



ALI 586: Spiritual Guidance from the Life of Imam Ali (a) Session One

What Hadith of Imam Ali (a) or incident from his life reveals his spirituality to you? Please share in the chat box.

To speak of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib . . . is to speak of the quintessential spirituality of the Islamic tradition. For in this seminal figure of nascent Islam, one finds an integral expression of the two fundamental sources of Islamic spirituality, the Qur’ānic revelation and the inspired Sunna of the Prophet . . . The spirit of the Qur’ān and the soul of the Prophet were thus fully interiorized by ‘Alī, and it is this interiorization of the twin sources of the Islamic revelation which constitutes the spiritual path of Islam . . .

Justice and Remembrance: Introducing the Spirituality of Imam Alī
Reza Shah-Kazemi

Spiritual receptivity to the Masumin (a)

There is a profound affinity between the believer's soul and the prophetic nature, a mysterious proximity that goes beyond time and space . . .

The Prophet . . . [and the rest of the Masumin] outwardly manifest the perfection which the spiritually sensitive believer intuits, to some degree or another, as determining the very essence of his or her own soul.

Justice and Remembrance: Introducing the Spirituality of Imam Ali by Reza Shah-Kazemi

Islamic esotericism or gnosis crystallized into the form of Sufism in the Sunni world, while it poured into the whole structure of Shī'ism, especially during its early period.

Seyyid Hossein Nasr

Shi'ism and Sufism: their Relationship in Essence and in History.

مَنْ عَرَفَ اللَّهَ تَوَحَّدَ مَنْ عَرَفَ نَفْسَهُ تَجَرَّدَ
مَنْ عَرَفَ الدُّنْيَا تَزَهَّدَ مَنْ عَرَفَ النَّاسَ تَفَرَّدَ

He who knows God integrates himself

He who knows his soul disengages himself

He who knows the world withholds himself

He who knows people isolates himself

Imam Ali (a), Ghurar al-Hikam

From the point of view of Nahjul-Balagha, the world of worship is another world altogether. Its delights are not comparable with any pleasures of the three-dimensional corporeal world. The world of worship effuses movement, progress and journey, a journey which is quite unlike physical travel to new lands. It is a spiritual journey to the “nameless” city . . . It does not distinguish night from day because it is always drenched in light. In it, there is no trace of darkness or pain, for it is purity, sincerity, and delight all over. Happy is the man, in the view of Nahjul-Balagha, who sets his foot into this world and is refreshed by its invigorating breeze.

Glimpses of Nahjul Balagha, Shahid Murtadha Mutahhari

Nahjul-Balagha does not regard worship as a series of cut-and-dried, lifeless rituals. The bodily movements constitute the apparent motion of worship while its soul and meaning are something else.

Only when endowed with meaning and spirit is the worship worthy of its name. Real worship means the transcending of the three-dimensional world into the spiritual sphere, which is a world of perpetual delight and sublimation for the soul and the source of vigour and strength for the heart which has its own pleasures.

Glimpses of Nahjul Balagha, Shahid Murtadha Mutahhari

Spirituality from Imam Ali (a)

- 1) Love for Allah
- 2) Grief at separation
- 3) Fear of the self
- 4) Insignificance of all else

My God, You, of all beloved ones, are the most attached to those who love You, and most ready to trust those who trust in You.

You see all things, You look into their secrets and know that which lies in their conscience and are aware of the extent of their inner vision.

Consequently their secrets are open to You and their hearts look up to You in eager apprehension. In loneliness, Your remembrance is their friend and consolation. In distress Your help is their protection.

Khutba #226, Nahjul Balagha

O my God, there have been too many astounding offenses from me, which You have been too Forbearing to make me encounter Your punishment for them.

Too many have been the wrongdoings that You have been too Noble to disclose, out of Your Nobility.

O my God, if my days of disobedience to You have become long and if my sins that are recorded in the Scroll have become numerous, then I am still hoping for nothing other than Your forgiveness and I desire for nothing other than Your pleasure.

O my God, when I think of Your pardon, the consequences of my evildoings are alleviated; but when I, after that, think of Your unbearable chastisement, my ordeal becomes greater and greater.

Aah! If I see in the Scroll of my deeds an evildoing, which I have forgotten, but You have recorded; then, You will order them to take me away!

Then, what a helpless one I shall be when my clan shall not be able to save me and my tribe shall be of no avail! Aah! For the fire that burns all livers and kidneys!

O Abu'L-Darda'! If you see me being called to interrogation on the Judgment Day, when the evildoers realize for sure that they shall be chastised, when harsh and short-tempered angels will surround me from all sides, when I shall be stood up before the Omnipotent King-Lord, when all my friends will desert me, and when all the inhabitants of this world will feel pity for me, then you will most certainly be more merciful to me (than this situation) while I will be made to stand before the One from Whom nothing can ever be concealed.

The life of pleasures that you [the world] offer is of a very little duration. There is no real importance in what you have and the desire of holding you is an insult and humiliation to sober minds.

Sad is the plight of those who want to acquire you. They do not provide for the Hereafter. They have to pass through a long journey over a very difficult road towards a sad destination.'

Resources

https://ebookshia.com/upload/bookFiles/1986/Justice_and_Remembrance_Introducing_The_Spitivity_of_Imam_'Ali_-Reza_Shah-Kazemi.pdf

<https://www.al-islam.org/life-ali-ibn-abi-talib-baqir-sharif-al-qurashi/kunyahs-imam-ali#frequent-turning-allah>

<https://www.al-islam.org/glimpses-nahjul-balagha-murtadha-mutahhari>