

Moral Counsel in Nahjul Balagha

Questions

- 1) What do you understand by the words ‘Moral Counsel’? How does it affect the human being?
- 2) What is the most effective moral counsel you have heard? Which one do you use often?

Agenda

- Understanding moral counsel
- Differences between Hikmat and Maw'idha
- Effective Maw'idha
- Why Moral Counsel
- Moral Counsel in everything
- Personal Sources of Maw'idha
- Themes of moral counsel in Nahjul Balagha
- Readings from Nahjul Balagha

Understanding moral counsel

- Expressing or conveying truths about right conduct
- Giving advice on moral issues
- Helping to overcome vices and negativity
- Encouraging and motivating good thoughts and deeds

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ ۖ
وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom
and goodly exhortation
and dispute with them in the best manner.

Sura an-Nahl, 16:125

Differences between Hikmat and Maw'idha

Hikmat

- Instruction
- Knowledge
- Struggle against ignorance
- Appeals to the intellect
- For reasoning and thinking

Maw'idha

- Inspiration
- Reminder
- Struggle against negligence
- Appeals to the heart
- for self-awakening

For effective Maw'idha

Personality of the speaker

Maw'idha is more personal than Hikmat. Personality of the speaker is important. A speaker who practices what he preaches is much more effective at Maw'idha.

Sincerity

What comes from the heart, enters the heart. When a person believes in what he is saying and is passionate about it, Maw'idha is very effective.

Why Moral Counsel?

Hadith of Imam Ali (a)

- 1) Moral counsel gives life to the hearts
- 2) Heedlessness is dispersed through moral counsel.
- 3) The best gift is good counsel.
- 4) Moral counsel is a polish for the souls and a clear light for the hearts.

Moral counsel in everything

Whoever can think
for him there is a lesson in everything.

Imam Ali (a)

Surely in every thing there is moral counsel
and a lesson
for a people of understanding
and reflection.

Imam Ali (a)

Personal sources of Moral Counsel

Experience

The intelligent one is he who is advised by his experiences.

Imam Ali (a)

Examples, Lessons

When Allah loves a person He counsels him through examples. **Imam Ali (a)**

Time, Passing of days

Whoever understands the counsel of time, does not incline to thinking well about the passing of days. **Imam Ali (a)**

Death

Enough is death as a counselor. **Holy Prophet (s)**

Some themes of moral counsel in Nahjul Balagha

Spirituality – looking after the soul

Taqwa – God consciousness

Zuhd – detachment from the world

Sabr – patience and forbearance

Tawakkul – trust and reliance on Allah

Readings from Nahjul Balagha

Saying no. 131

Khutba no. 149

For next session

Discussion on Zuhd

Chapter 5 of Glimpses of Nahjul Balagha

<http://www.al-islam.org/al-tawhid/glimpses/>