

Spiritual Counsel in Nahjul Balagha

Session Two

Ponder and Comment

A right does not accumulate in favour of any person unless it accumulates against him also, and it does not accumulate against him unless that it also accumulates in his favour

Imam Ali (a)

Khutba #216

Agenda

- Verse of Quran and Hadith on Human Rights
- Justice and Human Rights
- Movement away from Religion
- Leadership

From the Quran

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ
النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ
سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا

Surely Allah commands you to make over trusts to their owners and that when you judge between people you judge with justice; surely Allah admonishes you with what is excellent; surely Allah is Seeing, Hearing

Sura Nisaa, no.4, verse 58

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ
مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

O you who believe! obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority from among you; then if you quarrel about anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you believe in Allah and the Last day; this is better and very good in the end.

Sura Nisaa, no.4, verse 59

Hadith on Rights of the people

It is incumbent on the Imam to rule according to the decrees revealed by God, and to discharge the trusts that he has been charged with.

When he does that, it is incumbent upon the people to pay attention to the Divine command to obey him and respond to his call.

Imam Ali (a)

Dur al Manthur

Justice and Human Rights

- Belief in God is the foundation of the idea of justice and human rights
- Human rights and justice are two realities independent of any premise and convention.
- Belief in God is the best guarantee for their execution in practice.

Movement away from Religion

- Many thinkers and religious leaders in history linked belief in God to the absolute right of despotic regimes
- People had to choose between belief in God and accept the right of sovereignty of certain individuals who had otherwise no superiority over others, or deny the existence of God so as to establish their own rights
- This led to people inclining towards materialism and atheism.

Leadership

- The imam and the ruler is the protector and trustee of the rights of the people and responsible to them.
- If one is asked as to which of them exists for the other, it is the ruler' who exists for the people and not vice versa.

Sa'di has a similar idea in his mind when he says:

It's not the sheep who are to serve the shepherd

But it is the shepherd who is for their service.

Discussion

- Choose one value that Imam promotes in the selected passage
- Explain why the value is important in society
- Connect to a verse of Quran, or hadith or a story