

Glimpses of Nahjul Balagha

Session Two

Readings: Part II-Theology and Metaphysics

Glimpses of Nahjul Balagha

by Shaheed Murtada Mutahhari

Hadith

Reflect on the following Hadith of Imam Ali (a)

Time wears out bodies, renews hopes, brings death nearer and takes away aspirations. Whoever gets anything from the world lives in anxiety for holding it and whoever loses anything passes his days grieving over the loss.

Hadith no. 72, Nahjul Balagha

Questions for Reflection from the Readings

- 1) What types of discussions on God does Nahjul Balagha have?
- 2) Why is the study of Nature not enough to know about God?
- 3) Choose one sentence of Imam (a) on God and explain what you understand from it.

Discussions on God

Two types

1) Creation and the Natural world

Imam (a) talks about the Natural world as a mirror that reflects God and is a manifestation of Him

Reflecting on the world around us tells us that there is a Creator who is Wise and Powerful.

It also tells us that the world is run by a Mighty being who plans and administers it.

2) Philosophical discussions on God

Imam (a) talks about the Essence of the Divine being:

- a) Absolute, Self-Sufficient
- b) The concepts of limit, form, and condition do not apply to Him.

Imam also talks about the absolute oneness of God, the negation of all kinds of multiplicity.

Problems with focusing only on the Natural world

- 1) It does not tell us about the Nature of the Being who created it. It reveals the existence of God, but not the Essence of God.
- 2) It does not prove the Unity of God and the absolute impossibility of there being more gods.

Stages of knowing God in Nahjul Balagha

- 1) An inner instinct to know God
- 2) Reflection upon creation and awareness of a Creator.
- 3) Awareness of the Unity of God
- 4) Allah is free of all limitations
- 5) Knowing that His Essence and His attributes are all one. His attributes are not separate from Himself.