

ALI 453: Asceticism in Nahjul Balagha

Session Three

Quote for Reflection

The worth of anyone in pursuit of an objective is lower than the objective itself.

Ayatollah Mutahhari, Glimpses of Nahjul Balagha

Agenda

- ◆ Quran and hadith on the world
- ◆ Intoxication of Affluence
- ◆ Attachment to the world
- ◆ Relationship of the human being and the world

وَاضْرِبْ لَهُمْ مَثَلِ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَا إِ أَنْزَلْنَا مِنْ السَّمَاءِ
فَاخْتَلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ فَأَصْبَحَ هَشِيمًا تَذْرُوهُ الرِّيَّاحُ ^{مُقَلِّ} وَكَانَ
اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُقْتَدِرًا

And set forth to them example of the life of this world:
like water which We send down from the cloud Then the
earth's vegetation mingles with it. Then it becomes dry
pieces, scattered by the wind. And Allah has power
over all things.

Sura Kahf, no.18, verse 45

الْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ
الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمَلًا

Wealth and children are an adornment of the life of this world; and the ever-abiding, the good works, are better with your Lord in reward and better in expectation.

Sura Kahf, no.18, verse 46

The Price of my soul is [the pleasure of]
its Lord. The whole of creation does not
equal its worth.

Imam Sadiq (a)
Biharul Anwar

Imam Ali (a) on worldliness

Imam's strong warnings against the world were due to different reasons;

- response to the state of affluence and worldliness that had infected the society at that time.

- general advise to refrain from being worldly in a way that would detract from closeness to Allah

Intoxication of Affluence

- ◆ Affluence makes the human being feel needless
- ◆ Affluence creates more greed and indulgence
- ◆ It brings with it injustice and oppression
- ◆ Increases jealousy, resentment and hatred

Attachment to the world

- ◆ Emotional attachments with the world cannot be condemned. These are channels of communication with the world. They are natural and inborn.
- ◆ Bondage and submission to worldly and material things is condemned. This deadens the spiritual life of the human being.

Relationship of human being and the world

Like that of a;

- ◆ Farmer and his farm
- ◆ A horse and the racecourse
- ◆ A trader and the marketplace
- ◆ A devotee and the temple

Certainly, this world is a house of truth for him who appreciates it; a place of safety for him who understands it; a house of riches for him who collects provision from it (for the next world); and a house of instructions for him who draws instruction from it. It is the place of worship for the lovers of Allah; the place of praying for the angels of Allah; the place where the revelation of Allah descends; and the marketing place for those devoted to Allah. Herein they earned mercy and herein they acquired Paradise by way of profit.

Hadith #131, Nahjul Balagha

The world is

a school

a training ground

a place for growth and perfection

The world is not

a goal and ultimate ideal

an end in itself

only source of happiness and success

worthy of the human being