not asked.” If we know that the word ‘Allah’ means in its maximum sense, for the ancients of the belief of spiritual and intellectual originality, the centre of existence and cosmic connections, we know what universal, comprehensive goodness is the good of existence which gives you beyond what you ask, then it increases!

And because man, who assumes himself a tiny body, is a representative of this greater world as Ibn Abi Talib says, so he must be as well a picture of existence with its good, as he is its picture with its justice. If existence gave you beyond what you ask of its blessings it so it takes the initiative for a need of its nature to be good. And if you were a picture of it, then you are more in need of making good to people than people of need for it. And this is what Ali ascertains in his saying: “doers of favour to its rendering are more in need than those to whom it is rendered. And this is what he ascertains too in a phrase he refers whenever he speaks about practicing good among people: “The better in that is the beginner”.

As we want to shift to reflect on the good and its significance on the level of relationships among people, we could classify Ibn Abi Talib’s views into the following lines:

First: the good among people lies in the idea that they cooperate and support one another, and that one should act for the sake of himself and the other equally; and that this act should not have a hypocrisy from this side nor compulsion from that side “motivated by desire, not by fright” as Ali says: then to sacrifice little and much so as to save others’ comfort and people’s trust on each other, and that this sacrifice comes as an initiative not after a request, nor after a compulsion or a force. And whatever serves or benefits, whether on the material or spiritual level, is a goodness.

Second: Ali sees that good does not come except as a practice at first, then as a saying, for man must be one like the one existence, and to support one another to fulfil this law; then if he said he would practice, and if he acted he would say. And from Ibn Abi Talib’s masterpieces is a word he said of a man who hopes Allah in a concern but he does not act for the sake of this hope: “he claims according to his own thinking that he hopes from Allah. By Allah, the Great, he speaks a lie. Why doesn’t his hope appear through his action although the hope of everyone who hopes is noticed in his action.” But if you practiced the good, it is your right then to say the good: “Say the good and act the good.”

Third: Ali expands the range before the powers of good to go ahead to the most far distant, thereby making the acceptance of repentance of evil a law to be acted on. Then if a man committed a sin offending others, the repentance has a door where he could enter once again into the world of good if he liked. Ali says: “Accept the excuse of him who apologizes to you, and delay evil as long as you can. “History know the amount of offence

which Ali suffered from Abu Mosa Al-Ashary, and it too knows that Ali has not behaved except on his doctrine, whatever situations and difficulties have been, hence we see him send to Abu Mosa saying: “Know then, that you are a man led astray by your desires, and tempted by self-conceit, so seek Allah’s pardon, and He forgives your stumbling, because he who seeks Allah’s pardon, He forgives him.”.

Forth: Ali believes that the powers of good in man summon and fasten one another in a powerful way. If a man had a side of good, it is certain that it is connected with other sides, and if it is certain that it is connected with other sides, and if it is certain that these sides would appear on occasions. And this insight has a frank reference to the idea that existence is one, balanced, just, and good whatever it is a universal, great existence or a particular, small one manifested by the man: “If a man possesses a pure quality wait her sisters of him”

Fifth: And such a good contagion among the good qualities is a similar contagion that shifts from good to evil between people and people: “Associate with people of virtue; you will become one of them.” “seek good and its doers”.

Sixth: The deep belief that man’s power, whoever he is, is to follow the course of good, and that no one is worthier than another in this course: “No one of you should say that another person is more worthy than I in doing good.”

Seventh: One should not regard his much good acts as too much. Rather what he acts of the good remains little, however much it was, because the satisfaction with an amount of good is a denial of the great good of existence and is a denial of the power of man into whom the great world is enfolded: “They are not satisfied with their little good acts, and do not regard their plenty acts as great. They always blame themselves and are afraid of being neglectful in their actions”.

Eight: It is necessary to refer to the deep insight that Ali casts on the concepts of human tendency towards that which makes people, all people, be in a bliss.

If we think over the works of most of the thinkers who paid their attentions to people’s concerns, we find that the word ‘happiness’ is mentioned in these works, and that the significance of this word is itself the pivot of their researches and the goal of what they wanted. Yet, Ali replaces the word ‘happiness’ with what is longer in range, deeper in sense, wider in horizon, and grander in concern with which human nature should be characterized and long for.

He replaced this ‘happiness’ with the word ‘good’, then he was not directing hearts to that but to this. For happiness is restricted to a person’s limit, while good is not restricted in such a limit. So good is greater! Then good contains happiness, but it does not contain it the good, then it is more comprehensive! In Addition, some people may be happy with that which does not ennoble man; they may be happy with that which hurts others; they may be worthless and flabby and they think they are happy. Yet good is unlike happiness, since its metal is this metal. It is a happiness dependent on the happiness of all people. It is the contentedness with the conditions of the

body, mind, and con-science! Hence Ali increased the use of this word in his hot call upon whatever may elevate man's dignity.

I have not found, in Ibn Abi Talib's works, the word 'happiness' except one time. But he does not deviate from its meaning which he means away from the concept of good by what he loads it of its limits and meanings. As for the phrase in which the word 'happiness' is mentioned, it is this: "of one's happiness is to have a virtuous wife, faithful children, honourable brothers, righteous neighbours, and that his sustenance is in his country." Look how he joins man's happiness with that of his surrounding, his family, then his brothers' and neighbours' happiness as a whole. Afterwards he relates this man's happiness to that of his country relying on that it is a country that produces sustenance for all its sons, and he is one of them.

Nineth: The good of existence and of man entails, by necessity, the trust in human conscience in a manner that makes it the last arbitrator over what harms and benefits. And we have, in this subject, a view to be detailed, so we say:

From Ibn Abi Talib's masterpieces is that which addresses mind alone some of them is that which addresses conscience. Most of them are directed towards mind and conscience, together. As for that which addresses the mind, then say it is the utmost in originality, and it is an inevitable outcome of the activity of the mind which has observed, scrutinized, and got used to the good and evil of time, has known of the experiences whatever that reveals and clarifies the truths for it, and so they are moulded on geometric bases with limits and dimensions because of the intensity in which they are connected with the truths, shown in the most wonderful artistic frame because of the intensity in which they are connected with expressionistic aestheticism, which makes it, in matter and form, of the origins of the classical Arabic literature.

And in this sort of wisdoms directed towards mind, we see Ali portrays, leaving people to determine what they see. They may take, or leave, if they like. Hence we do not see in this sort of maxims the forms of order. We see but maxims shaped in a pure statement form cleared out of all the forms of order and prevention as a whole.

They are maxims which crystallize the natures of the friend and the enemy, the noble and the evil behaviour, the silly and the reasonable, the miser and the generous, the truthful and the hypocrite, the oppressor and the oppressed, the needy and the satiated, the holder of right and the holder of wrong, the concept of sound manners and that of bad manners, the concerns of the ignorant and the knower, the speaker and the calm, the reckless and the forbearing, the features of the greedy and the contented, the conditions of poverty and wealth, the fluctuations of time and its effect on people's manners, and the like which cannot be counted within a chapter or a topic.

As for that which addresses conscience, and the mind as well as conscience together, then take what is it on and what is about.

It is proved that those who saw in the systems and legislations alone the safety of man and the satisfaction of society can be achieved had committed a great mistake. For these systems and legislations, which declare man's rights and order to consider and protect them, could not be verified in the

end, just as they are not excelled honestly discover, and created, except by a sound mind, a refined spirit and a sublime conscience. For the whole of people's world is connected within certain limits, undoubtedly, with the manners of the supervisors of their laws and orders, and the extent of good which wide or narrow in their spirits, and the amount which is related to the conscience of the society which constitute the field of these laws and systems and justify their existence. This is with the confession that modern social systems differ greatly in their allowance for their guardians to keep pace with, or violate them. That is due to their nature and the rate of what their origins contain of the capabilities of practice. Yet, the old systems and laws were more influenced by the manners of their supervisors who supervise the action of what they require out of punishment. And that has reasons which are out of our speech.

And although these righteous systems and legislations direct people and impose on them what leads to their benefit supposedly, then this direction and imposition remain outside the limits of humanitarian value unless they are accompanied by the action, stemming from the very emotion. In our belief, every act that man does is inevitably lacking humanitarian warmth - which is more valuable and greater in its harmony with the human deed, unless it carries the flame of conscience, the scent of spirit, and the will of gift without compulsion or force. The systems and legislations do not succeed in establishing human relations except within the amount that enables them to address the mind and conscience, and convince them of good; so they create the splendid harmony between giving the opportunity for useful act and the will of the doer in a unity which secures, for the individual and the group, the rise to advance in the route of civilization.

And what is true, in this respect, in the domain of individuals and groups, comes true as well in the history of thinkers, legislators, scientists, discoverers, and the like. You can see, if you surveyed the history of those who have served man and culture, that reason which guided them to the right path, in every field, hasn't been alone in their history. For reason is cold, dry, and does not identify except numbers, parts and the aspects that have limits. Therefore it guides you to the way, but it does not inspire you to proceed through it and does not drive you in its plain and uneven parts. But the motive is the sound conscience and hot feeling. Then what prompted Marcony to endure hard solitude and gloomy, depressed seclusion, unless it had been the conscience which adorns to him the keeping away from the joys of life to the depression of solitude for the sake of civilization and man? And unless it was the emotion which fills up this sound conscience with heat and warmth, then it does not languish at all.

And what is said of Marcony is as well of Pasteur, Gallilo, Gandhi, Bethoven, Budha, Plato, Geity and others who have attained the human compound which is close to perfection.

And the positive evidence of this fact involves a negative evidence to increase clearness. Here are Adolf Hitler, Jankeez Khan, Hollacko, Al-Hajjaj bin Yousif Al-Thakafi, Caesar of Borjia; the hero of the ominous book 'The Prince' by Machiavelli⁽³⁾ and some contemporary scientists of atom who agree to experiment it on human beings, have not all of those

been distinguished with storing minds and perception which other's perceptions become little compared with these? Yet, they were not concerned except with killing destroying, and transgression on the sanctions of civilization, the outcomes of human efforts, on the dignity of life and creatures and the good of existence! For their minds were not gone along with sound conscience and compassionate feelings! Then, where is no conscience and no emotion there is no benefit from reason, rather say it is closer to harm.

Here, I do not want to detail for man's different powers like emotion, conscience, reason and the like, then they are undoubtedly interacting and cooperating. But what I mean by reason is the power which realizes the concerns on a level that joins the cause with the result, and connect skillfully between cause and effect, so it turns around a frame of number and limits which are not influenced, in itself, by particular and general human environment. And I allowed this detail on this light.

So, the holder of a discovering mind has to possess con-science and emotion which drive him in the way of good. And what is applicable, in this respect, to the legislator is applicable to whom it is legislated. The individuals, whom are asked to keep pace with this good system or that one, must have an emotional persuasion in addition to the abstract intellectual persuasion that drive them on the way of elevated human purifying discipline so as to establish a virtuous society. They have to get used to moral virtues which surround the systems and legislations with refined immune fortresses. They have to be righteous.

Hence Ali has gone stirring in the individuals the feelings of good as we saw, awakening in them what days had hidden of their sound conscience, endeavouring to cultivate them, and advising to take care of them.

Ali has gone to consciences in his advices, sermons, pledges and sayings as a whole. For it has not passed him that the refining of manners has a concern in complying with the just systems, in spreading heat in the dealings among people. It has not passed him as well that the purification is demanded for itself as it is one of the human values, and is demanded to protect the social justice and its norms as it is a control for some inclinations and a directing for others. And what helped him in that is what he has got out of a penetrating ability through which he passes to people's depths, individuals and groups; so he realizes their tendencies, their desires; he knows their natures and manners, then he weighs their good and evil, then he portrays develops, orders and prevents, on the light of his strick confidence in human conscience to which he addresses.

Ibn Abi Talib's confidence in human conscience was the confidence of the great persons in whom the brilliant mind has harmonized with the heart full of human wormth, and pulsant with deep affection which does not know limits.

His confidence in this conscience was the confidence of Budha, Bethoven, Rousseau, Gandhi, and all great men which their heart provided them with an illumination with which every light faints. And on the basis of this confidence Ibn Abi Talib established his maxims and proverbs, and on

the basis of it, the ideas and instructions with which he addresses people's emotions connect with each other.

If Imam Ali had such a confidence in the sides of good in people, despite the disasters and misfortunes he has suffered at their hands, then he refuses but to throw the seeds of this confidence in all of their hearts. He knows that "there is in the hands of people both right and wrong, true and false." But it is more deserving for one to open his eyes and heart and notice these sides of good; perhaps they are those which develop not the sides of evil. Perhaps teaching by example and conduct is grander and more useful. So much has Ali repeated in his sermons the necessity of this confidence in human conscience, and of his sayings are: "If a person has a good idea about you, make his idea be true." And he says in another place:

"Do not regard an expression uttered by any person as evil at the time you can find a good interpretation to it" and it is not just to destroy confidence by relying on assumption" and "At a time when virtue is dominant on time and people, if a person entertains an evil suspicion about another person of whom nothing evil has been noticed, then he has been unjust" and "he leads the worst life among people who doesn't trust in anyone due to his own evil will and no one trust in him due to his bad actions.

The researchers about Imam Ali made a mistake the hour they saw that he is pessimistic extremely about people, very much weary of them, and the hour they protested for their opinion by some sayings in which he attacks people of his time strongly and violently. But our opinion is completely to the contrary. Our opinion is that Ali has not abolished his confidence in man for one hour, although he cancelled it with regard to some people in some circumstances. Whoever knows Ibn Abi Talib's ability to endure misfortunes which come from people, and his surprising patience in suffering the adversities resulting from betrayal, treason and degeneration of the many of his opponents and supporters, then how he treated them when he deals with them with gentleness and kindness as much as he could; I say: whoever knows that realizes that Ali is greatly optimistic in man's nature and his instinct which society led astray in some cases; he does not differ from his great brother Rousseau.

And if he had, in censuring people of treason, betrayal and oppression much speech it is as such because he admits implicitly that man is reformable even if it takes along time. The optimist alone is the one who scolds the wrong-doer as he rewards the benevolent person wishing to straighten crookedness in morals and behavior. If it had not been for Ibn Abi Talib to have such a hope he would not have been able to bear what is unbearable of the misfortunes of time which the wrong-doers brought upon him, and he would not have endured what he dislikes. Even if he said of this world and its people that: "its inhabitants are howling dogs or preclatory beasts who growl at each other. The stronger of them eat away the weaker and the big of them trample on the small," he but says that because he suffered from the treason of the traitors, and the offence of the harmful people what has pained and hurt him. He rebuked them this painful censure as his preference for the one who does not degenerate or betray, not be a

growling dog or a predatory beast, not a strong one eating away the weak, or a big one trampling over the small one! He says that, then fights the devouring beast, the strong oppressor, the big tyrant, like the physician fights the germs as a preference from him to the safety of body and soul, rather as a preference of life to death, and optimistically strive for salvation!

So, Imam Ali, who respects life - the greatest thing Allah has created - and respect the living people - the most beautiful samples of this life -, is greatly confident in the human good, greatly optimistic of man, and wants him to be free as he must be!

And had it not been for this confidence, and this optimism, his concern with people would not be as such, and he would not say: "Do not regard an expression uttered by a person as evil if you can find a good explanation to it bearing some good. Then he would not turn toward the individual and collective con-science in his sermons which gather the depth of understanding, and the heat of emotion and the sublime purpose and the noble aim. He wanted these commandments to be an immune fortress for general morals, the human feeling, and the concentration of advantageous action on positive bases in mind and conscience. And relying on this confidence in human conscience and as a fortification the good noble act, we see him place on people guards from themselves and eyes from their limbs, so he addresses them saying:

"Know that your ownself is a watcher over you; your limbs are watchmen and truthful keepers who preserve the record of your actions and the number of your breaths!"

And relying on this confidence in the good and justice of existence, on the greatness of life and the living creatures, Ali bin Abi Talib addresses the people of his time with what awakens in them that life is free which does not endure the chains except what is a cause in its flow and a means of its continuity, a torch of its brightness and a norm of its norms. It does not like staying in the cradle of yesterday. People should not try to chain and restrain it, otherwise it stagnates and change into an extermination. Life is nice, compassionate, free and good like existence; its father, which protects itself by its constant laws not by the laws that pessimists want for it.

It is ever renovating, ever developing, it does not accept a substitute for its renovation and development; and they are a means it uses in its victories which intend more good and better survival continuity. Ibn Abi Talib's accurate and deep observation of life and its norms - as it is the greatest being of the good existence, consolidated in himself the belief in the revolutionary of life ever looking forward to the front, ever moving towards much more good. And the revolutionary of life is the origin of its moving, and the reason of its development from good to better. Hence life was free, unrestrained except with the conditions of its existence. And the revolutionary of life is the origin of the movement of human society and the reason of its development. And had it not been for this speciality life would be a thing of death, and the living creatures are inanimate.

Ibn Abi Talib believed in the revolutionary nature of life in a way like to a knowledge or say a knowledge itself. Then what follows from

that is a great belief that living creatures can reform themselves thereby keeping pace with the laws of life. They can be the masters of their fates thereby being subjected to the genius of life. We have said in a former speech that the revolutionary nature of life is the closest of its features to it, and the greatest in significance regarding its great capabilities. It entails on the believers in it to act on the basis of a perfect confidence in the inevitable progress, and to awaken the thoughts to it, and to make use of evidence and proof in preventing conservative from every silly action whose practicers assume that they can stand against the revolting life which is developed by its revolution.

By this confidence and this belief, Ibn Abi Talib addressed man by saying: “For when you were first created you were born ignorant. Thereafter, you has been taught and how much you ignore, in so many matters and in your sight first wonders and your eyes wanders then after this you see it.” There is a confession in this saying that life is developing, and that learning is the getting benefit of what life stores of its genius within its sons’ chests, as we have previously said. And it contains a belief in the great human capability for development or say for good. And his hot call to knowledge, which reveals everyday a new thing and establishes everyday a new thing is but an evidence of the belief in the revolutionary virtuous life and the capabilities of the living creatures. Knowledge to him is a revelation and victory that do not calm down.

With this belief and this confidence he addresses the people of his time saying: “Do not compel your sons to your manners, for they have been created for a time other than yours. And had it not been for his great optimism that life contains beauty, and that people have the capability of development towards the good, he would not had uttered this saying which sums up his knowledge of the revolutionary nature of life, it also sums up his optimism in the capabilities of the developing man with life, and sums up the spirit of sound education, and release every generation of people from the chains of tradition and custom with which a former generation was satisfied.

And Ibn Abi Talib in this sense has much speech, of which these masterpieces are in which he glorifies the work as it is a truth, a revolution and a virtue: “Whomever his action slackens him, his lineage cannot put him forward.” And “The worth of every man is what he does of good. And “Know that, people are the son of what good they do.” And “Every man has the consequences of what he has earned. Ie. Their behaviour is the result of the good thing they do.”

And of his sayings is what drives man to demand progress in work, and not to refrain or retreat in case he fails much or little, for the benevolent existence does not deprive its sons of what they deserve. And if it deprives them it is some deprivation not all of it. And the matter may be settled in a second payment of the demand by work. And from his saying is this masterpiece: “One who is in search of something will obtain it, or at least

apart of it”, I think that the reader recognizes the spirit of this phrase which glitters as if it were an emanation from Christ’s famous word: “You should knock and knock, and it will be opened for you.”

Perhaps the most beautiful in Allawiy belief in this respect is that its holder (Ali) unified the revolutionary nature of life and good of existence in letter and in spirit and in meaning. So many time we see him unify the meaning of progress, or the revolutionary of life, with the meaning of good of existence in a unity that does not make this a thing of that, or that of this; rather it makes the revolutionary nature of life entirely out of the good of existence, and the good of existence entirely of the revolutionary nature of life. And these masterpieces contain a compassionate proof for the trueness of what we say, so that they don’t need an explanation or a commentary. Here is a sample of them: “The rational man is one whose present day is better than his yesterday”. And He whose tomorrow is worse than his present day is deprived.” And “He whose two days are equal is aggrieved.” And lastly take this masterpiece which includes the whole of what we are now speaking about, besides the warmth of deep sympathy, besides the beauty of true art, besides making the days participate in people’s sensations: “No day passes over a human being except it tells him: I am a new day, and I am a witness upon you; so say the good and act the good since you will not see me again at all!”

We will mention in this book masterpieces by Ibn Abi Talib which will remain as long as good man remains. They are a group that constitute a procedure in compassionate manners, great dreams and sublim human refining which he wanted it to an emanation from the revolutionary nature of life and the good of existence!

Beirut

George Gerdak

The Allawiyah Foreward

Shall I be content with being called 'Amir Al-Mu'minin' (The Commander of the Believers), although I do not share with them the hardships of the world?

Forbid people to monopolize.

Do not appropriate to yourself a thing in which people are equal.

Know that I am fighting two persons: one has claimed what is not his own and the other has ignored what is obligatory upon him.

No poor has starved except because of what a rich has enjoyed.

I have not seen any rich blessing except there is, beside it a wasted right.

The ruin of the land is caused by the poverty of the cultivators, while the cultivators become poor because of the rulers' inclination to collect money due to their greediness.

You should keep an eye on the cultivation of land more than on the collecting of revenue.

No town deserves you more than another one. The best town for you is that which bears you.

Poverty in one's homeland is a strangeness.

If poverty were represented as a man I would kill him.

A human being is asked, at the Day of judgment, about his money, from where had he earned it.

How can you enjoy food and drink when you know that you are eating an unlawful food and drinking unlawfully.

Oppressing weak people is the worst oppression, oppression calls for sword; whoever loaded up himself with oppression will fail.

The day of the oppressed against the oppressor will be more difficult than the day of the oppressor against the oppressed.

The doer of oppression, the helper to it, and the contented with it are three partners.

Do not waste the interests of your brother depending upon your relation with him, for he is not your brother whose right you have wasted.

Whatever a defect in your secretaries which you over-look, you will be held responsible for it.

The worst minister to you is he who has been a minister to mischievous persons before you, and who has joined them their sins.

Thereafter, look into the affairs of your executives. Appoint them on trial and do not appoint them according to partiality or favouritism, because they are a collection of the branches of injustice and treason.

Avoid every such action which is performed in secret and of which shame is felt.

Allah has made it obligatory on just leaders that they should maintain themselves at the level of weak people.

The ruled hearts are the stores of their ruler; so whatever he places in them of justice or injustice will find it there.

The subjects' love and faithfulness do not manifest except through their feeling that the state is not a heavy burden over their shoulders.

When the ruler changes, time changes too.

The discontent of prominent people can be forgiven with the content of the common people.

If Allah becomes angry on a nation, its prices become high and its evil men dominate it.

But I am worried that silly and profligate people control the affairs of the entire community, with the result they grab the funds of Allah as their own property and enslave his slaves.

The scholars are the rulers of kings; oppression is the last period of kings' rule.

Knowledge is a religion which is acted upon.

It is an hour - at night - no slave of Allah prays for some-thing except granted to him unless he is a tax-collector, an intelligence man, or a police officer.

Three men favour money: The sea trader, the holder of authority, and the one accepting bribe while taking decisions.

If the shepherd is a wolf, then who protects the sheep?!

Allah may curse those who advise good but they thems-elves neglect it, and those who detest others from evil but they themselves act upon it.

Know that you are living at a time in which those who speak about right are few, the tongue is blunt to utter truth, and those who stick to the right are humiliated.

The weak is in my view strong till I restore (his) right while the strong is in my view a weak till I take the right back from him.

Shortly a time will come for people no one will be taken as associate to the rulers except informants and no one is regarded as witty but the profligate, and no one will be regarded as weak except the fair person.

A Group of His letters, sermons, Pledges and Advices

The worship of free men

His wonderful speech on the meaning of worship

A group of people worshipped Allah out of desire for reward surely, that is the worship of traders! Another group worshipped Allah out of fear, that is the worship of slaves! Still another group worshipped Allah out of gratefulness, this is the worship of free men!

O' People

A sermon in Al-Maddinah

Monopolizing is the medium of toil; miserliness is an incentive to stumbling into sins; greediness gathers the whole of evil vices.

O' people, there is no treasure more useful than knowledge no honour higher than tolerance, no evil worse than falsehood, and no absent closer than death!

O' people, he who sees his own defects abstains from looking into other's defects; he who draws out the sword of aggression is killed with it; he who digs a well falls in it; he who forgets his slips enlarges other's slips; he who gets astonished with his view strays; he who dispenses his mind lapsed, and he who prides on people is humiliated.

Through change of circumstances the mettle of men is known. Days reveal hidden secrets. It is enough for your own refinement that you abstain from what you dislike of others' he who scrutinized opinions understands the pitfalls. Love is a gained kinship your brother owes you a right like you owe him; no one gets anything unless he loses something else; there is a foodstuff for every living creature; there is an eater for every grain, and you are the foodstuff of death.

O' people, beware of cheating, since it is of the characteristics of ignoble people. Purifying the act is more hard than the act. Purifying the intention of perversion it is more hard to the doers than long jihad (struggle). How impossible! Had it not been for piety I would have been the most cunning of all Arabs.

You have to stick to the word of right in time of contentedness and anger; you have to stick to justice with friend and enemy; you have to stick to contentedness in hardship and well-being. Whoever leaves desire is free. Man's vanity of himself is a proof of his weak mind. The worst provision for the Day of Judgement is aggression on Allah's slaves.

O' Abu Dharr

Imam speech to the great companion of the prophet Abu Dharr Al-Ghifari when the third Caliph exiled him to Al-Rabadhah; it is a deserted place close to Medina, and he sent someone calling to people: "Know that no one should speak to Abu Dharr nor see him off"! people avoided him then except Ibn Abi Talib, his brother Aqeel, his sons Al-Hassan and Al-Hussain and Ammar:

O' Abu Dharr! You felt angry for the sake of Allah therefore have hope in His reward for the sake of whom you felt angry. The people have feared you for their present life and you feared them for your religion. Then leave to them that for which they have feared you and ran away with what you have feared them for. How needy are they for what you have deprived them of and how needless you are to what they are deprived you of. Even if these skies and earth were closed to someone then he feared Allah, then Allah would open an exit for him. Don't be amused but at rightfulness and don't feel an aversion but for wrongfulness. If you had accepted their worldly earnings they would have loved you and if you had gnawed at it they would have felt secure of you.

Whenever someone feels secure

In a letter to Salman Al-Farisi before Imam's Caliphate

And be the most amused by it - this world - the most cautious of it, for its admirer whenever he is assured of happiness it drives it away to an adversity.

O' prophet of Allah, peace be upon you

In a speech said on the occasion of the burial of the Supreme Lady Fatimah

O' prophet of Allah, greeting to you from me and from your daughter who is resident in your neighbourhood and who has hastened to succeed you. O' prophet of Allah, my patience about your purified daughter has been exhausted, and my power of endurance has weakened, except that I have ground for consolation in having endured the great hardship and heart-rending event of your separation. As to my grief it is eternal, and as to my night I am sleepless till Allah chooses for me the abode in which you are now residing.

The Best and the Worst of People

When people went to him and complained to him of what had angered them with Uthman bin Affan, and asked him to speak to the third Caliph and to admonish him for their sake. He went to see him and said:

The people are behind me and they have made me an ambassador between you and themselves; but, by Allah, I do not know what to say to you. I know nothing which you do not know, nor can I lead you to any matter of which are you not aware. You certainly know what we know, we have not come to know anything before you which we could tell you; nor did we learn anything in secret which we should convey to you. You have seen as we have seen and you have heard as we have heard... Then (fear) Allah and have mercy with yourself; for, by Allah, you are not being shown anything of which you are blind, the ways are clear. You should know that the best of Allah's slaves, before Allah is a just Imam who has been guided and guides others. the worst man before Allah is an arbitrary Imam who has gone astray and through whom others have gone. I heard the messenger of Allah saying: "On the Day of Judgement the oppressive Imam will be brought without anyone to support him or anyone to advance excuses on his

behalf, and then he will be thrown into hell where he will rotate as a hand-mill rotates then he will be confined to its bottom.”

I appeal to you by Allah that you should not be the killed Imam of this nation because it has been said that “An Imam of this nation will be killed after which killing and fighting will be made open for them till the Day of Judgement, and he will confuse their matters and spread troubles over them. As a result, they will not distinguish right from wrong. They will surge like waves and would be utterly misled.” You should not be like goaded animals for Marwan drives you wherever he likes, after your seniority of age and expiration of life.

He Appropriated (Wealth) and did it excessively

About the assassination of Uthman

If I had ordered his assassination I should have been his killer, but if I had forbidden others to kill him I would be unable to diagnose my responsibility he who helped him cannot now say that Uthman has been let down by Whom I am better than him and that who had let him down can not say Uthman has been helped by whom better than me. I am putting before you his case. He appropriated (wealth) and did it excessively you have burst out in anger and committed excess too. Allah has a practical verdict in both the appropriator and the impatient rebel.

I am like anyone of you

When people decided to swear allegiance at Imam's hands, after Uthman's murder.

Leave me and seek someone else. We are facing a matter which has (several) faces and colours, which neither hearts can stand nor intelligence can endure, horizons have clouded over the right path changed in symptoms. You should know that if I respond to you I would lead you towards what I know and would not listen to whatever one may say or admonish. If you leave me then I am like anyone of you perhaps I would be the most obedient to whom you make in charge of your affairs. I am better for you as a counsellor than a leader.

The right cannot be invalidated by Anything

Delivered the second day after people had sworn allegiance to him about what he sends back from the lands that had been taken by Uthman, and the money which Uthman had given from the public funds:

O' people, surely I am one of you, I have what you have, and what is your duty is mine. Know that every land Uthman has granted, and whatever money he had given from the public funds, should be resumed to the public funds because the old right cannot be invalidated by anything. By Allah, even if I find that by such money have been married or slave-maids have been purchased I would resume it, because there is a wideness in justice, and he who finds it hard to practice justice should find it harder to deal with prejudice.

O' people, some men of you tomorrow who are engaged in this world enjoyments, then possessed the estate, waded into rivers, rode on horses and purchased enslaved maids, if I prevented them from what they are doing and

set right their rights which they know, should not say: "Ibn Abi Talib had deprived as of our rights! Know that whoever man of the Muhajirin (immigrants) and Ansar (supporters) of the com-panions of the Messenger of Allah sees that he has a better dignity than others because of his companionship, then the priority tomorrow is with Allah since you are slaves of Allah and money is Allah's money and it is divided among you equally, and there is no priority for one to another.

Low persons Become High

Delivered when allegiance was sworn to him at Medina

You should know that the same troubles have returned to you which existed when the prophet was first sent. By Allah who sent the prophet - Peace be upon him - with faith and truth you will be severely sifted, bitterly shaken as in putting the food in a boiling cooking pot till your low becomes high and your high becomes low, some of those who had been left behind would precede and some of those who had preceded would become backward. By Allah, I have not concealed a single word or spoken any lie. Beware that sins are like unruly horses on which their riders have been placed and their reins have been let loose so that they would break with them into Hell. Beware that piety is like trained horses on whom their riders have been placed with their reins in their hands, so that they would take the riders to Heaven. It is a right and a wrong and everyone of them has its followers. He who claims perishes, and he who slanders disappointed. He who opposes right frankly perishes. It is enough ignorance for one that he doesn't know his extent. Hide yourself in your houses and reform yourselves. Repentance is at your back. One should not praise but his creator and shouldn't blame but himself.

May Allah forgive your past sins

Delivered after Uthman's murder, and the beginins of his Caliphate

O' people surely this world deceives him who longs for it and who leans to it. It does not consider him who competes with others to obtain it and overpowers him who overpowers it. By Allah, no people are deprived of the lively pleasures of life after enjoying them, except as a result of sins committed by them, because certainly Allah is not unjust to His slaves. If people, when calamities befall them and pleasures depart from them, they turn towards Allah with true intention and distracted hearts, He will return them every thing that has fled from them and reform all their corrupted concerns, I fear that you are in a period of examination. In the past there had been matters in which you deflected, and in my view you were not worthy of admiration; but if you return to the right path you would be happy. I have only to strive; but if I want to say, I could say, may Allah forgive your past sins!

The Bribe

Delivered to the army officers when he became the Caliph

Now, what ruined those before you was that they deprived people their rights so people had to purchase it (by bribes), and they practiced wrong against them, then they patterned after them.

If you do not Remain righteous

To the officers of his army

Now, it is obligatory on an officer that the distinction he achieves, or the wealth with which he has been exclusively endowed, should not make him change his behaviour towards his subject, and that the riches Allah has bestowed on him should increase his nearness to his people and kindness to his brethren.

Beware, that you have a right on me that I should not delay the fulfillment of any of your rights, and that for me all of you should be equal in rights. When I do all this, it becomes obligatory on you to thank Allah for this bounty and to obey me, and you should not hold back when I call you, nor waste any chance of reform good acts, and you should plunge into adventures for the sake of right. If you do not remain righteous in this, there will be no one of you more humiliated in my view than the one who has deviated, and then I will increase the punishment for him, and he will not find any excuse to avoid this punishment.

Behave Justly with people

To his collectors of land tax

Treat people justly in discharging the rights you owe them and act with endurance with regard to their needs, because you are the treasurers of the people and agents of the nation. For the collection of tax (Kharaj) from people do not oblige them sell their winter or summer clothes, not their cattle with which they work. Do not whip anyone for the sake of one dirham. Do not touch the property of any person, whether he is one who prays (a Muslim), or a protected covenantor.

Do I seek victory by injustice

When he was admonished for practicing equality in the distribution (of shares).

Do you ask me to seek victory by oppressing those over whom I have been appointed? By Allah, I won't do so as long as the world goes on, and as long as one star leads another in the sky. If it has been my property, I would have distributed it equally among them, then how it would be when the property is that of Allah. Beware; certainly giving wealth in other than its right is a wastefulness and lavishness.

People are equal in the right

After swearing allegiance to Imam, Talhah and Al-Zubayr complained to him that he had not consulted them or sought their assistance in the affairs:

You have been angry of a small matter and left aside big ones. Can you tell me of a thing wherein you have a right of which I have deprived you? Or a share which was due to you I have held away from you, or any Muslim who has laid any claim before me and I have been unable to decide it or been ignorant of it, or mistaken its category?

By Allah, I had no desire for the Caliphate nor any interest in government, but you yourselves invited me to it. When the caliphate came to me, I looked into the Book of Allah; I did not need your view or the view point of anyone else, nor has I ignored any judgement so that I ought to

have consulted you or my Muslim brethren. If it were so I would not have turned away from you or from others.

As regards to your mentioning question of equality, this is a matter in which I have not taken a decision by my own opinion, nor have I done it by my desire. But I have found, and you too found, that whatever the prophet brought had been finished with. Therefore, I felt no need to turn towards you about what Allah had been finished with its sectioning. May Allah lead our hearts and yours towards righteousness and may He grant us and you patience, May Allah have mercy on whom he sees a right and helps to get it, or that who found a wrong and rejected it!

To the parties of (the Battle of) Al-Jamal

A letter sent to Talhah, Al-Zubayer, and Aai'shah before the Battle of Jamal

From the slave of Allah, Ali, the Commander of the Faithful, to Talhah, Al-Zubayer, you have known that I did not want the allegiance till I was compelled to it; and both of you were among those who accepted my homage. If you have paid homage obediently, and if you have paid homage to me reluctantly, you have certainly given me the excuse to deal with you for action, by showing your obedience and concealing your disobedience.

And you, o' Talhah, chief of Muhajirin (immigrants), and you, o' Zubayer, the knight of Quraysh: your repulsing this matter before entering into it would have been easier than getting out of it after having accepted it.

And you, o' Aai'shah, you went out of your house disobeying Allah and His messenger seeking a concern of whose responsibility you are free. You claim that you want to reform peoples' relations. Tell me what have women to do with the leading of armies and challenging men!? You requested, as you claimed, Uthman's blood, and Uthman is one of Banu Umayyah while you are from Taim. Then, yesterday, you were saying before a group of the prophet's companions: "Kill Na'athal (i.e Uthman), may Allah kill him as he has become a disbeliever!", then you are, today, demanding his blood! Fear Allah and return to your house, and drop your veil on yourself. Wassalam.

Come out of your Den

His letter to Abu Musa Al-Ashari, his Governor of Kufa, when he learned that he was dissuading the people of Kufa joining the battle of Jamal.

From the slave of Allah, Amir Al-Mu'minin to Abdullah bin Qays:

Now, I have come to know of words uttered by you which go in your favour as well as against you. So, when my messenger reaches you prepare yourself and get ready, come out of your den and call those who are with you.

Set your mind in order, take a grip on your affairs and acquire your share. If you do not like it then get away to where neither you are welcomed nor can you find a salvation.

By Allah, it is a matter of right with a rightful person and I do not care about what heretics do!

The Clear Argument

When Imam approached Basrah an Arab met him - He is known as Kulayb Al-Jarmi - and spoke to him, as he had been sent to him by some people of Basrah to enquire from him on their behalf his position vis-à-vis the people of Jamal. Imam explained to him his position with respect to them, from which he was convinced that Amir Al-Mu'minin was in the right. Then Imam asked him to swear allegiance, but he replied "I am just a messenger of some people and shouldn't do anything till I return to them." Upon this Imam said this wonderful saying:

Suppose that those who have sent you as a forerunner to search out a rain-fed area for them, and your return to them and apprise them of herbage and water but they disagree with you and went towards dry and barren land, what would you do then?

He said: I would leave them and go towards herbage and water. Imam said: So then stretch forth your hand.

This man said: By Allah, by such a clear argument I could not refrain from swearing allegiance to Amir Al-Mu'minin.

And at one time, Imam was asked: with what thing you have overcome your mated challengers? He answered:

I have not encountered any man except he helped me to kill him.

He Tried to Create Misunderstanding from his speech, rich with logic, on Talhah and his attitude towards Uthman's case, before and after his murder.

As for me, I would never be threatened with fighting or be frightened of striking. By Allah Talhah has not hastened to draw his sword to avenge Uthman's blood except for fear that the demand for Uthman's blood be made against himself because the people's idea in this matter is about him, and, in fact, he was the most anxious among them for his killing. Therefore he has tried to create misunderstanding by collecting forces in order to confuse the matter and to create doubt.

By Allah, he did not act in either of three ways about Uthman. If the son of Affan has been in the wrong, as Talhah was claiming he had to support his murderers or resist his supporters. If Uthman has been the victim of oppression, then Talhah should have been among those who were keeping (the assaulters) away from him and of those who defended him and can't be blamed. If he was in doubt about these two states, then he had to leave him and sit aside leaving the men with him. But he has not adopted any of these three ways, and came out with a matter whose category couldn't be known, and its excuses are not free from blame.

I am their same challenger

Abdullah bin Abbas said that: I came to Amir Al-Mu'minin at Dhiqar and saw that he was stitching his shoe. Then, Amir Al-Mu'minin said to me: 'What is the worth of this shoe?' I said: "It has no value now". He then said: "By Allah, it is more dear to me than your leadership but to establish a right and ward off a wrong". Then, he came out and delivered this speech:

I has not shown weakness or cowardice. My present march is also like those. I shall certainly pierce the wrong till right comes out of its side. What have I got to do with Quraysh? By Allah, I have fought them when they were infidels verily I shall fight them when they have been misled. I am their same challenger yesterday and today.

To What I has to Responeded?

From a speech about those involved in the issue of the camel battle:

Beware! Satan has certainly instigated his party and has collected his army in order that oppression return to its places, and wrong may occupy its position. By Allah they have not blamed me for a certain atrocity nor have they dealt justly between me and themselves. They are demanding a right which they have abandoned, and a blood that they have shed. If I has been a partner with them in it then they too have their share of it. But if they have been charged with the authority of demanding the blood but me the liability is no another place but to them. Their biggest argument (against me) is - really - against themselves.

How disappointed is this challenger (of battle)? whom he has challenged? And for what I have to responeded? I am satisfied with Allah's argument against them and His knowing of them. If they refuse (to obey) I will offer them the edge of the sword which is an enough curer of wrong and a deffender of right. It is strange of them to send me a word to come out for challenging spear-fighting and to be patient for combat with swords. May the mourning women mourn over them I have not been to be frightened by fighting nor threatened by clashing. I enjoy full certainty of belief in my creator, I am not suspicious of my religon.

In a Deep area of sea

Condemning the people of Basrah after the battle of Jamal "camel"

You have been the army of a woman and the follower of a quadruped. It grumbled you responeded, and it was wounded you fled away. You morals are mean low, and your pledge is broken. Your religion is hypocrisy. Your water is bitter. He who stays with you is pledged to his sins and he who forsakes you is supplemented with Allah's mercy. By Allah your city would cer-tainly be drowned so much so that as though I see its mosque like the bosom of a bird in a deep area of sea.

They killed them in Captivity and by Treachery

from a sermon Describing the poeople of Jamal

they came out dragging the wife of the Messenger of Allah - the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants - heading with her for Basrah so they imprisoned their women in their houses and showed the imprisoned of the Messenger of Allah to themselves and to others in an army in which there was not a single individual who had not offered me his obedience and sworn to me allegiance quite obediently, without any compulsion. Here in Basrah they approached my governor and treasurers of the public treasury and its other inhabitants. They killed some of them in captivity and others assassinatedly. By Allah, even if they had wilfully killed only one individual Muslim without any offense, I would have the right to kill all that army.

Those Who Fought Against Me

Describing the battle of Jamal

I was afflicted, at the battle of Jamal, by the most extremely brave of all people, and the most wealthy and granting the most obeyed among people,

and the most deep in cunning and pride: I was afflicted by Al-Zubayer who had not turned his face at all, by Ya'la bin Munibah who carries funds on many camels and grants everyone thirty dinars and a horse so as to fight against me, and by Aai'shah who whenever she referred as such except that people follow her and by Talha whose bottom cannot be reached and whose cunning cannot be measured.

Dumb with speaking

Scolding his own companions in Kufa:

If Allah may respite the oppressor His catch would not spare him. He lie in wait for him on the passage of his way.

By Allah in whose hand my life lies, these people will overcome you not because they are more entitled to the right than you but because of their hastening towards the wrong of their leader and your slowness about my right. Nations are afraid of the oppression of their rulers while I fear the oppression of my subjects. I called upon you for war but you did not come. I made you hear but you did not listen. I called you secretly as well as openly, but you did not respond. I gave you sincere counsel, but you did not accept it. Are present people like absent ones and slaves like masters? I recite to you maxims but you turn away from them, and I preach to you with exhortations but you break up away from them. I rouse you for jihad against the people of revolt before I come to the end of my speech, I see you disperse like the sons of Saba. You return to your places and deceive one another to forget your maxims.

O'those whose bodies are present but their minds are absent and whose wishes are scattered. Whose rulers are afflicted with them your leader obeys Allah but you disobey him while the leader of the people of Syaria (Al-Sham) disobeys Allah but they obey him. By Allah, I wish Mu'ayyah exchange with me like dinars with dirhams. So that he takes from me ten of you and gives me one of them.

O' people of Kufa, I have suffered from you in three things and two others: you are deaf in spite of having ears, dumb in spite of speaking, and blind in spite of having eyes. You are neither true supporters in combat nor dependable brothers in distress.

Do Not Revenge on an Enemy

A letter to Abdullah bin Abbas, his governor of Basrah. He had been treating Beni Tameem hardly as they were with Talhah and AL-Zubayr at Jamal. He exiled most of them. This became very hard for Imam Ali whose big heart refuses revenge. He wrote to Ibn Abbas, preventing him, blaming him, stating a fact we are these days overlooking: the Head of the state is responsible as well for the actions of his officers whom the statesman appointed on people's affairs ... he said:

Speak to them amicably of this place pleased with good treatment and loosen the knots of fear from their hearts.

I have come to know of your strictness with Benu Tameem and your harshness to them. O' Abu Al-Abbas, may Allah have mercy on you, keep yourself restrained in whatever you say or do, good or bad about your people, as we are partners in this. Strive to be according to my good

impressions about you, do not change my opinion! About you towards weakness.

The Women

Delivered after Jamal on dispraising women

Beware of evil women and be on your guard even with those who are good. Do not obey them even in good thing least they may not crave for evils.

Bad Masters

About the mischief mongering of Banu Umayyah

Indeed the worst trial for you in my view is the trial of Banu Umayyah, because it is blind and dark. By Allah, you will find Banu Umayyah after me the worst masters for you, like the old unruly she-camel who bites with its mouth, beats with its fore-legs, kicks with its hind legs and refuses to be milked. They will remain over you till they wouldn't leave one of you except who benefits them. their calamity will continue till your revenging on them become like the revenge of the slave on his master or like the revenge of the fellower on his leader. Their trial will come to you distorted, ugly and frightful cut off pieces.

No Bricks nor Wollen Tents

Describing Banu Umayyah

By Allah, they would continue their sinful behaviour till they would not leave an unlawful act before Allah but they commit it and no knot of contract but they would loosen it, and till there would remain no house of bricks or of woolen tents but their oppression would enter it, and till the two weepers begin to cry, the weeper for his religion and the weeper for this world; and the revengful one of you on one of them would be like the revenge of a slave on his master, namely when he is present he obeys him, but when he is absent he backbites him!

A broad-pharynxed person

From a speech of him to his com-panions

Verily after me a person would overpower you with a broad mouth and a big belly. He swallows whatever he gets and craves for what he does not get! He would command you to abuse me and to renounce me. As for abusing, you do abuse me because that would mean purification for me and salvation for you. As regards renunciation, you should not renounce me because I have been born on the natural religion (Islam) and preceded to (accepting) faith and migrating.

Greediness of the Wealthy

A letter to Mu'ayyah which contain Imam's right view to the wealthy people whose appetite for funds incre-ase when their properties increases.

So now, this world diverts man from other things. He who is devoted to it achieves nothing of it except it increases his greed and coveting for it. He

who is devoted to it is not satisfied with what he gets of it to do without what he has not got. Eventually there is the separation from what he has amassed, and the undoing of what he twisted. If you had taken a lesson from the past you. Should have preserved what remained. Wassalaam.

With the right

Mu'ayyah wrote to Imam to grant him Al-Sham; so Imam wrote in reply to Mu'ayyah's letter:

As for your demand to grant you Al-Shaam, I cannot give you today what I have denied you yesterday. As regards your saying that the war has eaten up the Arabs save its last breath, you should know that he whom right has eaten up goes to Paradise and he whom wrong eaten up goes to Hell. As for our equality in war and in men, certainly you aren't more sharp in doubt (of belief) than me in certainty (of belief).

The Carrier of Dates to Hajar

(4)

In reply also to Mu'awiyah

Now, your letter has reached me wherein you recall that Allah Has chosen Muhammad (s.w.a) for His religion and helped him by those companions who helped him, time has concealed from us something wonderful of you as you have started telling us of Allah's favor for us and His bounties to us through our Prophet. In this matter you are like the person who carries dates to Hajar, or who challenges his own master to a duel in archery!

Then you have mentioned my attitude with Uthman, and in this matter you have the right to be answered because of your kinship with him. So (now tell me), which of us was more inimical to him and who had done more to bring about his killing; or who offered him his support but he asked him to sit down and stop him; or that whom he called for help but he relaxed and drew his death nearer to him till his fate overtook him? I wouldn't offer my excuse for had been angry with him for certain action of his, for if my good counsel and guidance to him has been the sin then very often a person may be blamed without a sin.

Fear Allah

A letter to Mu'awiyah

Fear Allah in what you have and consider His right on you, and turn, and turn to understand what you are not excused to ignore. Your ego has pushed you towards evil, thrown you into pitfalls, driven you to destruction and made your paths rough.

You have Ruined A generation of people

A letter to Mu'awiyah

You have ruined a big generation of people whom you have deceived by your seduction, and have flung them into the currents of your sea where darkness had covered them and misgivings tossed them about. So they have strayed from the right path and turned back on their heels,. They withdrew backwards and depended on their ancestorries except some who returned of clear - sighted men.

The fraud of child

From a reply to a letter to Mu'awiyah

You have stated that I have killed Talhah and Al-Zubayr, forced A'ishah out of her house and invaded the two cities (Kufa and Basrah). This has been a matter with which you have no concern as you were absent nor do the apologize in it to you.

You have said a lot about Uthman's murderers. You first join what the people have joined i.e pay homage then bring the charged people to trial before me and I shall settle the matter between you and them according to the Book of Allah, the Sublim. As to that at which you aim it is the intrigue to deceive the weaned child of milk by a nipple.

Glory be to God how strange O' Mu'awiyah

A letter to Mu'awiyah

Glory be to God! How keen do you cling to fabricated desires with ignoring the facts. As regards your prolonging the dispute about Uthman's murder certainly you have defended Uthman when it was really your own assistance and you forsook him when the defence was his, Wassalam.

He Deceives and Commits Evils

Describing his conduct and that of Mu'awiyah

By Allah, Mu'awiyah is not more cunning than I but he betrays and commits evil deeds. If I don't hate deceit I would be the most cunning of all men.

The Price of Swearing Allegiance

He did not swear allegiance till he put a condition that he would pay him its price. The hand of this purchaser may not be successful and the contact of the seller may face disgrace. Now you should take up arms for war and arrange equipment for it.

Eaters of bribe

A letter, whose some meaning has been mentioned, sent to a group of his companions:

You but are fighting the eaters of bribe, the salves of this world, hereies and fabrications I have been known that the son of the whore (Amru bin Al-Aa's) did not swear allegiance to Mu'a-wiyah till he got him agree that he would pay him a bribe which is the greatest of all what is at his hands of authority. May the hand of this seller, of his religion by his world, be empty. May the hand of this purchaser the support of a treacherous, wicked man by people's money, be soiled with earth. (i.e. become poor).

You have Ruined Your this and the next World

To Amru bin Al-A'as when he accede to Mu'awiyah

You have surely made your religion subservient to this worldly seekings of a man whose misguidance is apparent and whose veil had been torn away. Nobleman is disgraced by his company and prudent is befooled by his associaton. You have followed in his steps seeking his surplus like the dog that follows the lion resorting to his paws and waiting for whatever remnants of his prey fall down to him. Thus, you have ruined your this

world as well as the next life, although if you had stuck to the right, you would have got what you were after. If Allah grants me power over you and Ibn Abi Sufyan (Mu'awiyah) I shall penalize you for what you have done.

I shall Inflict Upon you

A letter to Ziyad ibna Abee, his governor of Basrah

I truthfully swear by Allah that if I come to know that you have misappropriated the funds of Muslims, small or big, I shall inflict upon you such punishment which will leave you empty handed, heavy backed and humiliated; Wassalaam.

Enjoying Comforts

From A letter to Ziyad ibna Abee too:

Do you expect that Allah may give you the reward of humble person while you yourself vainglorious in His view? And do you hope that He may give you the reward of those practising charity while you enjoy comforts and deny them to the weak people and widows? Certainly man is awarded according to what he has done and meets what he has sent forward.

Beware of Mu'awiyah

From A letter to Ziyad ibn Abih when Imam knew that Mu'awiyah had written to Ziyad to deceive him to attach him to himself in kinship.

I have learnt that Mu'awiyah has written to you to deceive your wit and blunt your sharpness. You should be on guard against him because he is the Satan who approaches the believer from the front and from the back, from the right and from the left, to break into his inadvertance and overcome his intelligence.

All men to us are Equal

A letter to Sahl ibn Hunayf Al-Ansari, his Governor of Medina, about certain persons who had accede to Mu'awiyah

Now, I have come to know that certain persons from your side are stealthily acceding to Mu'awiyah. Do not feel sorry for their numbers and what you lose of their help. It is enough for them that they have gone into misguidance and for you that you have been relieved of them. They have known justice, seen it, heard and perceived it. They have realized here that, to us, all men are equal in the matter of right. Therefore, they ran away to selfishness and partiality. So, away with them and let them far away. By Allah, they have surely not fled from an oppression nor do they proceeded to a justice.

O' you semi-men

From a sermon after Sufyan Ibn Auf of Banu Ghamid invaded Al-Anbar; Mu'awiyah had sent him to raid over people the sides of Iraq. To frighten its inhabitants.

The horsemen of Banu Ghamid have reached Al-Anbar and killed Hassan ibn Hassan Al-Bakri. They have removed your horsemen from their garrison and killed virtuous men of you I have come to know that the person of them has been breaking into Muslim women and the other women under protection of Islam and took away their ornaments from legs, arms, necks and ears and no woman could resist it except by reciting the verse of Quran, "We are for Allah, and to He we shall return." Then they got back laden with wealth without any wound or loss of life. If any Muslim dies of grief after all this he is not to be blamed but rather there is justification for him before me How strange! How strange! By Allah my heart sinks to see unity of these people on their wrong and your dispersion about your right. Woe and grief befall you as. You have become a target at which arrows are shot. You are raided on but you don't raid, you are invaded but don't invade. Allah is being disobeyed and you remain agreeable to it. When I order you to make a raid on them in summer you say it is hot weather. Respite us till heat subsides from it. When I order you to march in winter you say it is severely cold; give us time till cold clears from us All this are just excuses to flee from heat and cold so you from sword flee more quickly, by Allah, semi-men not men, your intelligence is that of children and your wit is that of women. I wish I have not seen you nor known you. By Allah, this acquaintance has brought about regret and resulted in distress. May Allah fight you! You have filled my bosom with rage and counteracted my plans by disobeying and deserting me so much so that Quraysh started saying that the son of Abi Talib is brave but does not know (the tactics of) war.

May Allah orphan them is there anyone more stubborn in war and older in practicing it than I? I undertook it as I hadn't reached twenty yet, and here I am, exceeding sixty, but one who is not obeyed has no opinion.

Even If I Strike Him With My Sword

Even if I strike the nose of a believer with this, my sword for hating me he does not hate me, and even if I pour out all the riches of this world in the lap of a hypocrite to love me he doesn't love me.

Will There Be Talk Without Action

Rebuking his dissuasive companions:

O' people, your bodies are together but your desires are divergent. Your talk softens hard-stoned mountains and your action tempts your enemy into you. If one calls you the call receives no heed. And he who suffers from you his heart has no solace. Which dwelling after your dwelling do you protect and with which Imam after me would you go for fighting? By Allah, really deceived is the one whom you deceive while, by Allah, he who won you had won the most abortive lot. By Allah, I am now in a position that I neither believe in your speech nor hope for your support, not threaten the enemy with you. What is the matter with you? What is your treatment? What is your cure? The other party are also men like you. Will there be speech without action, carelessness without piety and a baseless hope?

I Don't Improve You By Corrupting Myself

From a speech admonishing his companions too:

How much do I deal with you smoothly such as old worn clothes are dealt with, as they when sewed from one side get torn from the other. Do you whenever a brigade from Al-Sham draws near you, everyone of you shuts his door and hides himself like the lizard in its hole or a hyena in its den. By Allah he whom you support is humiliated. By Allah, you are numerous in courtyards but few under banners. Certainly, I know what can improve you and straightens your crookedness. But I do not improve your condition by corrupting myself!

Determining Without Hurry

Some of his companions suggested preparation to fight with him, after he sent Jarir ibn Abdillah Al-Bajali to Mu'awiyah:

My preparation for war with the people of Al-Sham while Jarir is still there would be a closing the door for Al-Sham and prevention of its people from a good action if they intend doing it. My opinion is to determine without hurry.

I have meditated and reflected upon this matter thoroughly from all its sides but I do not find any way except war or heresy. There had been over the people a ruler who brought about new unislamic practices and gave people the reasons to speak so they spoke them they resented and changed.

I Am Tired Of Rebuking You

To mobilize people for fighting with the people of Al-Sham

Woe to you. I have become tired of rebuking you. When I invite you to fight your enemy your eyes revolve as though you are in the clutches of death, and in the senselessness of last moments. You are like nothing but camels whose shepherd have strayed, so that whenever they are collected from one side they disperse from the other side! You are intrigued against but do not intrigue. Your boundaries are decreased but you do not get enraged. Your enemy do not sleep but you are unmindful. By Allah, spineless people are subdued. By Allah, I think about you that when battle rages and death hovers around you, you will cut away from the son of Abi Talib like the severing of the head from the trunk. By Allah he who gives his enemy the chance to remove his flesh, crush his bones and cut his skin into pieces, then it means that his helplessness is great and what is surrounded within the sides of his chest (i.e his heart) is weak. You be that person if you wish, as to me before I accept it there would be an encounter with sharp-edged swords in which the moths bones of skulls fly; thereafter let Allah do what ever He likes!

The Continuity Of State

Deliver at the battle of siffin

So now, Allah, the Glorified, has, by giving me the authority, have created the right you owe to me, and I owe you like what you owe me. As right is the most vast in description but the most narrow in practice. It does not accrue to any person unless it accrues against him also, and right does not accrue against a person unless it also accrues in his favour.

Then, he the Glorified made of his rights, rights for some people on others. He made them so as to equate with one another and some of them

entail some other rights and some rights don't become valid except by some others. The greatest of these rights that Allah, the Glorified, has made obligatory is the right of the ruler over the ruled and the right of the ruled over the ruler. The ruled cannot prosper unless the rulers are sound, while the rulers cannot be sound unless the ruled are sincere. If the ruled discharge the rights of the ruler and the ruler discharges their rights, then justice becomes mightly among them, criterion of justice become clear consequently time will improve, the continuance of government will be expected, and the hopes of enemies disappointed. But if the ruled gain sway over the ruler, or the ruler prejudiced the ruled, then disagreement crops up in every direction sings of inequity appear. Then desires are acted upon, the Allah's commands are counteracted, diseases of spirits become numerous and there is no hesitation in disregarding even great rights, nor in committing big wrongs. In such circumstances virtuous humiliated while vicious are honoured.

No person, however great his position in the matter of right, is above being helped to carry on the obligations placed on him by Allah, and no man, however small he may be regarded by others, and however humble he may appear before the eyes, is less than rendering help or being helped.

Here, one of Imam's companions replied to him by a long speech where he praised him much and mentioned his own listening to him and obeying him, imam said this prominent saying:

In the view of virtuous people, the worst characteristic of rulers is that it may be thought about them that they love haughtiness, and their affairs may be taken to be based on pride. I would really hate that you may absorb, That I love high praises or to hear eulogies. By the grace of Allah I am not like this so do not address me in the manner tyrants are addressed, and do not be discreet of me as you do the people of passion and do not associate with me with flattery and do not think I find it heavy if a true thing is said to me, as that who feels disgusted when a truth is said to him or justice is placed before him he would find it more difficult to act upon them! Do not, so, abstain from saying a truth or pointing out justice since I do not regard myself above erring.

Peace Is Prior

When Imam's companions showed impatience on his delay in giving them permission to fight in Siffin

Well, as for your saying is all this (delay) is due to a hatred of death!? Then by Allah I do not care whether I proceed towards death or death advances towards me as for you saying that it may be due to my suspicious about the people of Al-Sham, well, by Allah, I did not put off war even for a day except in the hope that some group may join me, find guidance through me and see my light with their weak eyes. This is dearer to me than killing them in the state of their misguidance although they draw on themselves the burden of their sins.

The Honourable Instruction

Given to the army before the encounter with the enemy at Siffin

Do not fight them unless they begin the fighting, because, by the grace of Allah, you have a plea that you are in the right and to leave them till they begin fighting will be another plea in your side against them. If, by the will of Allah, the enemy is defeated then do not kill a run away, do not strike a helpless person, do not finish off a wounded person, and do not excite women by any harm even though they may attack your honour with filthy words and abuse your officers!

O' my Allah! Save the Victor From Excesses

When imam decided to fight the enemy at Siffin

O' my Allah! The God of this earth which Thou has made it an abode for people and a place for the movement of insects and beasts and countless other creatures seen and unseen and The God of strong mountains which Thou hast made as pegs for the earth and a shelter for creatures. If Thou givest us victory over our enemy, save us from excesses and keep us on the straight path of truth. But if Thou givest them victory over us, then grant us martyrdom and save us from misguiding.

O' my Allah! Reform relation between us and them

From a speech of his in Siffin, Imam had heard some of his men abusing the people of Al-sham in reply to their abusing him:

I dislike you to be abusers, but if you describe their deeds and recount their situations that would be a better mode of speaking and a more convincing way of arguing. Instead of abusing them you should say:

“O'Allah! Save our blood and their blood, reform the relation and eradicate enmity, and lead them out of their misguidance so that he who is ignorant of the truth may know it, and he who inclines towards excess aggression refrain from it.

He Spoke with Their Tongues

From a sermon of his

They have made Satan the criterion of their affairs, and he has taken them as his traps. He has laid eggs and hatched in their bosoms. He creeps and crawls in their laps so He sees through their eyes, and speaks with their tongues. In this way he has led them to slippery paths and adorned for them stupidity like the action of one whom Satan has made partner in his domain and speaks untruth through his tongue.

They Made Them Officers Over The Heads

Someone asked Imam about fabri-cated traditions and contradictory sayings spreading among people, he said:

Certainly, what is at the hand of people is right and wrong, true and false. Allah too had warned you well about the hypocrites and described them fully to you. They have remained after the Holy Prophet. They made advances to the leaders of misguidance and callers towards Hell through falsehood and slandering. So, they inducted them into high offices made them rulers over people and amassed wealth through them. People are always with rulers and after this world except those whom Allah safeguards.

Two Kinds

His speech on those who love and hate him:

Two categories, with regard to me, will be ruined, namely he who loves me too much and the love takes him away from rightfulness, and he who hates me too much and the hatred takes him away from rightfulness. The best one with regard to me is he who is in the middle course. So be with him and be with the great majority because Allah's hand is with the majority.

And from his speech on those:

Two categories of persons will face ruin on account of me: he who loves me with exaggeration, and he who hates me intensely.

Sahl bin Hunayf Al-Ansari died at Kufa after his return from the battle of Siffin and he was very much loved by Imam as he was one of the strongest supporters of Imam in the way of right. Imam said thereafter:

Even if a mountain loves me it would crumble down.

Just Leaders

Imam went to enquire about the health of his companion Al-Ala' ibn Ziyad Al-Harithi and when he noticed the vastness of his house said:

What do you do with this vast house in this world? Don't you need this house more in the next world? Yes, you can use it to attain the next: you can entertain in it guests and be regardful of kinship and to pay all your obligations according to their categories. In this way you can use it to serve your next life.

Then Al-Ala' said to him: O' Amir Al-Mu'minin: I want to complain to you about my brother Asim ibn Ziyad. He said: What is the matter with him? Al-Ala' said: He has put on a woolen gown and cut himself away from the world. Imam said: present him to me. When he came Imam said:

O' enemy of yourself. Certainly, the evil (Satan) has mis-guided you. Do you feel no pity for your wife and your children? DO you think that Allah has granted you these benevolences and He dislikes you to take it? You are less important to Him to treat you so.

He said: O' Amir Al-Mu'minin, you actually put on coarse dress and eat rough food.

Imam replied: Woe unto you, I am not like you. Allah has made it obligatory on just leaders that they should maintain themselves at the level of weak people lest the poor feel very sad for his poverty.

If I Am Given The Domains Of The Seven Stars

From a speech describing himself as a guard of public funds after his brother Aqil destituted and asked him to give him some grain:

By Allah, I would rather pass a night in wakefulness lying on the thorns of Al-Sadan (plant having sharp prickles) or be driven in chains as a prisoner is dearer to me than meeting Allah and his Messenger on the Day of Judgement as an oppressor of some slaves or a usurper of some thing of the wreckage of this world.

By Allah, even if I had been given all the domains of the seven (stars) with all that exists under the skies in order that I may disobey Allah by ripping of one grain of barley from an ant I would not do it. For me your world is meaner than a leaf in the mouth of a locust chewing it. What has Ali to do with a passing away bounty and a vanishing appetite? We do seek

shelter of Allah from the sleep of mind and the ugliness of mistakes, and from Him we seek help.

Moved By Storms

I has been like a mountain which neither sweeping wind could move nor storms could shake. No one could find fault with me nor could any speaker wink at me. The weak in my view is strong till I restore his right and deliver it to him while the strong is in my view weak till I take right from him.

Were it not for the dyespepsia of the Oppressor and hunger of the Oppressed

From a sermon of his called Alsheq-sheqeiah

... Till the third man of these people stood up heaving his breasts i.e his stomach is too full of food. With him the sons of his father also stood up swallowing Allah's wealth like a camel devouring the foliage of spring till his actions finished him off and his dyespepsia stumble him down. At that moment nothing took me by surprise, but the crowd of people rushing to me from every direction they advanced towards me in a rushing way that Hasan and Husayn were crushed and both the ends of my shoulder garment were torn. They gathered around me like a resting herd of sheep and goats. When I took up the reins of government one party breached of homage and another turned disobedient while the rest began acting wrongfully as if they had not heard the word of Allah saying: "That abode in the hereafter, we assign it for those who intend not to exult themselves in the earth, not (to make) mischief therein; and the end is (best) for the pious ones. Yes, by Allah, they had heard it and understood it but the world appeared glittering in their eyes and its embellishments seduced them. Behold by Him who Has split grain and created spirits hadn't the presence of those present been and hadn't the presence of supporters exhusted my argument and hadn't Allah obligated on theology scientist not to acquiesce in the gluttony of an oppressor and the hunger of an oppressed I would have cast the rope of it i.e Caliphate on its withers, and would have irrigated its last with the cup of which I had irrigated its first and you would have seen that in my view this world of yours is cheaper than a sneezing of a goat.

People of Tirck

Surely, fulfillment of peldge is the twin of truth. I do not know a better shield than it. One who has realized the reality of return never betrays. We are in a time in which most of the people regard betrayal as wisdom. Ignorant people attributed them to excellence of cunning. What is the matter with them? Allah may destroy them. One who has been experience through thick and thin of life may see the way of the trick but there is a detterrent of Allah's piety so he gives it up after seeing it with eyes and after being able to act upon while that who has no religion seizes its appportunity.

You and your brother, the Human being

A commandment to his son Al-Hassan after Siffin

O' my son, make yourself the criterion between you and others. Thus, you should desire for others what you desire for yourself and hate for others what you hate for yourself. Do not oppress as you do not like to be

oppressed. Do good to others as you like good to be done to you. Regard as bad of yourself whatever you regard bad of others. Accept that (treatment) from others which you would like others to accept from you. Do not talk about what you do not know even though what you know is little. Do not say to others what you do not like to be said to you.

O' my son, beware, lest you become deceived by the leanings of people to wordly attractions and their rushing upon it. Allah has told you about it, and it has announced to you her death (mortality) and unveiled to you its evils. Those (who go) after it, surely are like barking dogs or devouring carnivore one growls at the other. The stronger of them eat away the weaker and the big of them tramples over the small.

Know that one whose mount is night and day is being moved on with though he is stopping, and he is covering the distance even though he is resident and resting.

Keep yourself away from every blemish even though they may take you to your desired aims, because you can not gain a worthy recompensation for what you spend of your dignity. Do not be the slave of others for Allah had made you free. The good which is not achieved but through evil is not good, and a facility that is achieved through (disgracing) hardship is not a facility.

Associate with people of virtue, you will become one of them. Part with people of vice, you will be distinguished from them. The worst food is that which is unlawful. Oppressing a weak person is the worst oppression.

Oblige yourself to associate with your brother when he break off; when he turns away be kind to him; when he withhold spend for him; when he goes away approach to him; when he is harsh be lenient; when he commits a wrong think of an excuse for it so much so as though he is the benevolent master over you. Be lenient to him who is harsh to you for it is likely that he will shortly become lenient to you. Treat your enemy with favours. If you intend to cut yourself off from a friend leave some scope for him from your side by which he may resume friendship if it so occurs to him one day. If anyone had a good intention about you prove it to be true. Do not waste the right of your brother depending upon your terms with him, for he is not your brother whom you waste his interests. Your brother should not be more able in his breaking off kinship than you in establishing them, and you should exceed doing good to him than his evil to you. The reward of him who has pleased you is not to displease him.

How bad it is to bend down at the time of need and to be coarse in adequacy. If you feel sorry for what has gone out of your hands then you has to feel sorry for all that which didn't reach your hand. Infer about what has not yet happened from what has already happened, as occurrences are ever similar. Do not be like those whom preachment does not benefit him unless it overdoes in painning him.

He who gives up moderation commits excess. The friend is he who keep your right during your absence. Many a distant one is nearer than a near one and many a near one is more distant than a distant one. The stranger is he who has no beloved, con-sult about the companion before the way and the neighbour before the house, when governor changes time changes too.

Listen To My Saying

Addressing the Kharijites, going to their camp:

Were all of you with us in Siffin? They replied some of us were but some of us were not.

Imam said: Then would you divide yourself into two groups. One of those who were in Siffin and other of those who were not present there, so that I may address each with its suitable speech. Then he shouted to the people:

Stop talking and keep quiet to listen to what I say. Turn your hearts to me. Whomever we ask for witness, he should give it according to his knowledge of it.

Then he delivered a long speech with them during which he said:

Haven't you said when they raised the Qu'ran as a deceit, craft, artifice and cheat "They are our brothers and our comrades in accepting Islam. They wanted us to cease fighting, and sought ease through the Book of Allah, the Glorified, so let us agree with them and end their troubles." Then I said to you: "This is a matter the outer side of is Faith but the inner side is aggression. Its beginning is pity and its end is sorrow. Consequently, you should stick to your way, and remain steadfast on your path. You should press your teeth in jihad and should not pay heed to a croaker. If he is answered he would mislead, but if he is left he would be humiliated."

But when this thing (Arbitration) was done I found that you agree to it. By Allah, if I had refused it, it would not have been obligatory on me. Nor would Allah have laid its sin on me. And by Allah, now if I have accepted it, I alone am the rightful person who should be followed, for certainly the Qu'ran is with me. I never forsake it since I have accompanied it. We have been with the Prophet in battles where in those killed our fathers, sons, brothes, and relations of one another. Nevertheless, every trouble and hardship just increased us in our belief, in our treading upon the right path, in submission to (divine) command and in enduring the pain of wounds. We now had to fight our brethren in Islam because of what is inserted into Islam of misguidance, crookedness, doubts and (wrong) interpretation. If we find any way by which Allah may gather us together in our disorder and by which we may draw nearer to each other and protect the remains between us we would accept it and would give up other means.

They Abandoned The Right Despite Their Seeing It

Revealing to the Kharijites the doubt they fall in

If you insist that I have mistaken and been misled. Then why do you consider the majority of the nation of the Prophet Muhammad have gone astray by my error, and accuse them with my wrong, and hold them unbelievers on account of my sins. You are holding your swords on your shoulders and striking with in wrong positions and confusing those who have com-mitted sins with those who have not.

May you have no father!, I have not caused you any misfortune, nor have I deceived you in any matter, nor created any confusion. Your majority had unanimously agreed to choose two men they deviated from it, and abandoned the right although both of them were looking at it. This wrongdoing was their desires so they carried it out, our reservation that they

should. Practice justice and stick to rightfulness had preceded the deviation of their vice and the unfairness of their decision.

I Am Your Herald

Threatening the people of Nahrawan before they started fighting him:

I am your herald not to be killed on the bank of this canal and on the level of this low area without a clear excuse before Allah nor any open authority with you. You might be flung into death have come out of your houses and ensnared by the divine decree. I had forbidden you the acceptance of this arbitration but you rejected my advice like adversaries and opponents till I turned my ideas towards your wishes. You are a group whose heads are devoid of wit and intelligence. May you have no father. I have not put you in any calamity nor wished you harm.

Where are the Amalekites?

Imam Ali delivered this sermon at Kufa standing on a stone which Ja'adah ibn Hubayral AL-Makhzumi had placed for him. He had put on a woolen apparel on his body, the belt of his sword was made of leaves and the sandals on his feet too were of palm leaves:

I advise you, slaves of Allah, to fear Allah who had dressed you good apparels and bestowed an abundance of sustenance upon you. If there was anyone who could secure a ladder to everlasting life or a way to avoid death it would be Sylayman Ibn Dawud who was given Control over the domain of the Jinn and men with prophethood and great position, but when he finished what was his due in food and exhausted his time the bow of destruction shot him with the arrows of death, His houses became vacant and his habitations became empty. Another group of people inherited them. Certainly, the by - gone generations have a lesson for you.

Where are the Amalekites and sons of Amalekites? Where are the Pharaohs? Where are the people of the cities of Al-Rass who killed prophets, put the light of messengers' traditions off and revived the traditions of the tyrants? Where are those who advanced with armies, defeated thousands, mobilised forces and populated cities?

Where is Ammar?

Of the same previous sermon

Beware, the coming things of this world has runaway and what is running away of the next life has come. O' virtuous people of Allah, departure is resolved to begin. What loss did our brothers whose blood was shed in Siffin suffer by not being alive today? Drinking as we do turbid water. Where are my brethren who took the (right) path and trod in rightness. Where is Ammar? Where is Ibn Al-Tayyihan? Where is Dha Al-Shahadatayn? And where are their likes of their comrades who had pledged themselves to death and whose (severed) heads were posted to the wicked enemy?

Pride, Fanaticism, and Transgression

Known as Al-Qasi'ah: Sermon of Disparagement

Do not be like him who feigned superiority to the son of his mother without any distinction given to him by Allah except what feeling of pride

has prompted in himself of the enmity and the fire of anger has been kindled in his heart and what the Satan blew into his nose his own vanity, after which Allah gave him remorse.

Allah! Allah! In feeling proud of your vanity and boasting over ignorance as they are the bellowses of Satan with which he has deceived past nations and by gone generations.

Do not obey the allegers (of Islam) whose dirty water you have drunk by your clean one, and whose wrongs you allow to enter into your rightful matters. They are the foundation of vice. Satan has made them carriers of misguidance and soldiers with whom he attacks men. They are interpreters through whom he speaks in order to steal away your wits, enter into your eyes and blow into your ears. In this way he makes you the target of his arrows, the foothold of his footsteps and a handle for his hands. Take a lesson from what afflicted previous arrogant nation of Allah's agony. Take admonition from their lying on their cheeks and falling on their sides, and seek Allah's protection from the motives of pride, as you seek His protection from calamities!

I cast my glance and noticed that no one in the world, except you, feels proud of anything without a cause which may appeal to the ignorant, or a reason which may deceive the minds of the fools, now you feel proud of something for which no reason is discernable, nor any ground. As for Satan he felt proud over Adam because of his origin and taunted him with his creation, since he said: "I am of fire, while you are of clay". In the same way the rich groups of prosperous communities have been feeling proud of their riches, as Allah said: "And said they: We are more in wealth and in sons, and we shall not be chastised."

In case you cannot avoid pride, your pride should be of good qualities, praiseworthy acts, and admirable matters with which the dignified and noble chiefs distinguished themselves, such as attractive manners and high thinking. You too should feel proud of praiseworthy habits such as protecting the neighbourhood, the fulfillment of pledges, obedience to charity, opposition to the motives of haughtiness, abstention from aggression, keeping aloof from blood-shed, doing justice to people, suppressing anger and avoiding corruption on the earth.

You should also fear what calamities had befallen nation before you because of their evil deeds and detestable actions. Remember, their good or bad circumstances and what happened to them, and be cautious not to become like them.

Indeed Allah Has commanded me to fight those who trans-gress and who break the pledge, and spoilers on the earth. As regards pledge-breakers. I have fought them; as regards deviators from truth, I have waged holy war against them, and as regards those renegaded, I have subdued. As for the Satan of the pit, I has dealt with him through a strike the loud cry of which the scream of his heart and shaking of his chest was also heard. Only a small portion of the aggressors has remained. If Allah allows me one more chance over them I will annihilate them except a few remnants that may remain scattered in the suburb of the cities.

Certainly I belong to a group of people who care not for the reproach of anybody in matters concerning Allah. Their countenance is that of the truthful persons and their speech is that of the virtuous. They are wakeful flourishing the nights with worship and thinking and over beacons in the day. They do not boast nor betray, nor spoil, nor create mischief. Their hearts are in Paradise, while their bodies are busy in fulfilling (good) acts.

The world is being Wrapped From Behind you

An instruction to Muhammad Ibn Abi Bakr when Imam appointed him Governor of Egypt. It reminds of the circumstances of the world, urges the rulers to be just and kind lest they be tortured - which is expressed in a highly wonderful genius of eloquence:

You are the quarry of death. If you stop, it will catch you, and if you run away from it, it over takes you. It is more attached to you than your shadow. Death is tied to your fore-locks while the world is being wrapped from behind you. Therefore, fear a fire whose bottom is deep, whose heat is severe and whose torture is renewed. Wherein there is no mercy, and no call is heard.

The Law of Governors

A letter written for Al-Ashtar Al-Nakhai when Imam appointed him Governor of Egypt. It is the longest and grandest of his letters and instructions, and the most comprehensive in containing the laws of civil dealings, general rights and special treatment in Imam's approach. Besides, it is the most wonderful that the mind and heart have produced in stating the relation between the ruler and the ruled, concept of government, Imam preceded his age by a thousand year as what this law contains of affairs uttered by the bright mind and good heart.

Then, know, O' Malik that I have sent you to a district where have come to pass governments of both justice and deviation people will now watch your dealings as you used to watch the dealings of the rulers before you, and they will criticize of you what you criticised of them. Surely the virtuous are known by the reputation that Allah circulated for them through the tongues of His slaves. Therefore, the best provision with you should be the provision of good deeds. So, control your desires and be stringy to yourself with what is not lawful for her, because being stingy to oneself, means demanding justice from oneself to others of what onelikes and dislikes Habituate your heart to mercy for the subject and to love and kindness for them. Do not treat them like a greedy lion who seize the chance to devour them, since they are of two kinds, either your brother in religion or a counterpart to you in creation. They commit slips and subjected to diseases. They may act wrongly, wilfully or by mistake. So, give them of your forgiveness and pardon, as you like Allah to extend His forgiveness and pardon to you, because you are over them, and your responsible Commander (Imam) is over you while Allah is over him who has appointed you.

Give Allah's and peoples's rights from yourself and from your near relatives and from those whom you love because if you do not do so you fall in injustice and when one oppresses the slaves of Allah, then, instead of His slaves, Allah becomes his opponent. Nothing is stronger to change Allah's

bounty or to hasten His retribution than continuance of oppression, because Allah hears the invoking of the oppressed and is waiting in ambush for the oppressors.

The way most coveted of you should be that which is the most moderate in right, the most universal profiting in justice, and the most comprehensive with regard to the contentedness of the commons because the disagreement of the common people sweeps away the agreement of the upper class while the disagreement of the upper class can be forgiven with the agreement of the common people. No one among the governor's subject is more burdensome to the ruler in the comfort of life, less helpful in distress, more disliking of equitable treatment, more insistent in asking favours, less thankful at the time of giving, most slow in accepting the excuse at the time of withhold, and weaker in endurance at the time of distress of life than the upperclass.

Unfasten every knot of hatred in the hearts of people and cut away from yourself the cause of every enmity. Do not hasten to give credence to an informant because an informant is a cheater although he looks like those who wish well.

The worst minister for you is he who had been a minister for mischievous persons before you, and who joined them in sins. He should not be a suite for you, because they are assistant of sinners and brothers of oppressors.

You can find among them a good substitute of those who have never assisted an oppressor in his oppression or a sinner in his sin. Then, let the most preferable among them for you should be that who openly speak bitter truths before you and who support you the least in those of your actions which Allah does not approve to His friends, where ever this one may be near or far from your wishes. Associate yourself with God-fearing and truthful people; then train them, not to praise you or please you by a great action you have not performed.

The virtuous and the vicious should not be in equal position before you because this means renouncing the virtuous from virtue and encouraging of the vicious of vice, keep everyone in the position in which he has put himself. Know that nothing is more conducive for the good opinion of the ruler on his subjects than extending good behaviour towards them lighten their hard-ships, and avoid compelling them to unbearable troubles. You should, therefore, in this way follow a course by which you will leave a good impression with your subjects, because such good opinion will relieve you of great worries. Certainly, the most appropriate for good impression of you is he to whom your behaviour has not been good.

Keep on increasing your conversations with scholars and your discussions with the wise, to stabilize what the prosperity of the areas under you and to continue with that in which the earlier people had remained steadfast.

Put in charge of your forces the man who is in your view the most sincere to Allah, His Prophet, and your Imam the most pure - pocketed and the highest of them in endurance is he who is slow in getting enraged, accepts

excuse, be kind to the weak, and is strict with the strong; violence should not excite his temper and weakness should not hold him back.

The most pleasant thing for the ruler is the establishment of justice in their territories and the manifestation of the love of their subjects, but the subjects' love manifests itself only when their hearts are sound. Their good wishes prove correct only when they protect their commanders, and do not regard their rule as a heavy burden over them.

Attribute to every one his action, do not attribute the performance of one to the other. The high position of a man should not lead you to regard his small deeds as big, nor should the low position of a man make you regard his big deeds as small.

For the settlement of disputes among people choose the most distinguished of your subjects in your view. The cases should not vex him, by appellants should not be enraged, he should not insist on slip; he should not lean towards greed and should not content himself with a cursory understanding without going thoroughly into it. He should be most ready to step (to ponder) on doubtful matters, most regardful of arguments, least disgusted at the dispute of litigants, most patient of probing matters and most fearless at the time of passing judgement. When truth becomes clear praise should not make him boast and temptation should not make him lean (to any side). Such people are very few. Then, very often check his decisions and allow him so much money that cures his disease he has no excuse worth hearing (for not being honest) and there remains no occasion for him to need others. Give him that dignity among your audience for which no one else among your dignitaries hopes, so that he remains safe from being assassinated (in fame) by others in your view.

Thereafter, look into the affairs of your executives. Appoint them as a test, and not because of favouritism or partiality because these two things constitute sources of injustice and treason. You should also check their activities and have people who report on them who should be truthful and faithful, because your watching their activities secretly will urge them to preserve trust with and to be kind to the people. Be careful of assistants. If anyone of them extends his hands towards a misappropriation and the reports of your reporters reaching you confirm it, that should be regarded enough evidence. You should then inflict corporal punishment on him and recover what he has misappropriated. You should put him in the position of disgrace, blacklist him with misappropriation and make him wear the necklace of shame for his offence.

Look after the revenue (land tax) affairs in such a way that those engaged in it remain prosperous because in their uprightness lies the uprightness of all others. The others cannot prosper without them, because all people are dependent on revenue and its payers. You should also aim at the cultivation of the land more than at the collecting of revenue because revenue cannot be possessed without cultivation and whoever asks for revenue without cultivation, ruins the countries and brings death to the people. His rule will not last for long. The remission granted by you to the removal of distress from them should not be found heavy for you, because it is a reserve which they will return to you in the shape of the prosperity of your country.

For prosperity is capable of bearing whatever you spend on it. The ruin of the land is caused by the poverty of the cultivators, while the cultivators become poor when the rulers concentrate on the collection (of money), having little hope for remaining (in their offices) and driving no lesson from past warning.

Then you should take care of your secretarial workers. Put the best of them in charge of your affairs, who should not be ignorant of his dignity and his own position in matters because he who is ignorant of his own position is even more ignorant of the position of others. Your selecting of them should not be on the basis of your physiognomy, confidence and your good impression, because people introduce themselves to rulers through affectation and good personal service and after that there is no well-wishing or trustfulness. Whenever defect is there in your secretaries which you overlook, then are held responsible of it.

Now take some advice about traders and industrialists. Give them good counsel whether they are settled (shop-keepers) or travelling traders because they are the sources of profits and the means of provision. Look after their affairs in your presence or where they may be in your area. Know, along with this, that most of them are very narrow-minded, and ugly stinginess. They monopolize goods for profiteering and ask high prices for goods. This is a source of harm to the common people and a blot on the rulers in charge. Forbid people from monopolizing because the Messenger of Allah has prohibited it. The sale should be easy, with correct weights and prices, not harmful to either party, the seller or the purchaser; whoever commits monopolizing after you have prohibited it, punish him severely without excessiveness.

Take care for the sake of Allah of His obligations towards the needy for which He has made you responsible. Allot for them a share of your public funds because in it the remote ones have the same shares as the near ones. All these people are those whose rights have been specified in your charge. Therefore, a luxurious life should not keep you away from them. You cannot be excused for wasting small matters in order to decide big problems. Consequently, do not be unmindful of them, nor turn your face from them out of vanity. Take care of the affairs of those of them who do not approach you because they are of unsightly appearance or those whom people regard as low; since of all of the subjects these people are the most deserving of equitable treatment; take care of the orphans and the aged who have no means (for livelihood) nor are they ready for begging. This is heavy on rulers; in fact All right is heavy.

And designate a time for complainants wherein you make yourself free for them, and sit for them in a common meeting and feel humble there in for Allah who has created you. You should keep away (on that occasion) your army and your assistant such as the guards and the police so that anyone who like to speak may speak to you without stammering, because I have heard the Messenger of Allah saying in more than one place, "The people among whom the right of the weak is not secured from the strong without stuttering will never become sacred". Tolerate their awkwardness and inability to speak. Keep away from you narrowness and haughtiness.

Then there are certain matters which you cannot avoid performing yourself such as, replying to your Governors when your secretaries are unable to do so, or disposing of the needs of people when your assistants shirk disposing them fulfill the work of everyday for everyday has its own work.

Then, do not keep yourself secluded from your subject for a long time, because the concealment of those in authority from the subjects is a kind of narrow-mindedness and a deficiency of knowledge about their affairs. Concealment from them also prevents them from knowing of those things which they are concealed from and as a result they begin to regard big matters as small and small matters as big, good matters as bad, and bad matters as good, truth becomes confused with falsehood. After all, a governor is a human being and cannot have knowledge of things which people keep hidden from him. There is not symptoms on the face of truth to distinguish various expressions of falsehood. Then you are no one except one of two kinds of men: either you are a truth generous in granting rights; and then why this hiding in spite of (your) discharging the obligations and good acts that you perform? Or, you are inflicted with stinginess; in that case people will soon give up asking you since they will lose hope of generous treatment from you. In spite of that there are many needs of the people towards you which do not involve any hardship on you, such as the complaint against an oppression or a request of justice in a matter.

Then, a governor has a group of special people and a suite. They misappropriate and audacious and do not observe justice in matters. So terminate the circumstances of which those profit to harm common people. Do not make any land grants to your hangers or suite. They should not expect of you the possession of a land or another thing which may cause harm to adjoining people over the question of irrigation or common services whose burden the grantees lay on others. So they enjoy its advantages than you, while the disgrace will lie on you in this world and the next.

Apply rights to whom soever it is due, whether near you or far from you. In this matter, you should be enduring and watch-ful even though it may involve your relations and favourites, and keep in view the reward of that which appears burdensome on you because its result is commendable.

If the subjects suspect of a prejudice, explain to them your excuse openly and remove their suspicion with your explanation, because this is a training for your soul and a kindness to the subjects and not to be blamed then. While this explanation will secure your aim of keeping them straightened on truth.

Do not reject a peace to which your enemy may call you and wherein there is a content of Allah, because peace brings rest, and relief from your worries and a security for your country. If you conclude on agreement between yourself and your enemy or enter into a pledge with him then fulfil your agreement and discharge your peldge faithfully. Plea yourself as a shield to protect your self from violating the pledge . do not betray your pledge and do not abolish an agreement, and do not deceive your enemy. Do not enter into an agreement which may admit of different interpretations and do not change the interpretation of vague words after the conclusion and

confirmation (of the agreement). If an agreement involves you in a hardship do not seek its repudiation after giving Allah's pledge without a justification.

Do not strengthen your authority by shedding prohibited blood because this will weaken and lower the authority, moreover destroy and shift it. You have to excuse before Allah and me for killing willfully.

Avoid reminding them of your obligation on your subjects for having done good to them or praising your son actions, or making promises and then breaking them, because reminding of obligation invalidates good, self-praise takes away the light of truth, and breaking promises leads to the hatred of Allah and people.

Avoid haste in matters before their time, laxity at their proper time, or being weakened when they become clear. Assign every concern its proper place and do every job at the appropriate time.

Do not appropriate to yourself a thing in which people have an equal share, nor be regardless of matters which have come to light that you are accountable for others. Shortly, the curtains of all matters will be removed from your view and you will be required to render redress to the oppressed. Have control over (your) sense of prestige, any outburst of anger, the power of your arm and the sharpness of your tongue. Guard against all this by avoiding haste, and delaying severe action till your anger subsides and you regain your self - control.

It is necessary for you to recall how matter went with those who preceded you and their just government or praiseworthy tradition of our Prophet. You should strive to follow what I have enjoined upon you in this document in which I have exhausted my argument over, least you have an argument when your soul hastens towards her desires. I ask Allah that He may grant us his help to me and you to have always a clear argument before Him and His slaves.

Limits of Tax

Written to whoever Imam has been sending to the collection of "Zakat" and Charities. It is full of the ruler's kindness - the father - and is worthy to be stated in the law of the ideal state of which the distinguished people dream:

When you reach a Quarter reside at their watering place without going among their houses. Then proceed towards them with tranquility and dignity till you stand among them. Then salute them and do not be remiss in greeting them, then say to them:

"O, slaves of Allah, the "waali" of Allah and His caliph has sent me to you to collect from you Allah's share in your properties. Is there anything of His share in your properties? If so, give it to His vicegerent."

If someone of them says "No", then do not repeat the demand. If someone speaks to you in the affirmative, then go with him without frightening him, threatening him, pressuring him, or oppressing him. Take what he gives you, of gold or silver. If he has a cattle or camels do not enter upon them save with his permission, because their major part is his. Therefore, when you get there do not enter upon them like one who has full

control over them or in a violent manner. Do not scare any animal, do not tease anyone and do not let the owner feel grieved about anyone. Divide the property into two parts and let the owner choose one. When he has chosen do not object to it. Then divide the remaining into two parts and let him choose one and when he has chosen do not raise any objection. Continue to do so till remains only that which is enough to satisfy Allah's due. Then take Allah's due from it. If he showed dissatisfaction repeat the operation, then mix the two parts and repeat what you had done before till you take Allah's due from his properties.

The Silly and Traders

From a letter of Imam sent to the people of Egypt sent with Malik Al-Ashtar when he was made Governor of that place:

By Allah, if I encounter them alone and they are numerous as to fill the earth to the full, I don't worry or become perplexed. I have clear insight and certainty that I am in the right path and they are misguided. But I grieve that silly and wicked people come to power and control the affairs of this nation then they grib the funds of Allah as their own property and enslave His slaves, fight against virtuous, and ally with the sinful. If this had not been I would not have insisted on gathering you, reprehending you, mobilising you and urging you.

The Bribed in Judgement

O' (people of) discordant minds and scattered hearts, whose bodies are present but wits are absent. I lead you towards right, but you run away from it like goat's running away from the howling of a lion. How hard it is for me to generate a light from you to eradicate darkness and uncover justice, or to straighten the curve of truthfulness.

O' my Allah! Thou knowest that what we had done was not to seek power nor to acquire anything from the vanities of this world. We rather wanted to restore the real signs of Thy religion and to usher prosperity into Thy cities so that the oppressed among Thy slaves might feel safe.

You certainly know that leadership should not be given to a miser as his greed would aim at their wealth, nor be an ignorant as he would estrange them from him with his rudeness, nor should be he who deals unjustly with wealth, thus he associates with some except another, nor should he who accepts bribe while taking decisions as he would waste rights.

Along with the Oppressed

I want you for Allah's sake but you seek me for your own benefits. O' people! Help me against yourself (desires). By Allah I will restore the right of the oppressed from the oppressor and will lead the oppressor from the string of his nose (like an ox) and drag him to the spring of right even though he is reluctant.

Money is for People

Abdullah ibn Zama'ah who was one of his followers came to Imam to ask for some money, he said:

This money is not mine nor yours! The earning of their hands cannot be for other than their mouths.

A Trust

To Al-Ash'ath ibn Qays: Imam's Governor of Azarbayjan

Certainly, your assignment is not a gain for you, but it is a pledge round your neck. It is not for you to be oppressive to a subject; you have in your hands funds of Allah's to whom belongs Might and Majesty, and you are one of His treasurer till you pass it on to me. Probably I will not be one of the bad rulers for you, wassalam.

I shall strike you with my Sword

To one of his officers when he snatched some of the public funds and fled to Al-hijaz.

As soon as it was possible for you to misappropriate the Ummah's trust, you hastened to turn around and attack them, and made a swift leap to snatch away whatever you could from their property meant for their widows and their orphans as the quick wolf snatches the wounded and helpless goat. Then you happily loaded it off to the Hijaz without feeling guilty for having appropriated it.

How can you enjoy food and drink when you know that you are eating and drinking an unlawful food and drink. Fear Allah and return to these people their properties. If you do not so and Allah grants me power over you I shall punish you to the limit that I am not blamed before Allah about you and strike you with my sword with which I hadn't striken anyone but he enters Hell.

By Allah, even if Hasan and Husayn had done what you did there would have been no leniency with me for them and they could not have won their way with me till I had restored from them the right and eradicated the wrong produced by their unjust action.

The Ruler and Bribe

To Uthamn ibn Hunayf Al-Ansari, Imam's Governor of Basrah, when he knew that the people of Basrah had invited Uthman to a banquet and he had attended:

O' Ibn Hunayf, I have come to know that a man of Basrah invited you to a feast and you hastened towards it. Foods of different colours were being chosen for you and bowls were brought to you. I never thought that you would accept the feast of a people whose poor is neglected and their rich is invited.

Realize that your Imam has contented himself with two shabby pieces of cloth out of the world, and two loaves for his food. Certainly, you cannot do so but at least support me with piety, striving, chastity and uprightness, because, by Allah, I have not treasured any gold out of your world nor amassed plentiful wealth nor prepared for my old clothe a substitute, nor possessed a tiny span of its land. If I wished I could have taken the way leading towards pure honey, fine wheat and silk clothes but it cannot be that my desire overcomes me and my greed takes me to choose good meals while in the Hijaz or in Yamamah there may be that who have no hope of getting a piece of bread or who does not remember his last satiety. Shall I lie with a satiated belly while around me there are hungry bellies and thirsty livers? Shall I be content with being called 'Amir Al-Mu'minin' (the

commander of the believers), without sharing with the people the hardships of life? I see as if one of you would say that if this is what the son of Abi Talib eats then weakness must have made him weak to fight his challengers and encounter the brave. Don't they remember that the tree of desert is solid-trunked, while green twigs have soft bark, and the wild bushes are very strong for burning and slow in dying off. By Allah if the Arabs join together to fight me I will not surrender.

The Ruler and Desires

To Al-Aswad ibn Qutbah, the Governor of Halwan

Now, if the governor's desires separated they prevent him from practicing many sorts of justice. All the people should be equal in right before you, because there is no compensation in injustice for justice. So avoid what you renounce its likes.

Know that nothing can make up for right at all. One of the rights on you is that you should protect yourself and to do your best in looking after the subjects.

Behave Humbly

Behave humbly with the people, meet them large-heartedly, keep yourself lenient, accord them equal treatment in glance and gesture and in greeting, so that the strong should not expect injustice from you in their favour and the weak should not be despondent of your justice to them.

Teach the Ignorant

TO Qutham ibn Al-Abbas, His Governor of Mecca

Teach the ignorant and discuss with the learned. There should be no intermediary between you and the people except your tongue, and a chamberlain save your own face. Do not prevent any needy person from meeting you, because if it is chased away from your doors in its arrival then you wouldn't be praised for meeting it.

See what has been collected with you of the funds of Allah and spend it over the persons with families, the distressed, the starved on your part. Then, send the remaining to us for distribution to those who are on our part. And ask the people of Mecca not to charge rent from lodgers...

The Treacherous Rulers

To AL-Mundhir ibn Jarud Al-Abdi who had misappropriated certain things given into his administrative charge:

If what has reached me about you is correct, then the camel of your family and the strap of your shoe is better than yourself. A man with qualities like yours is not fit to fortify a borderline city, nor for performing any deed, nor for increasing his position, nor for taking him as a partner in any trust, nor for trusting him against misappropriation. Therefore, come to me as soon as this letter of mine reaches you if Allah so will.

Noble Morals

To Al-Harith Al-Hamdani

Avoid every such action which is performed in secret and from which shame is felt in the open. Also avoid any action about which if the doer is

questioned he denies it or aspologized for it. Do not relate to the people all that you hear, for that would be enough to contain lie do not contest all that people relate to you for that would be enough to ignorance. Forgive when you have power (to punish), show forbearance in the state of rage, and pardon with authority.

Avoid the company of the wicked because vice adjoins vice. Keep off anger because it is one large army of Satan's armies.

People of Greed and People of poverty

You are in a time in which good doesn't increase but turning away and eveil doesn't increase but advent, and satan in destroying people but covertness.

Cast your glance over people wherever you like, Do you see but a poor man suffering from poverty, or a rich man who has changed Allah's bounty into infidelity where are your good people? Where are your virtuous people? Where are your high-spirited men and generous men? Where are those of you who avoid deceit in their business and remain pure in their behaviour? Have they not all departed from this ignoble world? Have you not been left among people who are just like rubbish and so mean that the two lips cannot meet even to condemn them scornfully. Allah may curse those who advise good but they themselves avoid it, and those who desist others from evil but they themselves act upon it!

The ignorant Judge

About those who sit for judgement among people, but are not fit for it

Till when he has quenched his thirst from a polluted water and treasurd up of cheap metals, he sits among people as a judge respons for explaining what ever is confusing to the others. If an ambiguous problem intercepted him he manages a shabby mean-ingless argument about it of his own accord and passes judge-ments on its basis. In this way he is entangled in the confusion of doubts as in the spider's web, not knowing whether he was right or wrong. If he is right he fears lest he erred, and if he is wrong he hopes he is right. He is ignorant, wandering astray in ignorance.

He scatters the traditions as the wind scatters the dry leaves. Whatever he does not know he does not assume to be a knowledge it worth knowing. He does not think that there is beyond his reach a view. If anything is not clear to him he concealed it because of what he knows of his own ignorance. Lost lives are crying for help against his unjust verdicts, inheritances are grumbling against him.

I complain to Allah about a community who live ignorant and die misguided. For them nothing is more worthless than Qura'n if it is recited as it should be recited, nor anything more valuable than the Qur'an if its verses are misinterpreted, nor anything more vicious than virtue nor more virtuous than vice.

He Judges According to His view

When a problem is put before one of them he passes a judgement on it from his view. When exactly the same problem is placed before another one

of them he passed on an opposite verdict. Then these judges go to the Imam who had appointed them and he confirms all their verdicts, although their Allah is one, their Prophet is one, their Book (the Qur'an) is one.

Their learned Man is Hypocrite

Describing the people of his time:

Know that you are living at a time when those who speak of right are few, when tongues are blunt to utter the truth, and those who stick to the right are humiliated. The people of this time are engaged in disobedience. Their youths are Quarrelsome, their old men are sinful, their learned men are hypocrites. Their youths do not respect their elders, and their rich men do not provide for the destitute.

They act through doubts

It is not that every man with a heart is intelligent, every ear does not listen, and every eye does not see. I wonder, and why shouldn't I wonder, about the faults of these groups who have introduced alterations in their religious proofs. They act on the doubts and tread in (the way of) their desires. For them good is whatever they consider good and evil is whatever they consider evil, their resort for resolving distress is to themselves. Their confidence in regard to dubious matters is in their own opinions as if everyone of them is the leader (Imam) of himself. As if he has decided himself he considers it to have been taken through reliable sources and solid bonds.

Scold the self

O' slaves of Allah, weigh yourselves before you are weighed, and call it to account yourselves before you are called to account. Breathe before the suffocation of the throat. Be submissive before you are harshly driven. Know that He who is not helped in acting as his own adviser and scold then no one else can (effectively) be his adviser and scold.

Beware

Speaking to his son, Al-Hasan:

O' my son, you should avoid making friends with a fool because he may intend to benefit you but may harm you; you should avoid making friends with a miser because he withdraws from you when you need him most; you should avoid making friends with a sinful person because he sells you for nought; and you should avoid making friends with a liar because he is like a mirage, he shows you remote things as near and near things as remote.

Agreement And Disagreement

O' people do not feel desolated in the path of right because of the fewness of its runners, because people have thronged round a table (of this world) whose satiety doesn't last, but whose hunger lasts for a long time.

O' people contentment and anger is what gathers people to be treated as one community.

O' people he who treads the clear path reaches the spring of water, and whoever disobeys he falls into misdirection it strays into waterless desert.

Hypocrisy and Injustice

Beware from destroying your morals and changing them. Certainly the tongue of a believer is after his heart, while the heart of a hypocrite is after his tongue; because when a believer intends to say some thing, he thinks it over in his mind. If it is good he discloses it, but if it is bad he lets it remain concealed. While a hypocrite speaks whatever comes to his tongue, without knowing what is in his favour and what goes against him,

As for the injustice That will not be left unquestioned, it is the injustice of slaves against one another. For your unity in respect of a right which you dislike is better than you scattering away in respect of a wrong that you like. Blessed is the man whose own defects keep him from the defects of others, so that he is engaged in himself and people are in comfort of him.

The Tribe

O' people! Surely no one can do without his tribe and their defence by hands and tongues. They are the most of all people to keep him and can ward off from him his troubles, and they are the most kind to him when tribulations befall him.

Whoever holds up his hands from his kinsmen, they loose only one hand, but at the time of his need many hands remain held up from helping him.

The dispositions

Describing man's disposition

It (the heart) has the drugs of wisdom and things contrary to wisdom. If hope is widened to it, eagerness humiliates it and when covetousness increases greed ruins it. If anger rises in it a serious rage develops. If it is blessed with pleasure, it forgets to be cautious. If it is frightened precaution busied it. If he feels secure inadvertence leads him astray. If it earns wealth, luxury spoils him. If trouble befalls it, impatience disgraces it. If it faces starvation, distress overtakes it. If hunger attacks it weakness cripples it. If he eats to the excess, dyspepsia pains it. Thus, every shortness is harmful to it and every excess is spoiling to it.

Time and its people

At a time when virtue is dominant in the world and among people, if a person entertains an evil intention about another person of whom nothing evil has been seen, then he has done unjust. And at a time when corruption is dominant in the world and among people, if a man entertains a good intention about another person he has flung himself in danger.

Many a Fasting Person

On fasting and prayer

Many a fasting person of whose fast gain nothing but just hunger and thirst, and many an offerer of prayers of whose prayer gains nothing but wakefulness and hardship. The sleep and not fasting of the tactful (God-knowing) is far better.

Categories of People

From a sermon describing the bad natures of the people of his time

O' people we have been borne in such a wrongful and thankless period wherein the virtuous is deemed vicious and the oppressor goes on advancing

in his excesses. We do not make use of what we know and do not ask of what we do not know. We do not fear calamity till it befalls. People are of four categories: among them is that who is not prevented from mischief but by his low position, bluntness of his edge and paucity of wealth. Then there is he who has drawn his sword, openly commits mischief, and has devoted himself to securing wealth, leading troops, rising on the pulpit and has allowed his faith to perish. How bad is the trading that you allow (enjoyment) of this world to be a price for yourself. And among them is he who seeks this world through actions meant for the next world, but does not seek the next world through actions of this world. He keeps his body calm (in dignity), raises short steps, tucked up his clothes, embellishes his body for trust - worthiness and uses the position of Allah's veiling as a means have held him back from seeking authority. This keeps down his position and he has named it contentment and he clothes himself with the robe of asceticism.

Then there remain a few men in whose case the remembrance of their return (to Allah on doomsday) has cast down their eyes, and the fear of resurrection has shed their tears. Some of them are scared away and dispersed; some are frightened and oppressed; some are quiet as if muzzled; some are praying sincerely, some are grief-stricken and pain-ridden whom fear has confined to namelessness and humiliation has covered them. They preached till they became tired, they were oppressed till they were disgraced and they were killed till they remained few in number. So learn from those who preceded you before those who follow you learn from you, and refuse it realizing its ugliness as it has refused those who has been more enchanted by it than you.

With every wind

Describing the people of his time:

The common riffraff who run after every caller and bend in the direction of every wind. They haven't been enlightened by knowledge and haven't sought shelter in a secure locality.

Many a small person overcomes a big one.

Avoid speaking during meetings of fear, since fear bewilders the mind from which you acquire, and engages it with protecting the self rather than protecting the doctrine that you like to support. Also avoid anger from the one who compels you to it, because anger spoils the thought and prevents from verification. Avoid the sessions which does not allow justice in the equality between you and your apponent in matter of attention and listening, and their holders have no morals that prevent them from passing an unjust judgement in your favour or against you. Avoid speaking to him who does not understand you as he makes you tired. Avoid undervaluating the opponent since it prevents caution. Many a small person overcomes a big one.

His lamp at Night was the Moon

A wonderful speech about Muhammed and christ

Certainly, in the Prophet of Allah - peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his progeny - was sufficient example for you and a proof concerning the meanness of the world, its defects, the multitude of its disgraces and its evils, as its sides has been folded for him, while its flanks had been spread for others; he was weaned from its milk and turned away from its adornments.

If I desire I will tell you about Isa (Christ) son of Maryam (Mary). He used a stone as his pillow, put on coarse clothes, and ate rough food. His condiment was hunger. His lamp at night was the moon. His shade during winter was just the expanse of earth eastward and westward. His fruits and flowers were only what grows from the earth for the cattle. He had no wife to allure him, nor wealth to deviate, nor greed to humiliate him. His two feet were his mount and his two hands were his servant.

Like Christ's Manner

It is related by Nawf Al-Bikali that: I saw that one night Amir Al-Ma'minin, peace be upon him, came out of his bed and looked at the stars, then he said to me: O' Nawf, are you awake or sleeping? I said: "I am awake, O' Amir Al-Mu'minin." Then he said:

Blessed be those who abstain from this world and are eager for the next world. They have taken this earth as a floor; its dust a bed-cloth; and its water a perfume; they took the Qur'an as their undercloth and supplicate as their blanket and then they are cut off from the world like Isa (Christ).

Do not say of what you Do not know

The qualities of the virtuous:

O' slaves of Allah, the most beloved slave of Allah is he who has enjoined upon himself justice. The first step of his justice is the rejection of desires from his heart. He describes right and acts according to it. There is no good which he has not aimed at nor any likely place (of virtue).

O' people, do not say what you do not know, because most of the right lies in what you deny. Accept the apologize of one against whom you have no argument.

Their speech is to the point, their Gait is Humble.

It is related that a companion of Ibn Abi Talib called Hammam said: O' Amir Al-Muminin, describe to me the pious men in such a way as though I see them" . Imam avoided the reply, then he spoke of the pious wonderful speech, some of which is:

Now then, Allah, the Glorified, the sublime had created the creatures (its things) without any need for their obedience and safe from their sinning, because the sin of anyone who sins does not harm Him nor does the obedience of anyone who obeys benefits Him. He has distributed among them their livelihood, and has assigned them their positions in the world. Thus the God-fearing in it are the people of virtues. Their speech is to the point, their dress is moderate and their gait is humble. They keep their eyes closed to what Allah has made unlawful for them, and they put their ears to that knowledge which is beneficial to them. They remain in the time of trials as though they remain in comfort. If there had not been fixed periods (of

life) ordained for each, their spirits would not have remained in their bodies even for the twinkling of an eye.

They are not satisfied with their meagre good acts and do not regard their major acts as great. They always blame themselves and are afraid of their deeds. When anyone of them is spoken of highly, he says: "I know myself better than others, and my Lord knows better than I know. O' Allah, do not deal with me according to what they say, and make me better than they think of me and forgive me which they do not know."

One of the symptoms of anyone of them is that you find that he has determination along with leniency, faith with conviction, moderation in riches devotion in worship, endurance in starvation, endurance in hardship, vitality in guidance and abstain from greed. He transfuses knowledge with forbearance, and speech with action. Good is expected from him. Evil from him is not feared. He forgives him who is unjust to him. He gives to him who deprives him, and he behaves well with him who behaves ill with him. Indecent speech is far from him, his speech is lenient, his virtues are ever present. He does not commit unjust to him whom he hates, and does not commit sin for the sake of him whom he loves. He admits truth before evidence is brought against him. He does not call others bad names, he does not cause harm to his neighbour, he does not feel happy at others' misfortunes, he does not enter into wrong, and does not go out of right. He suffers of himself while others feel at rest of him, and makes people feel safe from himself. His keeping away is not by way of vanity or feeling of greatness, nor his nearness by way of deceit and cheating.

His keeping away from others is by way of asceticism and purification, and his nearness to those to whom he draws near by way of lenience and mercifulness.

The Hypocrites

They change into many colours, and adopt many ways. In every path there is one of their victims and they have a mean to approach every heart, and they have tears for every grief. They lend each other eulogies and expect reward from each other. When they ask something they insist on it, if they blame they unveil, and if they pass a verdict they commit excess. They have prepared for every truth a wrong way, for every erect thing a tilted, for every living being a killer, for every door a key, and for every night a lamp. They attempt to reach their greedy aims by despair, in order to maintain with it their markets, and to popularize their ornamented merchandise.

It Has Become Eternal For Them

Describing those who deserted this world:

The approach of danger do not frighten them, and the adversity of circumstances does not grieve them. They do not mind earthquakes, nor do they pay heed to thunders. They are departed and not waited. They are present but don't attend. They had been together but are now scattered. Their accounts are unknown and their houses are silent, not because of duration of time or distance of place, but because they have been made to drink a cup (of death) which has changed their speech into dumbness, their hearing into deafness, and their movements into stillness.

They are neighbours not feeling affection for each other, and friends who do not visit each other. The bonds of their knowing each other have been worn out and the connections of their friendship have been cut asunder. Everyone of them is therefore alone although they are together, and they are strangers, even though friends. They are unaware of morning after a night or an evening after a day. The night or the day when they departed has become eternal for them.

Carrying Them Towards Their Dangers

Describing the present world:

Its dweller is a traveller, and its resident is departing. It is drifting with its people like a ship when severe winds dashes in the deep sea. Some of them sinks and die, while some others escape on the surface of the waves, where winds push them with their currents and carry them towards its horrors. So whoever has sunk cannot be restored, and whoever escapes is on the way to perdition.

They Were Of Longer Ages

Caution about the states of this world:

So now, certainly I caution you against this world for it is sweet and green, surrounded with lusts, is ornamented with hopes and decorated with deception.

No person gets a rejoicing from this world but succedes it with tears, and no one gets its comforts in the front but to face hardships in the rear. It is just worthy of this world that in the morning it supports a man but in the evening it does not recognize him. If one side is sweet and pleasant the other side is bitter and distressing. No one secures enjoyment. From its freshness but he has to face hardship from its calamities. No one would pass the evening under the wing of safety but that his morning would be under the feathers of the wing-tips of fear.

How many a man relied on it but it distressed him; how many a man felt peaceful with it but it knocked him down; how many a man were prestigious but it made him mean and how many a person was proud but it made him humiliated. Its realm is spoliated., the strong in it is defeated and the rich is afflicted with misfortune. Its neighbour is plundered.

Are you not (residing) in the houses of those resided before you, who were of longer ages, more lasting traces, and farther hopes, were more in numbers and had greater armies. How they devoted themselves to this world and what adevotion it was how they showed preference to it and what a preference it was! Then they departed it without any provision that could convey them through. Did you informed that she accepted to pay a ranoom for them or had she given them any support, or afforded them a good company?

Woe to your inhabited streets

Describing the destiny of Barrah

Woe to your inhabited streets and decorated houses with their wings like the wings of vultures and trunks like the trunks of elephants; from those people whose murdered is not mourned and their lost is not searched for. I

have turned this world over on its face, valued, it according to its (low) value, and looked at it with its own eye.

O' my Allah! Our mountains have dried up

Seeking rain, full of kindness, sympathy, humbleness to the Creator of the Cosmos and the glory of existence

O' my Allah! Surely our mountains have dried up and our earth has become dusty. Our cattle are thirsty and are bewildered in their enclosures. They are moaning like the moaning of mothers for their dead sons. They are tired of going to their meadows and longing for their watering place. O' my Allah! Have mercy on the groan of the groaning and the yearn of the yearning.

O' my Allah! We have come out to Thee when the years of drought have crowded over us like thin camels, and clouds have disappointed us. Thou art the hope for the afflicted and succour for the seeker. We call thee when the people have lost hopes, cloud has been denied and cattle have perished, that do not punish us for our deeds and do not call to account for our sins, and spread Thy mercy over us through raining clouds, rain fed blossoming, amazing vegetation, and heavy down pours with which you enliven what have died and restor with it all what has been lost. O' my Allah, give rain from Thee which should be life giving. Satisfying, thorough, wide-scattered, purified, blissful, plentiful and invigorating. Its vegetation should be exuberant, its branches full of fruits and its leaves green. With it Thou reinvigorates the weak among Thy slaves, and revive the dead among Thy cities. O' my Allah! Irrigate us with which our high lands get covered with green herbage, streams get flowing, our sides grow green, our fruits thrive, our cattle prosper, our farflung areas get watered and our dry areas get its benefit, with Thy vast blessing!

Backbiting

Preventing the backbiting of people:

Those who do not commit sins should take pity on sinners and other disobedient people. Gratefulness to Allah should be mostly their indulgence. How it would be with the absent who blames his absent brother and disgraced him with his affliction.

O' slave of Allah! Do not be quick in exposing anyone's sin for he may be forgiven for it and do not feel yourself safe even for a small sin as you may be punished for it!

Today Goes and Tomorrow Comes

Know, O' slaves of Allah! That your oneself is a watcher over you; your limbs are watchmen and truthful vigil-keepers who preserve your actions and the numbers of your breaths. The gloom of a dark night cannot conceal you from them, nor can closed doors hide you from them. Surely tomorrow is close to today.

Today departs with all that it has and tomorrow will com following it. It is as though everyone of you has reached the place of his solitude. So what a house of loneliness a residence of solitary and an isolated exile!

Alas! The Journey is Far

It is related that when Dhirar ibn Hamzah Al-Dibabi went to Mu'awiyah and Mu'awiyah asked from him about Imam Ali, Dhirar said: I stand witness that I have seen him on several occasions when night had spread and he was standing in the niche (of the mosque) holding his beard, groaning like a man bitten by a snake and weeping as a grieved man, saying:

O' world, o' world! Get away from me. Why do you present yourself to me? Or are you eager for me? May you don't get that opportunity to impress me. Deceive other than I. I have no concern with you. Your life is short, your importance is little and hope in you is mean humble. Alas! The provision is little, the way is long, the journey is far, and the goal is hard to reach! The summoning is difficult.

The Nature Of Existenc

A sermon indicating imam's deep realization of nature and conditions of existence:

(in this world) with every dosage there is a choke and with every morsel there is chocking. You do not get any benefit in it except by foregoing another and no one among you advances a day in age except by the taking away of a day from his life. No meals is renewed to one unless a previous one was exhausted. No mark appears for him unless a mark disappears. Nothing new comes into being unless a new becomes old. No new crop comes up unless a crop has been reaped. Those roots are gone whose offshoots we are.

He Has Run in it A Luminous Moon

Imam recalls the creation of the earth and the sky:

When Almighty created the openings of atmosphere, expanse of horizons and strata of winds. He flowed into it a water whose waves were stormy and whose surges leapt one over the other. He loaded it on the dashing wind and breaking typhoons. Then Almighty created forth a wind and intensified its motion. Then He ordered the wind to raise up deep waters and to intensify the waves of the oceans. So the wind churned it like the churning of curd and pushed it fiercely into the horizons throwing its front position on the rear and the stationary on the flowing till its level was raised.

Then He decorated them with stars and the light of meteors and hung in it the shining sun and a luminous moon under a revolving sky, and a moving ceiling.

The Rising Of Water

Describing Allah's Omniscience

Allah knows the goals of besats in the forests, the sins of slaves in seclusions, the intersecting of whales in deep seas and the clashing of water by stormy winds!

Creation Of Bat

An example of Allah's fine production, wonderful creation and deep sagacity which He has shown us in these bats which keep hidden in the daylight although daylight reveals everything else, and are mobile in the night although the night shuts up every other living being; and how their

eyes get dozzled and cannot make use of the light of the sun so as to be guided in their movements and so as to reach their known places through the direction provided by the sun. Allah has prevented them from moving in the brightness of the sun and confined them to their places of hiding instead of going out at the time of its shining consequently, they keep their eyelids down in the day and use night as a lamp and go with its help in search of their livelihood. The darkness of night does not obstruct their sight nor does the gloom of darkness prevent them from movement. As soon as the sun removes its veil and the light of morning appears, and the rays of its light enter upon the lizzards in their holes, the bats pull down their eyelids on their eyes and live on what they had collected in the darkness of night. Glorified is He who has made the night as day for them to seek livelihood and made the day for rest and stay. He has given them wings of flesh with which, at the time of need, they rise upwards for flying. They look like the ends of ears without feathers or canes. Of course, you can see the veins quite distinctly. They have two wings which are neither too thin so that get torn in flying, nor too thick so that they prove heavy. When they fly their young ones hold on to them and seek refuge with them, getting down when they get down and rising up when they rise. The young does not leave them till its limbs become strong, its wings can support it for rising up, and it begins to recognize its places of living and its interest. Glorified is He who creates everything without imitation of a previous pattern of some one else.

Creation of the Peacock

The most amazing among them in its creation is the peacock, which Allah had created in the most precise symmetry arranged its hues in the best arrangement with wings whose ends are inter-leaved together and whose tail is long. When it moves to its female it spreads out its folded tail and raises it up so as to overshadow its head, as if it were the sail of a boat being pulled by the sailor. It feds proud of its colours and swaggers with its movements.

You would imagine its feathers to be sticks of silvers and what he has grown on it like suns and their halos of pure gold and green emeralds liken it to what land germinates, you would say that it is a bouquet of flowers collected of every flowers of spring. If you likened them to cloths, they would be like embroide red garments or amazing variegated clothes of Yemen. If you liken it to ornaments then you would say like stones of different colours encompassed with ornamented silver., the peacock walks with vanity and pride, browsing through its tail and wings and laughs admiring the beauty of its dress and the hues of its scarf.

But when it casts its glance at its legs it cries loudly with a voice which indicates its call for help and displays its true grief, because its legs are thin like the legs of Indo Persian cross-bred cocks.

On the place its comb it has a green ornamented crest. The loop hole of its neck is like a pitcher stretch up to its belly is like the hair-dye of Yemen in colour or like silk cloth put on a polished mirror which looks as if it has been covered with a black veil, except that on account of its excessive lustre and extreme brightness it appears that a lush green colour has been mixed with it.

Along the openings of its ears there is a line of bright white with the colour of daisy. With its whiteness it shines on the black background. There is hardly a hue from which it has not taken a bit and improved it further by regular polish, lustre, silken brightness and brilliance. It is therefore like scattered blossoms which have not been seasoned by the rains of the spring or the sun of the summer.

It may shed its plumage and put off its dress. They all fall away one by one and grow again. They fall away from the feather stems like the falling of leaves from twigs, and then they begin to join in together and grow till they return to the state that existed before their falling away. They don't change its previous colours, nor does any colour occur in other than its own place. If you carefully look at one of the hairs of its feathers it would look like a red rose, another time an emerald green and sometime a golden yellow. How can sharpness of intellect reach the description of this, or how can the faculty of mind get to it, or the utterances of describers manage to tell of it. Even its smallest parts have made it impossible for the imagination to pick them out or for tongues to describe them.

Creation of the Ant

Look at the ant with its small body and delicate form. It can hardly be seen in the corner of the eye, nor by the perception of the imagination how it moves on the earth and strive for its livelihood. It carries the grain to its hole and deposits it in its place of stay. It collects during its hot summer for its cold winter, and during strength for the period of its weakness. Its livelihood is guaranteed, and it is fed according to fitness. Allah, the kind, does not forget it and (Allah the lover) does not deprive it, even though it may be in dry stone or fixed rocks. If you have thought about its digestive tracts in its high and low parts, the rib cartilages of its belly, and its eyes and its ears in its head you would feel difficulty in describing it. Exalted is He who made it stand on its legs and erected it on its pillars (of limbs). No other originator took part with Him in its origination and no one having power assisted Him in its creation.

If you tread on the paths of your imagination and reach its extremity it will not lead you anywhere except that the Originator of the ant is the Originator of the date-palm, because everything has (the same) precision and detail, and every living being has little difference! Nothing, the grand and the delicate, the heavy and the light, the strong and the weak, but to Him are the same!

Creation of the Locust

If I wish I can tell about the locust. Allah gave it two red eyes, lighted for them two moon-like Iris made for its small ears, opened for it a suitable mouth and gave it keen sense, gave it two canines to cut with, and two sickle to grip with. Farmers are afraid of it in the matter of crops since they cannot drive it away even though they may join together. Till it at last enters the fields and satisfies its desires (of hunger) from them although its body is not equal to a thin finger.

Forgive Me

A Supplication of Imam

O' my Allah! Forgive me what Thou knowest about me more than I do. If I return thou return to forgiveness. My Allah forgive me that with what I sought nearness to Thee with my tongue then my heart diverged from my intention. My Allah forgive me gestures with the eye, vile utterances, inattentions of mind and slips of speech.

What have I suffered

Spoken on the evening of the day in which he was struck:

I was sitting when a slumber overtook me. I saw the Prophet of Allah appear before me, and I said: "O' Prophet of Allah! What a crookedness and antagonism I had faced from your nation. The prophet of Allah said: "Invoke (Allah) evil upon them", I said, "Allah may change them for me with better ones, and change me for them with a worse one.

Forgiveness of the killer

Made shortly before his martyrdom when he had been fatally wounded by a blow from the sword of Ibn Muljam:

Yesterday I was your companion and today I am a lesson for you, while tomorrow I shall be leaving you. If I survive I shall be in charge of my blood, and if I die then death is a promised event. If I forgive, it is for me a means of nearness (to Allah) and for you a good act. Therefore do forgive!

Oppressed

Describing the oppression he under-goes:

I have been continually oppressed since Allah chooses that the prophet dies till today. I was as well oppressed before Islam: my brother Aqil was striking me when my brother committed a wrong.

The three Oxen

We see to mention here this proverb, as it is one of the most beautiful of Arab proverbs spoken on the tongue of animal. Then because it is the first proverb that Ibn Al-Muqaffa' mentioned in his well-known book 'Kallilah and Dimnah'. It is a call for unity and prevention of disorder. It is strange that this attributed proverb has not been mentioned in Nahj Al-Balaghah, despite the many editions nor in the books whose authors rectify what has been passed by the collector of 'Nahj'.

There had been three oxen in a jungle; one is white, the others are black and red. There was also a lion, which could not win over them (to eat) because of their unity against him. The lion told the black ox and the red ox: nothing indicates our being here in this jungle except the white ox, as its colour is clear, but my colour is like your colour; if you leave me eat it the jungle will be untroubled for us only! They told him: as you like, so eat him. Then the lion ate the white ox. Days passed, the lion told the red, my colour is like yours; let me eat the black ox so that the jungle becomes for us alone! The red ox agreed telling the lion to eat him! Then he told the red ox: "I am eating you inevitably"! He said: let me shout three times. So he said: "Do it". He shouted: "Beware: I had been eaten the day the white ox was eaten".

A Group of Imam's Wonderful Proverbs

If a person has a good idea about you prove his idea to be true.

Do not regard an expression uttered by a person as evil if you can find it capable of bearing a good intention.

The worst man is one who does not trust in any person due to his evil intention, and no one trusts him due to his bad action.

It is no just to pass a verdict by relying on probability.

Evil intention diseases hearts, accuses the faithful, isolates the friendly, and change brother's affection.

The fighter in the way of Allah who gets martyred would not get a greater reward than he who remains chaste despite means. It is possible that a chaste person almost one of the angels.

Forgiveness is the alms tax of victory.

The most entitled to pardoning is he who is the most powerful to punish.

Hide the blemish of your brother, and forgive your friend's slips.

You have to be true in all of your concern.

No vice is worse than lie.

The liar fears himself while he is safe.

The evidenc of faith is that you prefer truth even when it harms you to falsehood when it benefits you.

Be on your guard against lie. A truthful person is on the height of salvation and dignity, while the liar is on the edge of a falling down and degradation.

The liar and the dead are equal, because the preferance of the living to the dead is confidence in him, then if his speech is not trusted his life becomes fatile.

If you are truthful we will reward you, but if you are a liar we will punish you.

Lie is not useful in seriousness and in joking; even that anyone of you promises his child and then he does not keep it; falsehood leads to corruption.

The best speech is that which actions certify it.

Whoever lacks truthfulness in his speech is afflicted in the noblest of his morals.

The strict sword in the hands of the brave is not more glorious than truthfulness.

The worst truthfulness is man's praise of himself.

My conscience for what I say is mortgaged.

Adhere to contracts by their fulfillment.

Do not betray your commitment, do not overrule your pledge, and do not deceive your enemy.

Fulfil your agreement (when it is due): be just in taking deci-sions; and do not vie in boasting with one another for fathers.

Do not be one of those who refrains others but not himself; he commands others for what he himself does not do; he describes lessons but he doesn't take lesson himself, therefor he rebukes others but flatters himself.

Do not associate with a fool since he will beautify his action to you and long that you too be like him.

The double-dealer has often no friend, the liar has no honesty, the jealous has no comfort, and the base no dignity.

Make use of opportunities to do good.

Do good and do not regard any part of it small, because its small is big and its little is much.

Say the good and you are known of it; act the virtue and you will be one of its people.

Whoever seeks the good is like its doer, but whoever seeks the evil and fights the good is an enemy of Allah and human beings.

No one of you should say that another person is more deserving than I in doing good, Otherwise, by Allah, it would be really so.

When the picture of evil moves but does not appear, it induces terror, and if it appears it begets pain; when the picture of good moves but does not appear it will beget joy; if it appears it begets delight.

He whose two days are equal is aggrieved.

The tactful person is the one whose today is better than his yesterday.

He who remind others of his good action corrupts them.

Don't let that who doesn't thank you for your good actions to frustrate you to do it.

Do not regard anything of favor as small when you can do it as a preference to what is more than it because the simple thing in time of need is more advantageous than the plentiful when one can do without it.

The doer good is better than it, the commiter of evil is worse than it.

Do not act the good hypocritically, and do not leave it shyly.

He who does distinguish good from evil is in the rank of an animal.

Allah will not waste the reward of him who does good.

Seek good and its people, and know that the giver of good is better than it, and the doer of evil is worse than it.

No day passes a human being except it says to him: "I am a new day. And I am a witness over you, So say good, and act the good, because you will not see me at all.

He also says of the noble man: He intends to act plenty of good, he fulfills a group of good deeds, and is eager for what has pass him; how he had not done it.

He has enjoined upon himself to follow justice; he describes right and acts according to it; there is not good which he has not aimed at nor any likely place of virtue.

Harvest evil from the others' chests by rooting it up from your chest.

Whoever approves the evil is a partner of it.

If you like to know a man's nature, you ought to consult him, then you will recognize in his consultation upon his justice and injustice, his good and evil.

There is not delight during the swift flash, for the one who plungee into darkness.

Accept the excuse of him who apologizes and delay the evil as much as you could.

All people should be equal in right before you.

He who transgresses right wastes his own passage.

Whoever wrestle with Right would be knocked down by it.

Only rightfulness should delight you while wrongfulness should detract you only.

Know that with the Right the skies and the Earth have existed.

I have never entertained doubt about right since I was shown it.

Follow the right and its people wherever they are.

The crowd of men around me does not give me more strength nor does their dispersal from me cause more loneliness, and I do not hate to die for the sake of right.

One who has sought right but did not find it is not like that who sought wrong and found it.

Whoever seeks dignity through wrong Allah inherits him humility through right.

The person who feels disgusted when truth is said to him or a just matter is brought before him he would find it more difficult to act upon them.

We have aright. If it is allowed to us well and good, otherwise we will ride on the hind part of the camel. i.e. insist on soughting it eventhough the night journey may be long.

Don't feel alone in the path of right because of the fewness of those who take it.

Act (good) without dissemblance.

The hypocrite has three marks; he becomes active if he sees people, he becomes lazy if he is alone, and likes to be praised in all of his concerns.

Your drawing near to people should be by seeking leniency and mercifulness.

Associate with whoever cust his relationship with you; grant him who deprives you; act good to him who offends you, and say the right even though against yourself.

Reprove the wrong-doer through rewarding the benevolent.

If you cannot forbear feign to do so since it is seldom that a man assimilate himself to a group and has not become one of them.

The reward of him who pleases you is not to displease him.

He whose sin overpowers him is not victorious, and he who secures victory by evil is vanquished.

One, whose manners are bad torments himself.

Goodness of moral character is a sufficient blessing.

Do not give a promise humilliated by your little self-confidence, and do not be deceived by the easy height if the slope is rough.

Have mercy (on others) you will be pitied; say the good, you will be spoken well of; avoid backbiting because it is the foodstuff of the dogs of Hell.

The elders should be kind to the young.

He who preaches his brother in secret adorns him, while he who preaches his brother in publicness offends him.

You have to stick to the word of Right in time of contentedness and rage, and you have to stick to justice with regard to the friend and enemy.

A hearer of backbiting is one of the backbiters.

Backbiting is the toil of the helpless.

Imam saw a person bickering another at the presence of his son Hasan and said: o' my son, exalt your hearing to listen to him because he looked on the worst thing of his container and emptied it in your container.

Give true advice to your brother and help him in any case; do not cut relation with your brother, relying on a doubt; do not break away from him without blaming because he may have an excuse while you are blaming him.

All woe to whoever approves for himself what he rebukes of others and he therefore devalues people in such an act.

He is not reasonable who gets furious because of false saying of him, and He is not wise who feels contented with the praise of ignorant of him.

He who ventures in favour of you he ventures against you.

He who praises you for what you do not have of good when he is contented of you he dispraises you in what you do not have of bad when he is angry with you.

It is surprising that a man of whom is spoken well in what he has not got how he feels happy; and it is surprising that a man of whom is spoken ill in what he has not got, how he gets angry!

Your knowledge of yourself should be more trustworthy than the praise of those who praise you.

He who feels ashamed of people and does not feel ashamed of himself his self to him is worthless.

The head of knowledge is gentleness.

Wherever there is gentleness in something it adorns it.

An absent driven towards you by day and night is appropriate to approach you quickly.

Blessed is he whose own defects keep him away from looking into other's defects.

He who looks into people's defects and disapproves of them and then accepts them for himself is definitely the fool.

He who forgets his slips will regard others' slips as great, and he who prides on people will be humiliated.

It is enough ignorance for one not to know his level.

The ignorant of himself is more ignorant of others' value.

Whoever knows himself knows his Lord.

Whoever does not know himself will perish.

Look at your face every time in the mirror: if it is beautiful, regard it bad to add to it a bad action which offends it, if it is ugly, regard it bad to gather between two ugly things.

Man is the mirror of man: he thinks of him and satisfies his need.

If a man possesses a good quality wait for his sisters of him.

The worst of men are the seekers of denunciation, who separate among friends, and who find fault with the innocent.

There is no dignity with revenge, no propriety with leaving consultation.

I do not accept the testimony of the immoral but upon himself.

If you are met with a greeting, give a better greeting in return; if a hand of help is extended to you, do a better favour in return, although the priority would remain with the beginner.

If a man reaches in this world beyond his worth, his behavior changes to the worst.

If you raise anybody above his prestige, so expect of him to depreciate you to the same amount that you have raised him!

Do not feel happy at others' misfortunes; do not enter into wrong; do not go out of right.

Do not feel happy at another's slip because you do not know how days will dispose of you.

Entertain yourself from any meanness.

No one should refuse honour except a donkey.

To render relief to the grief-stricken and to provide comfort in hardship means the atonement of great sins.

He who consoles the woman who is bereaved of a child, Allah will shade him in the shade of His Throne.

Educate the orphan with what you educate your children.

Be equal in your foods to your weak person.

Your relatives should not expect injustice from you, and your enemy should not be disappointed of your justice.

Do not accompany, in a trip, one who does not feel your superiority to him as much as he feels his superiority to you.

The walking of a walker with a rider is a corruption to the rider and a humility to the walker.

Do not tell anyone in your presence secretly; if you become angry you ought to stand, and do not pass a verdict while you are angry.

Know that you should act motivated by desire as you do by fear.

If your brother visit you do not save from what is there at your house, and do not feign them what is beyond the door.

The worst of brothers is he for whom overtaking has to be observed.

Avoid every action whose commiter deny it when it is recited.

He who commites in secret the action of which he feels shame in public his self to him is worthless.

Whoever reforms his inward self, Allah reforms his outward self.

He who warns you is like him who brings good news to you.

The jealous man of you do not please with you until one of you dies.

Jealousy of a friend is a result of illness of his love.

Humbleness is a blessing that a jealous person does not notice.

I have not seen an oppressor more like an oppressed than the jealous person, he has an ever-existent breath, perplexed heart, accompanying sadness, angry with whom have no sin, and is stingy with what he does not possesses.

To praise more than what is due is sycophancy; to do it less is either because of inarticulateness or of envy.

Associate with people in such a manner that if you die they weep for you and if you live they should long for you.

A friend is not a friend unless he affords protection to his friend on three concerns in his adversity, in his absence and at his death.

A wise enemy is better than an ignorant friend.

The highest act of a noble person is to ignore what he knows.

The biggest enemy is the most hidden in deception.

Whomever modesty clothes him with its dress people cannot see his defects.

The tears have not dried except because of hardness of hearts, and hearts have not become hard except because of excess of sins.

Kinship is more in need for affection than affection is for kinship.

Much often a near one is more distant than a remote one, often a distant one is nearer than a near one; and the lonely is he who has no friend.

Love is a gained kinship.

Death of friends is a loneliness.

It is of one's nobility: his crying upon what has passed of his time, his nostalgia towards his homeland, and his observance old friends.

Most of the demises of minds are under the treed of the flashes of greed.

Many enslaved mind is subservient to domineering longings.

If you cry over what has gone out of your hands then you are to cry for all what you has not obtained.

Desire is the mount of disorder.

If you become wealthy, then all men are your, but if you become poor, then your family will deny you.

When this world advances towards anyone (with its favours) it attributes to him other's good, and when it turns away from him it deprives him of his own good.

To miss what one needs is better than begging it from an inappropriate person.

Three men are pitied: a wise man who is subjected to an ignorant's judgement and a weak man in the hands of a strong oppressor, and a generous who is in need of a wicked person.

If you ask a generous person a need, so let him think, because he does not think but of good; and if you ask a wicked man a need, then hasten him, because if he thinks he will return to his nature.

The desire to the generous man motivates him to grant, and to the thrifty tempts him to deprive.

The generous does not become lenient by compulsion, and does not become hard by ease.

Direct you expeditations towards whom your hearts like.

Generosity is that which is by one's own initiative, as to giving on being asked is either out of shyness or to avoid rebuke.

Miserliness contains all other evil vices and is the rein with which one can be led to every evil.

Miserliness is the dress of poverty.

For the misers of people over looking great crimes is easier than rewarding for simple benevolence.

O' son of Adam, whatever you earn beyond your basic need you are a treasurer for others.

O' son of Adam, be the guardian of your money, and spend it like what you prefer it to be spent, after you die.

He who has money should satisfy the needy and the captured.

Whoever maintains his dignity in view, his funds appear cheap to him.

Greed, vanity and jealousy are incentives to falling into sins.
Do not distort your virtues by pride and vanity.
If you like to be praised, then you should not show a wish to be praised.
The greatest pride is not to be proud.
Patience comes according to the affliction.
The misfortune is one, if you are impatient it becomes two.
Accustom yourself to patience of disasters.
At the extremity of hardship relief comes.
Patience is a mount that does not stumble.
Patience is of two kinds: patience of you dislike, and patience of resisting what you like.
Time has two days one for you and the other is against you. When the day is for you, do not feel proud but when it is against you endure it.
One should endure like a noble people, otherwise He should be consoled like the ignorant.
Do not be arrogant in riches nor lose courage in distress.
The feeling proude over proude people is definitely the humbleness.
He who seeks something will obtain it, or at least a part of it.
Man is hidden under his tongue.
He who allows his tongue to overpower his soul debases his soul.
The tongue of the wise man is behind his heart and the heart of the fool is behind his tongue.
If you do everything then be like the one who hasn't done anything.
There is no advantage in keeping silent when a verdict has to be said about an issue of wisdom just as there is no good in speaking out of ignorance.
Hold up your tongue because it is easier to make up for what you have missed by silence than to rectify what you have lose by speaking.
Do not ask about tlings which may not happen because you have enough to worry about what happens.
If matters get mixed up the last ones should be known according to the previous ones.
He who thinks hits the goal or almost, while he who hastens misses the aim or almost.
How many are the issues of taking lessons, but how few are lesson takers.
I love the opinion of an old man more than the prowess of a young man.
It is said to Imam: "Describe for us the wise man". He say: He is the one who places things in their correct positions. Then it is said to him: "Describe for us the ignorant man". He says: I have done.
He whose concerns gets mixed for you. Look at his companions.
If you are turning away from this world and death is in advent, How quick you meet each other!
Whoever keeps in view the distance of the journey he prepares himself.
The breaths of a person are his steps towards his appointed time (death).
Many a meal prevents many meals.
Dispute ruins good views.
One who is not obeyed has no view.

When Imam heard the shouting of the kharijites that Authority is only that of Allah' he said: a right thing, a wrong thing is intended by it.

He who is ignorant of something will find fault with it.

People are enemies of what they do not know.

He whose trunk is soft he would have thick branches.

Sleeping in a state of firm belief is better than praying in a state of doubtfulness.

One perfect jurist (of Islam) is more difficult to Satan than a thousand worshippers.

The best abstemiousness is to conceal abstemiousness.

Prayer is not your standing and sitting, it is surely your faithfulness.

The most serious sin is that which the committer considers light.

Do not discount a small that may become big, nor a little that may become much.

Shortly a time will come across people when high position will be given only to those who defame others, when vicious, people will be regarded as witty, and the just will be regarded as weak.

The present world is foolish so it does not tend but to its likes.

I have turned this world over on its face, appreciated it according to its worth and looked at it with its eye.

O' people! By Allah, I do not impel you to any obedience unless I practise it before you, and do not restrain you from any disobedience unless I desist from it before you.

Whoever places himself as a leader of people should begin with educating his own self before educating others; and his teaching should be by his own conduct before teaching by the tongue. The person who teaches and instructs his own self is more entitled to esteem than he who teaches and instructs others.

He who is entitled as a leader of people should start with straightening his own self before he starts to correct his subjects; otherwise he becomes like that who seeks to straighten the shade of a stick before the stick becomes straightened up.

How strange? Could the Caliphate be chosen through the Prophet's companionship but not through his companionship and his kinship?

The most miserable ruler is the one whose subjects get miserable with him.

How bad is the betrayal of a ruler.

There is no right of leadership for an ill-mannered person.

If the shepherd is a wolf, then who is to protect the ewe?

Do not accept a mediation in appointing your governors and chiefs but the mediation of qualification and honesty.

He whose suite is corrupted is like one who is choked over his water because if he is choked over another thing water can allow his choking.

Justice is one form, injustice many forms, therefore committing injustice becomes easy, and the searching of justice got difficult; and they are similar to hitting and missing in archery and to hit the mark needs training.

Give priority to justice over assault, and do not use action where speech can treat the situation.

The worst person is a leader who strays and by whom people get strayed.
Oppression is the last days of kings' authority.

The justice of ruler is more profitable than the fruitfulness of time.

The ruler is free till he promises.

The hearts of subjects are the treasures of their ruler, what he stores in them of justice or injustice he will find it in them...

Know that I am fighting two persons - one has claimed what is not his and another has abstained from fulfilling what is obligatory on him.

Allah's hands are above the head of a ruler fluttering with mercy.

And when he oppresses, Allah entrusts him to himself.

Allah would root out the mountains and scatter them. They would crush each other out of awe of His Glory and fear of His dignity.

Praise be to Allah from whose view one sky does not conceal another nor one earth another earth.

Leaders of justice should maintain themselves at the standard of common people.

One of the officers of Imam built a stately house, about which Imam said: this is silver coins showing forth their faces. Certainly this house speaks of your riches.

When Allah becomes angry with a nation, its prices go high and its evil men overcome her.

Three persons prefer money to their own selves, the sea trader, the holder of authority and the bribee in taking decisions.

May Allah make us better than they think and forgive us what they do not know.

Uthman blamed Imam and continued while Imam was silent. Uthman said: "Why do you not speak?" Imam replied: if I speak I would not say but what you dislike, and I do not have for you but what you like.

Do not call one for dueling.

Beware of dispute and quarrelling because they disease the heart and hypocrisy grows upon them.

Whomever you feel safe of his harm be desirous of his brotherhood.

Allah has protected you from that He might be unjust with you.

Grant help for the weak person, support the oppressed man, and cooperate.

Practice the right among you and use it to cooperate against the foolish oppressor.

O' my! I did not command them to oppress your slaves.

The day of the oppressed over the oppressor is more hard than the day of the oppressor over the oppressed.

Our followers are those who if they get angry they do not oppress. They are a blessing upon whomever they live near and are peaceful with whomever they associate.

Injustice and falsehood humiliate the person.

He who committes oppression fails.

How bad is the severity on the neighbour.

He who claims perishes, and he who slanders fails.

He who plants aggression reaps a loss.

How bad is high-handedness over people.

Oppression leads to the sword.

Do not strengthen your authority thereby shedding a sacred blood.

By Allah, I will take the looted right of the oppressed from the oppressor and will put a string in the nose of the oppressor and drag him to the spring of justice even though he dislikes it.

You should choose to be a vanquished person with being just, and do not choose to be victorious with being an oppressor.

The most ignoble person is he who informs on a weak person for a tyrant ruler.

The worst oppression is oppressing the weak.

As for the sin which is not forgiven is the oppression of slaves for each other.

Do not be a helper for the oppressor.

The oppressor of people has three signs, he oppresses the above of him by disobeying Him, and the lower than him by imposing his authority and he supports other oppressors.

May Allah have mercy on the person who, when he sees the truth, supports it, when he sees the wrong, rejects it, and who helps the truth against him who is in the wrong.

The committer of oppression, the helper of him, and the one who shows content of it are all three partners.

He who agrees with the action of some people is as though he joins them in that action. And everyone who joins in a wrong commits two sins: one sin for committing the wrong, and the other for agreeing with it.

It is said to Imam: "Which of the sins are quicker in punishment and sooner for its committer in clashing?" He said: "to oppress the one who has no supporter but Allah, and the pride of the rich over the poor.

When you oppress remember Allah's justice with you, and when you are able remember Allah's power over you.

Profligacy is a weak house which does not protect its people, and does not give security to him who takes refuge therein.

Do not give a maxim to those who don't deserve it since you do wrong to it.

Everyone has what he has earned.

The worth of every man is in his attainments.

Know that people are the sons of what they do of good to each other.

Do not consider whom he says, but consider what he says.

No esteem is like humility, no honour is like knowledge, no companion is like goodness of moral.

The most honourable thing is knowledge, and Allah, the Sublime, is knowledgeable who like every scholar.

He whose actions accord him a back position his lineage can not hasten him forward.

Whoever falls short of actions he is afflicted with grief.

Do not be like him who hopes for bliss in the next life more than his action.

Act for your present world as if you live for ever.

Learn knowledge even though you do not acquire an estate with it, because it is better that time is dispraised for you than it is dispraised by you.

There is no activity unless you are in need of knowledge therein.

The doer (of an action) without knowledge is like that who walks in another than his way, so the faster he run the farther from his need he becomes; while the doer with knowledge is like one who walks on the clear way; then one should see; is he advancing or retreating.

Thought inherits light, while ignorance inherits darkness.

Ask me to understand but do not ask to puszzle.

The most knowledgeable person is he who gathers people's knowledge to his own.

He who acts obstinately gets ruined, and he who consults other people shares in their understanding.

He who has several opinions understands the pitfalls.

No treasure is more profitable than knowledge; no dignity is higher than endurance.

Knowledge dispels the excuse of those who search for excuses.

The good is not that your money and sons increase but the good is that your knowledge increases.

Those who amass wealth are dead even though they are living, while those endowed with knowledge remain as long as the world lives.

Kings are rulers over people, and scholars are rulers over kings.

A scholar is living even though he may be dead, while the ignorant is dead even though he may be living.

Knowledge is one of the two lives, affection is one of the two relationships, and good renown is one of the two ages.

No one should feel ashamed of saying "I do not know" when he is asked a matter which he does not know; no one should feel ashamed of learning the thing that he does not know.

There are so many matters of which you are ignorant and in which your sight first wonders and your eye wanders then after this you see them.

No poverty is more serious than ignorance.

You cannot feel safe from the evil of an ignorant person evn though he is your kinship or a neighbour.

If Allah discards a slave He deprives him of knowledge.

Every container becomes narrower because of what is placed in it except the container of knowledge which becomes wider the more knowledge you put in it.

The hearts become tired as the bodies become tired. You should therefore search for beautiful maxims for them.

Flame of suspencion is lighter in enduring than suffering from the boredom.

It is enough honour for knowledge that the one who is not fit for it claims to have it, and the one who lacks it becomes happy when it is attributed to him; it is enough shame for ignorance that one disowns it if it is in him and one gets angry if it is attributed to him.

The last person in value is one who is the least in knowledge.

Knowledge is a belief which is acted upon.

Knowledge is more than to be counted, so take the best from everything.

He who explains a legal opinion without knowledge is cursed by the earth and heaven.

Scholars are strangers, because of the plentiness of ignorant people.

Allah has not made it obligatory on the ignorant to learn till He has made it obligatory on the learned to teach.

A vigorous person, even though he humbles himself, refuses but to get elevated like the torch of fire whose holder hides it but it refuses except to be high.

When you sit to a learned person, devote yourself to hear more than to say.

Knowledge is associated with action. Therefore he who knows should act, because knowledge calls for action; if there is a response well and good, otherwise it departs.

O' carriers of knowledge, are you able to carry it? Because knowledge is for whom he knows then acts according to what he knows, and his action agrees with his knowledge.

Certainly a scholar who doesn't act according to his know-ledge is like the puzzled ignorant who does not find relief from his ignorance.

Do not change your knowledge into ignorance or your conviction into doubt; when you gain knowledge act (Upon it) and when you acquire conviction proceed (on its basis).

How good is knowledge adorned by gentleness.

You said that someone has acquired a great amount of money! So has he got days in which he can spend it in them.

The foot of every human being, at the Day of Judgement, does not move unless he is asked about his age, how he consumed it, about his youth: how he used it up, about his money: from which means he got it and in which case he spent it, and about his action coincidence with his knowledge.

How difficult is it for whom lusts engaged him up, to be praiseworthy.

Whoever obtains authority practices appropriation.

Two greedy persons never get satisfied the seeker of knowledge and the seeker of this world.

A trader is an impious man, and the impious is in Hell, except he who takes the right and gives it.

He said of the one who gathers money: "possibly he may have collected it wrongfully or by denying a right".

Poverty is the biggest death.

Poverty disable an intelligent man, and a destitute person is a stranger in his home town.

Poverty is estrangement even though in one's homeland.

No country deserves you more than another. The best town for you is that which suffices you.

If poverty is embodied to me as a man I would kill him.

No a destitute remains hungry except because of what some rich person has enjoyed.

I have not seen a rich blessing unless there is besides it a lost right.

Money could not be collected except by miserliness or through unlawful ways.

One cannot get a blessing unless he loses another.

A blessing cannot be acquired except after a hardship.

A human being has not been created for naught so as to amuse, and he has not been left in vain so as to chatter.

The mistake in giving him who does not deserve and preventing him who deserves is the same.

If you dispense with anything, so let it, and take what you need.

Prevent from monopoly.

He who is to be blamed is that who takes what is not his.

Beware of debt.

Debt is a humiliation.

You should fear what calamities had befeller peoples before you on account of their evil deeds so remember, during good and bad their circumstances, and be cautions to become like them.

Seek preachment from those who preceded you before those who follow you take preachment of you.

Do not compel your sons to follow your morals because they have been created for a time other than yours.

The hearts of people are like wild beasts. Whoever tames them they would come to him.

Do not be the slave of another as Allah has made you free.

Whatever you burden a free man with he endures it and sees it as an addition to his honour except that which belittles his freedom because he refuses it and does not respond to it.

I have no right to compel you to what you dislike.

I agreed that you be as you like.

Grief is a half of the cause of old age.

I do not punish according to uncertainty.

Whoever prides on time it will humiliate him.

I prevent you from haste in speech and action.

Fear Allah in the matter of His creatures and His cities because you will be questioned even about lands and beasts.

How fast are the hours in the day, how fast are the days in the month, how fast are the months in the year, and how fast are the years in one's age.

This Book

Imam Ali Bin Abi Talib, Peace be upon him, is the imam of eloquents and spokesmen as he is the imam of the pious.

At the end of the fourth century A.H, Al-Sharif Al-Radhi is chose a large collection from his addresses, letters, and short speeches and gathered them in a book called Nehj Al-Balagha which means the way to eloquence.

From the day the book was collected, scholars and literary men devoted themselves to reading and explaining it. Thus the explanations became numerous and various, some of which reached several volumes that requires, to be acquainted with, time and effort people often do not have within these days. Hence came the need for a book that facilitates knowledge of the Nehj Al-Balagh for The common reader by selection samples and explaining them.

The famous author George Gerdak attempted to carry out this task; he worked throughout years to surmount difficulties for the reader, so he collected within a book the masterpieces of Nehj Al-Balagh; he classifying them according to their topics on one hand, and according the time they were delivered on the other hand, explaining their strange and difficult expressions.

Once more, throughout these masterpieces which he chose organized, and explained, he introduced an excellent study on “the Allawiyan personality” adding it to his well-known five - study series (Imam Ali: the Voice of human Justice).

This book satisfies a need for the common reader, the students of schools and universities, and the specialized reader as well, at this time when man does not find an opportunity for reading, amid several businesses and the predomination of audiovisual massmedia.

(1) Hasan Aon, trans; Theory of Zikrariy Genve.

(2) In summary from Faghnar and Woman, the author, pp. 163 - 164.

(3)Machiavelly: is an Italian genius who lived during the age of the great painter Rafaed, and was a friend and a helper of him. His unique mind and compassionate manners drived him to attack means of oppression and savagery of rulers of history. So he wrote his famous book 'The Prince' in which he describes the insolence of those rulers, and their indecent personalities in an indirect way as he portrayed to people a picture about the prince's personality who has not got any conscience or mind or taste, and who resorts to different means of violence like killing, terrifying, expelling, and the whole of disasters so as to hold his position ... with reference to the idea that emirates of history and age in which they lived but concentrated on this repulsive means. Machiavelly took the Prince's feature in this book from the character of Caesar of Borjia, son of Iskander of Borjia the committer of the known oppressions. The princeple stating the resort to such a means so as to reach authority then to concentrate it is called Machiavellian as an attribution to Machiavelly: the author of the book.

(4)Hajar: is a city in Bahrain full of palm trees. He says you were like the person who carries dates to its source and calls his master to a duel in archery - they are proverbs used for the carrier of a thing to its origin and the one who claims one who claims learning more than his teacher.

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