Nahjul Balagha Part 2, Letters and Sayings

Nahjul Balagha Part 2, Letters and Sayings

Sharif Razi

Al-Islam.org

The English translation (accompanied with original Arabic text) of a collection of letters and sayings of the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him) that provide divine wisdom and eternal guidance for his followers.
The Sermons of Imam 'Ali can be found here:http://www.al-islam.org/nahjul-balagha-part-1-sermons [1]

Get PDF [2] Get EPUB [3] Get MOBI [4]

Compiler(s):

Sharif Razi [5]

Topic Tags:

Hadith Collections [6]
Ahl al-Bayt [7]
Nahj al-Balagha [8]

Person Tags:

Imam Ali [9]

Letters of Imam ‘Ali Amir Al-Mu’minin, Peace Be On Him

Selections from the writings of our master Amir al-Mu’minin, ‘Ali Ibn Abi Talib and his letters to his enemies and the governors of his provinces, including selections of his letters of appointment to his administrative officers and his injunctions to members of his family and his companions

(رسائل أمير المؤمنين (عليه السلام

(باب مختار من كتب مولانا أمير المؤمنين علي (عليه السلام

. و رسائله الى أعدائه و أمراء بلاده ، و يدخل في ذلك ما اختير من عهوده الى عماله و وصاياه لأهله و أصحابه

Letter 1: Addressed to the people of Kufa before proceeding for the Battle of Jamal

Addressed to the people of Kufah at the time of his march from Medina to Basrah. [1]

(من كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى أهل الكوفة، عند مسيره من المدينة إلى البصرة

From the servant of Allah, `Ali, the Commander of the faithful, to the people of Kufah who are foremost among the supporters and chiefs of the Arabs.

مِنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ عَلِيّ أَمِيرِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِلَى أَهْلِ الْكُوفَةِ، جَبْهَةِ الأَنْصَارِ وَسَنَامِ الْعَرَبِ.

Now, I am apprising you of what befell `Uthman so (correctly) that its hearing may be like its seeing. People criticised him, and I was the only man from among the muhdjirun (immigrants) who asked him to seek to satisfy (the Muslims) most and to offend them the least. As for Talhah and az-Zubayr, their lightest step about him was hard and their softest voice was strong. `A'ishah too was in a rage with him. Consequently, a group overpowered him and killed him. Then, people swore allegiance to me, not by force or compulsion but obediently and out of free will.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي أُخْبِرُكُمْ عَنْ أَمْرِ عُثْمانَ حَتَّى يَكُونَ سَمْعُهُ كَعِيَانِهِ إِنَّ النَّاسَ طَعَنُوا عَلَيْهِ، فَكُنْتُ رَجُلاً مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ أُكْثِرُ اسْتِعْتَابَه، وَأُقِلُّ عِتَابَهُ، وَكَانَ طَلْحَةُ وَالزُّبَيْرُ أَهْوَنَ سَيْرِهِمَا فِيهِ الْوَجِيفُ، وَأَرْفَقُ حِدَائِهِمَا الْعَنِيفُ، وَكَانَ مِنْ عَائِشَةَ فِيهِ فَلْتَةُ غَضَب، فَأُتِيحَ لَهُ قَوْمٌ فَقَتَلُوهُ، وَبَايَعَنِي النَّاسُ غَيْرَ مُسْتَكْرَهِينَ وَلاَ مُجْبَرِينَ، بَلْ طَائِعِينَ مُخَيَّرِينَ.

You should know that Medina has been vacated by its residents and they have abandoned it. It is boiling like a huge cooking pot and rebellion is fixed on its axis moving with full force. So, hasten towards your amir (commander) and proceed forward to fight your enemy, if so wills Allah to Whom belongs Might and Majesty.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ دَارَ الْهِجْرَةِ قَدْ قَلَعَتْ بِأَهْلِهَا وَقَلَعُوا بِهَا، وَجَاشَتْ جَيْشَ الْمِرْجَلِ، وَقَامَتِ الْفِتْنَةُ عَلَى الْقُطْبِ، فَأَسْرِعُوا إِلَى أَمِيرِكُمْ، وَبَادِرُوا جِهَادَ عَدُوِّكُمْ، إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ عزَّ وَ جَلَّ.

1. Ibn Maythman writes (in Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.4, p.338) that when on hearing about the mischief-mongering of Talhah and az-Zubayr, Amir al-mu'minin set off for Basrah, he sent this letter to the people of Kufah through Imam al-Hasan and `Ammir ibn Yasir from al-Ma' al-`Adhb, while Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written (in Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.14, pp.8, 16; at-Tabari, vol.1, p.3139; and Ibn al-Athir, vol.3, p.223) that when Amir al-mu `minin camped at ar-Rabadhah, he sent this letter through Muhammad ibn Ja'far ibn Abi Tilib and Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr. In this letter Amir al-mu 'minin has clearly thrown light on the point that the assassination of `Uthman was the result of the efforts of `A'ishah, Talhah and az-Zubayr, and that it was they who took a prominent part in it. In fact, `A'ishah went beyond her bounds and exposed his shortcomings in public meetings and ordered that he should be killed. Thus, ash-Shaykh Muhammad `Abdub has written:

Once `Uthman was on the pulpit when Umm al-mu `minin `A'ishah took out the shoes and the shirt of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and his descendants) from under her veil and said: "These are the shoes of the Messenger of Allah and his shirt, not yet decayed, while you have altered his religion and changed his sunnah." Upon this, hot words followed between them when she said, "Kill this Na'thal," symbolising him as a long bearded Jew (of that name). (Nahjul Balaghah al-bala-ghah, printed in Egypt, vol.2, p.3; also see Ansab al-ashraf, vol.5, p.88; Abu'l-Fida', vol.1, p.172).

People were already displeased with `Uthman, so this event increased their boldness and they surrounded him so that he might mend his ways or abdicate from the caliphate. In these circumstances, there was serious apprehension that if he did not accept either of the two alternatives he would be killed. All this was observed by `A'ishah, but she paid no heed to it and, leaving him in the siege, decided to leave for Mecca, although on this occasion Marwan ibn al-Hakam and `Attab ibn Asid did say to her, "If you postpone your departure it is possible his life may be saved and this crowd may disperse" whereupon she said that she had decided to go for hajj (pilgrimage) and that that could not be changed. Then Marwan recited this couplet by way of a proverb:

Qays set fire to my cities, and when they came into flames he slipped away saving himself clear of it.

Similarly, Talhah and az-Zubayr were (also) in rage against him and they were ever forward in fanning this fire and intensifying the opposition. From this angle they were, to a great extent, taking part in his assassination and responsible for his blood. Other people also knew them in this perspective and regarded them as his murderers, while their supporters too were not able to offer any explanation (for absolving them). Thus, Ibn Qutaybah writes that when al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah met `A'ishah at Awtas he asked her:

"O' Umm al-mu'minin, where are you bound for." She replied, "I am going to Basrah." He inquired for what purpose and she replied, "To avenge `Uthman's blood." He said, "But his assassins are with you." Then he turned to Marwan and enquired where he was going. He replied that he too was going to Basrah. He enquired the purpose and the reply was "to avenge `Uthman's blood." Then he said, "Uthman's assassins are with you. These Talhah and az-Zubayr have killed him." (al-Imamah was `siyasah, vol.1, p.60)

In any case, when, after laying the blame on Amir al-mu'minin, this group who had killed `Uthman reached Basrah, Amir al-mu'minin also rose to quell this mischief and wrote this letter to the people of Kufah to seek their support. Upon this their combatants and warriors rose in large numbers and enlisted in his army. They faced the enemy with full courage which Amir al-mu'minin also acknowledged. Thus, the letter hereafter is in acknowledgement of this very fact.

Letter 2: Written to the people of Kufah after the victory of Basrah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام) إليهم،

بعد فتح البصرة

May Allah reward you, townsmen (of Kufah), on behalf of a member of your Prophet's family, with the best reward that He bestows on those who act in obedience to Him, and on those who thank Him for His bounties. Surely, you heard (me) and obeyed, and when you were called you promptly responded.

وَجَزَاكُمُ اللهُ مِنْ أَهْلِ مِصْر عَنْ أَهْلِ بَيْتِ نَبِيِّكُمْ أَحْسَنَ مَا يَجْزِي الْعَامِلِينَ بِطَاعَتِهِ، وَالشَّاكِرِينَ لِنِعْمَتِهِ، فَقَدْ سَمِعْتُمْ وَأَطَعْتُمْ، وَدُعِيتُمْ فَأَجَبْتُمْ.

Letter 3: To the Qadhi (judge) of Kufa, Shurayh b. Haarith when he purchased a costly house

Shurayh bin Haarith had been holding an important post during the previous regimes. Imam Ali (*a*) *had also appointed him as a Qadhi* (*Chief Judge*) *of Kufa. It was brought to the notice of Imam Ali* (*a*) *that he had purchased a house for himself in the city* (*rather a costly and expensive house, perhaps more expensive and luxurious than his status demanded and that too rather at a cheaper price*).

Imam Ali (*a*) *called him and asked of him: "I am given to understand that you have purchased this house for eighty dinars and a sales deed has also been completed regularizing it with signatures of witnesses".*

Shurayh replied, "O Amir al-Mu'minin this is a fact". Hearing this Imam Ali (*a*) *felt annoyed and said to him: "Shurayh be warned that a thing* (*death*) *will come to you; it will not take any notice of this sales deed nor will it accept the testimony of the witnesses but it will take you out of this house alone and unattended and will drag you to your grave.*

And before such a thing happens, you must think well over the fact whether you have purchased this house with the money which does not belong to you but to somebody else and whether the purchase price was acquired with foul means or it was an ill-gotten wealth, which met its cost, if it was so, then remember that you will part (*through death*) *with this house and in the bargain you will lose your place in Paradise.*

If you had come to me prior to this transaction I would have drafted such a sales deed for you that you would not have cared to purchase this property even for a dirham. You know what the transfer deed would have been like, it would have been phrased in the following words:

(ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام

لشريح بن الحارث قاضيه

It is related that Shurayh ibn al-Harith (al-Kindi) who was Amir al-mu'minin's Qadi (judge) at Kufah during his tenure purchased a house for eighty Dinars. When it became known to Amir al-mu'minin he sent for him and said to him: I have come to know that you have purchased a house for eighty Dinars, and that you have written a document for it and put witnessing on it. Shurayh, replied: Yes, Amir al-mu'minin, it is so. Amir al-mu'minin cast an angry look at him and said to him:

روي أنّ شريح بن الحارث قاضي أميرالمؤمنين(عليه السلام) اشترى على عهده داراً بثمانين ديناراً،

فبلغه (عليه السلام) ذلك، فاستدعى شريحاً، وقال له:

بَلَغَنِي أَنَّكَ ابْتَعْتَ دَاراً بِثَمانِينَ دِينَاراً، وَكَتَبْتَ لَهَا كِتَاباً، وَأَشْهَدْتَ فِيهِ شُهُوداً.

فقال شريح: قد كان ذلك يا أميرالمؤمنين. قال: فنظر إليه(عليه السلام) نظر مغضب ثمّ قال له:

O Shurayh, beware, shortly one body (the angel of death) will come to you who will not look at the document, nor question you about your evidence but take you out of it far away and deposit you in your grave quite alone. Look! O Shurayh, if you have purchased this, house from money other than yours or paid the price from unlawful source, you have incurred loss of this world as well as of the next. If you had come to me at the time of purchase I would have written for you a document on this paper and then you would not have liked to purchase the house even for one Dirham, not to speak of more. That document is this:-

يَا شُرَيْحُ، أَمَا إِنَّهُ سَيَأْتِيكَ مَنْ لاَ يَنْظُرُ فِي كِتَابِكَ، وَلاَ يَسْأَلُكَ عَنْ بَيِّنَتِكَ، حَتَّى يُخْرِجَكَ مِنْهَا شَاخِصاً، وَيُسْلِمَكَ إِلَى قَبْرِكَ خَالِصاً. فَانْظُرْ يَا شُرَيْحُ لاَ تَكُونُ ابْتَعْتَ هذِهِ الدَّارَ مِنْ غَيْرِ مَالِكَ، أَوْ نَقَدْتَ الثَّمَنَ مِنْ غَيْرِ حَلاَلِكَ! فَإِذَا أَنْتَ قَدْ خَسِرْتَ دَارَ الدُّنْيَا وَدَارَ الاْخِرَةِ! أَمَا إِنَّكَ لَوْ كُنْتَ أَتَيْتَنِي عِنْدَ شِرَائِكَ مَا اشْتَرَيْتَ لَكَتَبْتُ لَكَ كِتاباً عَلَى هذِهِ النُّسْخَةِ، فَلَمْ تَرْغَبْ فِي شِرَاءِ هذِهِ الدَّارِ بِدِرْهَم فَمَا فَوْقُ. والنسخة هذه:

This is about a purchase made by a humble slave (of Allah) from another slave ready to depart (for the next world). He has purchased a house out of houses of deceit in the area of mortals and the place of those liable to perish. This house has four boundaries as follows: The first boundary is contiguous to

sources of calamities; the second boundary adjoins the sources of distress; the third boundary adjoins devastating desire; and the fourth boundary adjoins deceitful Satan and towards this opens the door of this house.

هذَا مَا اشْتَرَى عَبْدٌ ذَلِيلٌ، مِنْ مَيِّت قَدْ أُزْعِجَ لِلرحِيل، اشْتَرَى مِنْهُ دَاراً مِنْ دَارِ الْغُرُورِ، مِنْ جَانِبِ الْفَانِينَ، وَخِطَّةِ الْهَالِكِينَ، وَتَجْمَعُ هذِهِ الدَّارَ حُدُودٌ أَرْبَعَةٌ: الْحَدُّ الاوَّلُ يَنْتَهِي إِلَى دَوَاعِي الافَات، وَالْحَدُّ الثَّانِي يَنْتَهِي إِلَى دَوَاعِي الْمُصِيبات، وَالْحَدُّ الثَّالِثُ يَنْتَهِي إِلَى الْهَوَى الْمُرْدِي، وَالْحَدُّ الرَّابِعُ يَنْتَهِي إِلَى الشَّيْطَانِ الْمُغْوِي، وَفِيهِ يُشْرَعُ بَابُ هذِهِ الدَّارِ.

This house has been purchased by one who has been waylaid by desires from one who is being driven by death at the price of leaving the honour of contentment and entering into the humility of want and submissiveness. If the purchaser encounters some (evil) consequences of this transaction then it is for him who dismantles the bodies of monarchs, snatches the lives of despots, destroys the domain of Pharaoh like Kisras, [1] Caesars,[2] Tubba`s [3] and Himyars [4] and all those who amass wealth upon wealth and go on increasing it, build high houses and decorate them and collect treasures and preserve them, as they claimed according to their own thinking, for children to take them to the place of accounting and judgement and the position of reward and punishment. When the verdict will be passed *those who stood on falsehood would then be the losers*. (Qur'an, 40: 78)

This document is witnessed by intelligence when it is free from the shackles of desires and safe from the attachments to this world.

اشْتَرَى هذَا الْمُغْتَرُّ بِالاَمَلِ، مِنْ هذَا الْمُزْعَجِ بِالاَجَلِ، هذِهِ الدَّارَ بِالْخُرُوجِ مِنْ عِزِّ الْقَنَاعَةِ، وَالدُّخُولِ فِي ذُلِّ الطَّلَبِ وَالضَّرَاعَةِ، فَمَا أَدْرَكَ هذَا الْمُشْتَرِي فِيمَا اشْتَرَى مِنْ دَرَك، فَعَلَى مُبَلْبِلِ أَجْسَامِ الْمُلُوك، وسَالِبِ نُفُوسِ الْجَبَابِرَةِ، وَمُزِيلِ مُلْكِ الْفَراعِنَةِ، مِثْلِ كِسْرَى وَقَيْصَرَ، وَتُبَّعٍ وَحِمْيَرَ، وَمَنْ جَمَعَ الْمَالَ عَلَى الْمَالِ فَأَكْثَرَ، وَمَنْ بَنَى وَشَيَّدَ، وَزَخْرَفَ وَنَجَّدَ، وَادَّخَرَ واعْتَقَدَ، وَنَظَرَ بِزَعْمِهِ لِلْوَلَدِ، إِشْخَاصُهُمْ جَمِيعاً إِلَى مَوْقِفِ الْعَرْضِ وَالْحِسَابِ، وَمَوْضِعِ الثَّوَابِ وَالْعِقَابِ، إِذَا وَقَعَ الاَمْرُ بِفَصْلِ الْقَضَاءِ، (وَخَسِرَ هُنَا لِكَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ)

شَهِدَ عَلَى ذلِكَ الْعَقْلُ إِذَا خَرَجَ مِنْ أَسْرِ الْهَوَى، وَسَلِمَ مِنْ عَلاَئِقِ الدُّنْيَا.

1. Kisra, is the Arabicised form of "Khusraw" which means a King whose domain of rule extends to a vast area. This was the title of the rulers of Iran.
2. Caesar, was the title of the rulers of Rome, which in Latin means that child whose mother dies before delivery and who is extractedby cutting open her body. Since among the Kings of Rome, Augustus was born like this he was known by this name and after that this word was adopted as the title of every ruler.
3. Tubba', is an appellation of each of the Kings of Yemen who possessed Himyar and Hadramawt. Their names have been mentioned in the holy Qur'an in chaps. 44:37 and 50:14.
4. Himyar, originally, an important tribe in the ancient Sabaean kingdom of south-western Arabia; later the powerful rulers of much of southern Arabia from c. 115 BC to c. AD 525. The Himyarites were concentrated in the area known as Dhu

Raydan (later called Qataban) on the coast of present-day Yemen; thus they were probably aided in the overthrow of their Sabaean kinsmen by the discovery of a sea route from Egypt to India, which deprived the inland Sabaean kingdom of its former importance as a centre for overland trade. The Himyarites (classical Homeritae) inherited the Sabaean language and culture, and from their capital at Zafar their power at times extended eastward as far as the Persian Gult and northward into the Arabian Desert. At the beginning of the 4th century AD the Himyar capital was moved northward to San'a, and later in that century both Christianity and Judaism gained firm footholds in the area. Internal disorders and changing trade routes caused the kingdom to decline, and in 525, after several unsuccessful attempts, Abyssinian invaders finally crushed the Himyarites. A Himyar apeal to Persia for aid led to Persian control in 575. (The New Encyclopaedia Britanica [Micropaedia], vol.5, p.49, ed. 1973-1974)

Letter 4: To one of the officers of his army

(ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام

إلى بعض أُمراء جيشه

If they 1 return to the umbrella of obedience then this is all that we want. But if the condition of these people points out towards disruption and disobedience then, taking with you those who obey you, rush upon those who disobey you, and while you have those with you who follow you do not worry about those who hold back from you, because the absence of a halfhearted man is better than his presence, and his sitting down is better than his rising up.

فَإِنْ عَادُوا إِلَى ظِلِّ الطَّاعَةِ فَذَاكَ الَّذِي نُحِبُّ، وَإِنْ تَوَافَتِ الاْمُورُ بِالْقَوْمِ إِلَى الشِّقَاقِ وَالْعِصْيَانِ فَانْهَدْ بِمَنْ أَطاعَكَ إِلَى مَنْ عَصَاكَ، وَاسْتَغْنِ بِمَنِ انْقَادَ مَعَكَ عَمَّنْ تَقَاعَسَ عَنْكَ، فَإِنَّ الْمُتَكَارِهَ مَغِيبُهُ خَيْرٌ مِنْ شُهُودِهِ، وَقُعُودُهُ أَغْنَى مِنْ نُهُوضِهِ.

1. When `Uthman ibn Hunayf, the Governor of Basrah informed Amir al-mu 'minin of the arrival of Talhah and az-Zubayr in Basrah and of their intentions, Amir al-mu 'minin wrote this letter to him, wherein he has instructed him that in case the enemy was bent on fighting, when facing him he should not enlist on his side those who on the one hand showed consideration for the personalities of `A'ishah, Talhah and az-Zubayr and who on the other hand had agreed to fight against them merely by persuasion, because such people could not be expected to fight steadfastly nor could they be depended upon. Rather, such people would try to dishearten others too. Therefore, it was only good to leave aside such people.

Letter 5: To al-Ash'ath ibn Qays (al-Kindi), the Governor of Azarbaijan

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى الاشعث بن قيس عامل أذربيجان

Certainly, your assignment [1] is not a morsel for you, but it is a trust round your neck, and you have been charged with the protection (of the people) on behalf of your superiors. It is not for you to be oppressive towards the ruled, nor to risk yourself save on strong grounds. You have in your hands the funds which are the property of Allah, to Whom belongs Might and Majesty, and you hold its charge till you pass it on to me. Probably, I will not be one of the bad rulers for you, and that is an end to the matter.

وَإِنَّ عَمَلَكَ لَيْسَ لَكَ بِطُعْمَة، وَلكِنَّهُ فِي عُنُقِكَ أَمَانةٌ، وَأَنْتَ مُسْتَرْعىً لِمَنْ فَوْقَكَ، لَيْسَ لَكَ أَنْ تَفتَاتَ فِي رَعِيَّة، وَلاَ تُخَاطِرَ إِلاَّ بِوَثِيقَة، وَفي يَدَيْكَ مَالٌ مِنْ مَالِ اللهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ، وَأَنْتَ مِنْ خُزَّانِهِ حَتَّى تُسَلِّمَهُ إِلَيَّ، وَلَعَلِّي أَلاَّ أَكُونَ شَرَّ وُلاَتِكَ لَكَ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

1. When Amir al-mu'minin was free from the battle of Jamal he wrote to al-Ash'ath ibn Qays (al-Kindi) who had been the Governor of Azarbayjan from the days of `Uthman, to send the revenue and levies of his province. But since he had fears about the future of his position and assignment, he intended to swallow all this money like other officers of `Uthman. Therefore, when this letter reached him he sent for his chief associates and after mentioning this letter to them said: "I fear that this money will be taken away from me; I therefore intend to join Mu`awiyah." Whereupon those people said that it was a matter of shame to leave kith and kin and seek refuge with Mu'awiyah. Consequently, on the advice of these people he postponed his idea to run away but did not agree to part with the money. On getting this information Amir al-mu'minin sent Hujr ibn `Adi al-Kindi to bring him to Kufah. He persuaded him and brought him to Kufah. On reaching there his kit was found to contain four hundred thousand Dirhams out of which Amir al-mu'minin
left thirty thousand for him and deposited the rest in the public treasury.

Letter 6: To Mu`awiyah (ibn Abi Sufyan)

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى معاوية

Verily, those who swore allegiance to Abu Bakr, `Umar and `Uthman have sworn allegiance 1 to me on the same basis on which they swore allegiance to them. (On this basis) he who was present has no choice (to consider), and he who was absent has no right to reject; and consultation is confined to the muhajirun and the ansar. If they agree on an individual and take him to be Caliph it will be deemed to mean Allah's pleasure.

If any one keeps away by way of objection or innovation they will return him to the position from where he kept away. If he refuses they will fight him for following a course other than that of the believers and Allah will put him back from where he had run away.

By my life, O Mu'awiyah, if you see with your intellect without any passion you will find me the most innocent of all in respect of `Uthman's blood and you will surely know that I was in seclusion from him, unless you conceal what is quite open to you (and accuse me of a crime I have not committed). Then you may commit any outrage (on me) as you wish and that is an end to the matter.

إِنَّهُ بَايَعَنِي الْقَوْمُ الَّذِينَ بَايَعُوا أَبَا بَكْر وَعُمَرَ وَعُثْمانَ عَلَى مَا بَايَعُوهُمْ عَلَيْهِ، فَلَمْ يَكُنْ لِلشَّاهِدِ أَنْ يَخْتَارَ، وَلاَ لِلغَائِبِ أَنْ يَرُدَّ، وَإِنَّمَا الشُّورَى لِلْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالأنْصَارِ، فَإِنِ اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَى رَجُل وَسَمَّوْهُ إِمَاماً كَانَ ذلِكَ لله رِضىً، فَإِنْ خَرَجَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِمْ خَارِجٌ بِطَعْن أَوْبِدْعَة رَدُّوهُ إِلَى مَاخَرَجَ منه، فَإِنْ أَبَى قَاتَلُوهُ عَلَى اتِّبَاعِهِ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، وَوَلاَّهُ اللهُ مَا تَوَلَّى.

وَلَعَمْرِي، يَا مُعَاوِيَةُ، لَئِنْ نَظَرْتَ بِعَقْلِكَ دُونَ هَوَاكَ لَتَجِدَ نِّي أَبْرَأَ النَّاسِ مِنْ دَمِ عُثْمانَ، وَلَتَعْلَمَنَّ أَنِّي كُنْتُ فِي عُزْلَة عَنْهُ، إِلاَّ أَنْ تَتَجَنَّى ; فَتَجَنَّ مَا بَدَا لَكَ! وَالسَّلاَمُ.

1. When all the people of Medina unanimously swore allegiance to Amir al-mu`minin, Mu`awiyah refused to acquiesce apprehending danger for his own power, and in order to contest Amir al-mu'minin's caliphate he concocted the excuse that it had not been agreed to unaulmously and that there fore after cancelling it there should be another general election, although the caliphate from which (the process of) election was started was the result of a timely situation. There was no question of the common vote therein so that it could be called the result of the people's election. However, it was imposed on the people and assumed to be their verdict. From then it became a principle that whomever the nobles of Medina elected would be deemed to represent the entire world of Islam and no person would be allowed to question it, whether he was present at the time of election or not. In any case, after the establishment of the principle, Mu`awiyah had no right to propose a re-election nor to refuse allegiance when he had in practice recognized these caliphates which, it was alleged, had been settled by the important people of Medina. That is why when he held this election to be invalid and refused allegiance,
Amir al-mu'minin pointed out to him the (recognized) way of election and demolished his argument. It was a method known as arguing with the adversary on the basis of his wrong premises so as to demolish his argument, since Amir al-mu'minin never at any state regarded consultation (with chiefs) or the common vote to be the criterion of validity of the caliphate. Otherwise, in connection with the caliphate about which it is alleged that they were based on the unanimity of the muhajirun and the ansar, he would have regarded that unanimity of vote as a good authority and held them as valid; but his refusal for allegiance in the very first period, which cannot be denied by anyone, is a proof of the fact that he did not regard these self-

concocted methods as the criterion of (validity of) the caliphate. That is why at all times he continued pressing his own case for the caliphate, which was also established on the basis of the Prophet's saying and deeds. However, to place it before Mu`awiyah meant opening the door to questions and answers. He therefore attempted to convince him with his own premises and beliefs so that there could be no scope for interpretation or for confusing the matter, in fact Mu'awiyah's real aim was to prolong the matter so that at some point his own authority might get support.

Letter 7: To Mu'awiyah

(ومن كتاب منه (عليه السلام

إليه (معاوية) أيضاً

I have received from you the packet of unconnected advices and the embellished letter. You have written it because of your misguidance, and despatched it because of lack of wisdom. This is the letter of a man who has neither light to show him the way nor a leader to guide him on the right path. Passion prompted him and he responded to it. Misguidance led him and he followed it. Consequently, he began to speak nonsense and became recklessly astray.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ أَتَتْنِي مِنْكَ مَوْعِظَةٌ مُوَصَّلَةٌ، وَرِسَالَةٌ مُحَبَّرَةٌ، نَمَّقْتَهَا بِضَلاَلِكَ، وَأَمْضَيْتَهَا بِسُوءِ رَأْيِكَ، وَكِتَابُ امْرِىء لَيْسَ لَهُ بَصَرٌ يَهْدِيهِ، وَلاَ قَائِدٌ يُرْشِدُهُ، قَدْ دَعَاهُ الْهَوَى فَأَجَابَهُ، وَقَادَهُ الضَّلاَلُ فَاتَّبَعَهُ، فَهَجَرَ لاَغِطاً، وَضَلَّ خَابِطاً.

A part of the same letter

ومن هذا الكتاب

Because allegiance is once and for all; it is not open to reconsideration nor is there any scope for fresh proceedings of election. He who remains out of it is deemed to be critical of Islam while he who prevaricates upon it is a hypocrite.

لاِنَّهَا بَيْعَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ لاَ يُثَنَّى فِيهَا النَّظَرُ، وَلاَ يُسْتَأْنَفُ فِيهَا الْخِيَارُ، الْخَارِجُ مِنْهَا طَاعِنٌ، وَالْمُرَوِّي فِيهَا مُدَاهِنٌ.

Letter 8: To Jarir ibn `Abdillah al-Bajali

Jarir bin Abdullah Bajali was sent to Damascus. He was carrying a letter for Mu'awiya. Some delay occurred in his return. Imam Ali (a) felt anxious about his safety and wrote the following letter to him:

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى جرير بن عبدالله البجلي لما أرسله إلى معاوية

Now then, when you receive this letter of mine ask Mu'awiyah to take a final decision and to follow a determined course.Then ask him to choose either war that exiles him from home or ignoble peace. If he chooses war leave him alone, but if he chooses peace secure his allegiance; and that is an end to the matter.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِذَا أَتَاكَ كِتَابِي فَاحْمِلْ مُعَاوِيَةَ عَلَى الْفَصْلِ، وَخُذْهُ بَالأَمْرِ الْجَزْمِ، ثُمَّ خَيِّرْهُ بَيْنَ حَرْب مُجْلِيَة، أَوْ سِلْم مُخْزِيَة، فَإِنِ اخْتَارَ الْحَرْبَ فَانْبِذْ إِلَيْهِ، وَإِنِ اخْتَارَ السِّلْمَ فَخُذْ بَيْعَتَهُ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

Letter 9: To Mu`awiyah

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى معاوية

Our people [1] (the Quraysh) decided to kill our Prophet and to annihilate our root. They created worries for us, behaved with us harshly, denied us ease of life, exposed us to fear, forced us to take refuge in a rugged mountain and ignited for us the flames of war.

فَأَرَادَ قَوْمُنَا قَتْلَ نَبِيِّنَا، وَاجْتِيَاحَ أَصْلِنَا، وَهَمُّوا بِنَا الْهُمُومَ، وَفَعَلُوا بِنَا الأَفَاعِيلَ، وَمَنَعُونَا الْعَذْبَ، وَأَحْلَسُونَا الْخَوْفَ، وَاضْطَرُّونَا إِلَى جَبَل وَعْر، وَأَوْقَدُوا لَنَا نَارَ الْحَرْبِ،

Allah then gave us determination to protect His religion and defend His honour. The believers among us expected (heavenly) reward from it, and the unbelievers among us gave their support because of kinship. Those who accepted Islam from among the Quraysh were away from the distresses in which we were involved either because of a pledge that protected them or because of the tribe that would rise to support them. They were therefore safe from killing. The way with the Prophet (may Allah bless him and his descendants) was that when fighting became fierce and people began to loose ground he would send forward members of his family and through them protect his companions from the attacks of swords and spears. In this way `Ubaydah ibn al-Harith was killed on the day of Badr, Hamzah (ibn `Abd al-Muttalib) on the

day of Uhud and Ja'far (ibn Abi Talib) on the day of Mu'tah. One more person, whom I can name if I wish, desired to seek martyrdom as they did; but their deaths approached, while his death had not yet approached.

فَعَزَمَ اللهُ لَنَا عَلَى الذَّبِّ عَنْ حَوْزَتِهِ، وَالرَّمْيِ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حُرْمَتِهِ. مُؤْمِنُنَا يَبْغِي بِذلِكَ الأجْرَ، وَكَافِرُنَا يُحَامِي عَنِ الأصْلِ، وَمَنْ أَسْلَمَ مِنْ قُرَيش خِلْوٌ مِمَّا نَحْنُ فِيهِ بِحِلْف يَمْنَعُهُ، أَوْ عَشِيرَة تَقُومُ دُونَهُ، فَهُوَ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ بِمَكَانِ أَمْن. وَكَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ(صلى الله عليه وآله) إِذَا احْمَرَّ الْبَأْسُ، وَأَحْجَمَ النَّاسُ، قَدَّمَ أَهْلَ بَيْتِهِ فَوَقَى بِهِمْ أَصْحَابَهُ حَرَّ السُّيُوفِ وَالأسِنَّةِ، فَقُتِلَ عُبَيْدَةُ بْنُ الْحَارِثِ يَوْمَ بَدْر، وَقُتِلَ حَمْزَةُ يَوْمَ أُحُد، وَقُتِلَ جعفر يَوْمَ مُؤْتَةَ، وَأَرَادَ مَنْ لَوْ شِئْتُ ذَكَرْتُ اسْمَهُ مِثْلَ الَّذِي أَرَادُوا مِنَ الشَّهَادَةِ، وَلكِنَّ آجَالَهُمْ عُجِّلَتْ،مَنِيَّتَهُ أُجِّلَتْ.

How strange it is that I am being grouped with him who never evinced briskness of pace like me nor had he to his credit any achievement like mine unless he claims something of which I do not know and which I think Allah too does not know. In any case, all praise belongs to Allah.

فَيَاعَجَباً لِلدَّهْرِ! إِذْ صِرْتُ يُقْرَنُ بِي مَنْ لَمْ يَسْعَ بِقَدَمِي، وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ كَسَابِقَتِي الَّتِي لاَ يُدْلِي أَحَدٌ بِمِثْلِهَا، إِلاَّ أَنْ يَدَّعِيَ مُدَّعٍ مَا لاَ أَعْرِفُهُ، وَلاَ أَظُنُّ اللهَ يَعْرِفُهُ، وَالْحَمْدُ لله عَلَى كُلِّ حَال.

As regards your request to hand over to you the murderers of `Uthman, I have thought over this matter and I do not find their handing over to you or to someone else possible for me. By my life, if you do not give up your wrong ways and disruptive acts you will surely know them. They will shortly be seeking you and will not give you the trouble of seeking them in land, sea, mountains or plain. But this search will be painful for you and their visit will not give you happiness. Peace be on those who deserve it.

وَأَمَّا مَا سَأَلْتَ مِنْ دَفْعِ قَتَلَةِ عُثْمانَ إِلَيْكَ، فَإِنِّي نَظَرْتُ فِي هذَا الأمْرِ، فَلَمْ أَرَهُ يَسَعُنِي دَفْعُهُمْ إِلَيْكَ وَلاَ إِلَى غَيْرِكَ، وَلَعَمْرِي لَئِنْ لَمْ تَنْزِعْ عَنْ غَيِّكَ وَشِقَاقِكَ لَتَعْرِفَنَّهُمْ عَنْ قَلِيل يَطْلُبُونَكَ، لاَ يُكَلِّفُونَكَ طَلَبَهُمْ فِي بَرّ وَلاَ بَحْر، وَلاَ جَبَلاً سَهْل، إِلاَّ أَنَّهُ طَلَبٌ يَسُوءُكَ وِجْدَانُهُ، وَزَوْرٌ لاَ يَسُرُّكَ لُقْيَانُهُ، وَالسَّلاَمُ لِاهْلِهِ.

1. When the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and his descendants) was commanded (by Allah) to call people to

(believe in) the Unity of Allah, the powers of unbelief and disobedience stood up to block the way of Truthfulness and the tribes of Quraysh decided to quell this voice through pressure and force. The love of their idols was so staunch in the hearts of these unbelievers that they were not prepared to hear a single word against them. The idea of one God was enough to rouse their passions. In addition, they were made to hear such epithets about their gods that gave them no better position than lifeless stones. When they saw their principles and beliefs in danger they prepared themselves to trouble the Prophet and got ready to try every means to that end. They adopted such pain-inflicting devices (against the Prophet) that it was impossible for him to step out of his house. Those who had accepted Islam in this period too had to face continuous tribulations. For example, these adherents of belief were often laid prostrate on the ground under the sun and beaten with straps and stones till they lost their senses. When the atrocities of the Quraysh rose to this extent the Prophet permitted them to leave Mecca and immigrate towards Abyssinia, in the fifth year of his call to Prophethood. The Quraysh followed them there as well, but the ruler of Abyssinia refused to hand them over to them, and by his fairness and justice did not allow any trouble to befall them.

On the other side the Prophet's preaching was continuing and the magnetism and influence of Truth was producing its effect. People were impressed by his teachings and personality and coming into his fold as a result of which the Quraysh felt much perturbed and tried to stop this increasing influence and power. When they could not do anything they decided to sever all connections with Banu Hashim and Banu `Abd al-Mut-talib, to have no social contacts with them and to have no transactions with them, so that they might be forced to give up supporting the Prophet and then they would deal with him as they wished. Consequently, they concluded a mutual agreement about it and a document was written on the subject and kept in deposit. After this agreement, although the locality was the same and the inhabitants too were the same yet for Banu Hashim every nook and corner became strange and well-known faces turned as if they had never known each other. All of them turned their faces and stopped mutual meeting and contacts. In these circumstances, there was also apprehension that the Prophet might be attacked suddenly in a valley outside the city. For this reason, they were forced to take refuge in a place called "shi`b (quarter) of Abi Talib." At this stage those Banu Hashim who had not yet accepted Islam shared these privations on account of lineal unity and offered defence at the hour of need, while those who had accepted Islam like Hamzah and Abu Talib, were active in protecting the Prophet by way of a religious obligation. In particular, Abu Talib had given up all his personal ease and comfort. He spent his days in consoling the Prophet and his nights in changing his bed, in this way, that if the Prophet used a bed one night the next night `Ali was made to sleep in it, so that in case someone attacked, then `Ali should suffer the brunt.

This was a period of great privation and trouble for Banu Hasim. If they could get leaves of trees to eat that was enough, otherwise they had to starve. After the lapse of three years in these hardships Zuhayr ibn Abi Umayyah (whose mother was `Atikah bint `Abd al-Muttalib), Hisham. ibn `Amr ibn Rabi `ah (who had family relationship with Banu Hashim through his mother), al-Mut'im ibn `Adi ibn Nawfal ibn `Abd Manaf, Abu'l-Bakhtari al-`As ibn Hisham ibn al-Mughirah and Zama'ah ibn al-Aswad ibn al-Muttalib proposed that this agreement should be abrogated. For a discussion of this issue, the Chiefs among the Quraysh assembled in the Ka'bah. No decision has yet been taken when Abu Talib also came out of the Valley and joined them. He said to them, "My nephew Muhammad has told me that the paper on which this agreement was written has been eaten by white-ants and nothing in it has remained save the name of Allah. So, you should send for the document and see it. If he is correct then you should give up animosity to him; and if he is wrong I am ready to hand him over to you." Consequently, the document was sent for and seen. It
was a fact that except the words "with Your name, O' My God" which was written on the top of all documents in those days the rest of it had been eaten away by white-ants. Seeing this al-Mut'im ibn `Adi tore off the writing and thus this agreement was abrogated. At last Banu Hashim got rid of the life of oppression and helplessness; but even after this there was no change in the unbelievers' behaviour towards the Prophet; rather they were so keen in their enmity and malice against him that they started thinking of taking his life, as a consequence of which the great event of hijrah (immigration of the Holy Prophet from Mecca to Medina) took place. Although on this occasion Abu Talib was no longer alive, `Ali represented him by lying down on the Prophet's bed, because it was the lesson taught by Abu Talib through which he managed to protect the Holy Prophet's life.

Although these events were not unknown to Mu`awiyah yet by recounting to him the deeds of his precedessors, the intention was to awaken his malicious spirit. Therefore, his attention has been drawn to the hardships inflicted (on the Holy

Prophet and his adherents) by the Quraysh and especially Banu `Abd Shams so that he might see the conduct of each of the followers of truth and the followers of wrong and realize whether he himself was treading on the right path or just following his forefathers.

Letter 10: To Mu'awiyah

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إليه أيضاً

What will you do when the coverings of this world in which you are wrapped are removed from you. The world attracted you with its embellishment and deceived you with its pleasure. It called you and you responded to it. It led you and you followed it. It commanded you and you obeyed it. Shortly an informer will inform you of things against which there will be no shield (to protect you). Therefore, keep off from this affair, take heed of the accounting (on the Day of Judgement), get ready for death that will soon overtake you and do not give your ears to those who have gone astray. If you do not do so I shall recall to you whatever you have forgotten, because you are a man living in ease and luxury. [1] Satan has taken you in his clutches, has secured his wishes in you and has taken complete control of you like your soul and blood.

وَكَيْفَ أَنْتَ صَانِعٌ إِذَا تَكَشَّفَتْ عَنْكَ جَلاَبِيبُ مَا أَنْتَ فِيهِ مِنْ دُنْيَا قَدْ تَبَهَّجَتْ بِزِينَتِهَا، وَخَدَعَتْ بِلَذَّتِهَا، دَعَتْكَ فَأَجَبْتَهَا، وَقَادَتْكَ فَاتَّبَعْتَهَا، وَأَمَرَتْكَ فَأَطَعْتَهَا، وَإِنَّهُ يُوشِكُ أَنْ يَقِفَكَ وَاقِفٌ عَلَى مَا لاَ يُنْجِيكَ مِنْهُ مِجَنٌّ، فَاقْعَسْعَنْ هذَا الاْمْرِ، وَخُذْ أُهْبَةَ الْحِسَابِ، وَشَمِّرْ لِمَا قَدْ نَزَلَ بِكَ، وَلاَ تُمَكِّنِ الْغُوَاةَ مِنْ سَمْعِكَ، وَإِلاَّ تَفْعَلْ أُعْلِمْكَ مَا أَغْفَلْتَ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ، فَإِنكَ مُتْرَفٌ قَدْ أَخَذَ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنْكَ مَأْخَذَهُ، وَبَلَغَ فِيكَ أَمَلَهُ، وَجَرَى مِنْكَ مَجْرَى الرُّوحِ وَالدَّمِ.

O Mu'awiyah, when were you all protectors of the ruled and guardians of the affairs of the people? Without any forward step or conspicuous distinction? We seek Allah's protection against the befalling of previous misfortunes, and I warn you lest you continue being deceived by desires and your appearance becomes different from your innerself.

وَمَتَى كُنْتُمْ يَا مُعَاوِيَةُ سَاسَةَ الرَّعِيَّةِ، وَوُلاَةَ أَمْرِ الاْمَّةِ ؟ بِغَيْرِ قَدَم سَابِق، وَلاَ شَرَف بَاسِق، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللهِ مِنْ لُزومِ سَوَابِقِ الشَّقَاءِ، وَأُحَذِّرُكَ أَنْ تَكُونَ مُتَمادِياً فِي غِرَّةِ الاْمْنِيَّةِ، مُخْتَلِفَ الْعَلاَنِيَةِ والسَّرِيرَةِ.

You have called me to war. Better to leave the people on one side, come out to me and spare both the

parties from fighting so that it may be known who of us has a rusted heart, and covered eyes. I am Abu'l-Hasan who killed your granfather 2 your brother 3 and your uncle 4 by cutting them to pieces on the day of Badr. The same sword is with me and I meet my adversary with the same heart. I have not altered the religion nor put up any new prophet. I am surely (treading) on that very highway which you had willingly foresaken (in the beginning) and then adopted per force.

وَقَدْ دَعَوْتَ إِلَى الْحَرْبِ، فَدَعِ النَّاسَ جَانِباً وَاخْرُجْ إِلَيَّ، وَأَعْفِ الْفَرِيقَينِ مِنَ الْقِتَالِ، لِتَعْلَمَ أَيُّنَا الْمَرِينُ عَلَى قَلْبِهِ، وَالْمُغَطَّى عَلَى بَصَرِهِ! فَأَنَا أَبُو حَسَن قَاتِلُ جَدّكَ وَخَالِكَ وأَخِيكَ شَدْخاً يَوْمَ بَدْر،ذلكَ السَّيْفُ مَعِي، وَبِذلِكَ الْقَلْبِ أَلْقَى عَدُوّي، مَا اسْتَبْدَلْتُ دِيناً، وَلاَ اسْتَحْدَثْتُ نَبِيّاً، وَإِنّي لَعَلَى الْمِنْهَاجِ الَّذِي تَرَكْتُمُوهُ طَائِعِينَ، وَدَخَلْتُمْ فِيهِ مُكْرَهِينَ.

You think you have come out seeking to revenge 'Uthman's blood. Certainly, you know how 'Uthman's blood was shed. If you want to avenge it, avenge it there. It is as though I see that when war is cutting you with its teeth you cry like camels crying under a heavy load. And it is as though I see your party bewildered by the incessant striking of swords, occurrence of death and

falling of bodies after bodies, calling me towards the Qur'an 5 although they would themselves be either unbelievers, deniers of truth or breakers of allegiance after swearing it.

وَزَعَمْتَ أَنَّكَ جِئْتَ ثَائراً بِدَمِ عُثْمانَ، وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ حَيْثُ وَقَعَ دَمُ عُثْمانَ فَاطْلُبْهُ مِنْ هُنَاكَ إِنْ كُنتَ طَالباً، فَكَأَنّي قَدْ رَأَيْتُكَ تَضِجُّ مِنَ الْحَرْبِ إِذَا عَضَّتْكَ ضَجِيجَ الْجِمَالِ بِالْأَثْقَالِ، وَكَأَنّي بِجَمَاعَتِكَ تَدْعُونِي جَزَعاً مِنَ الضَّرْبِ الْمُتَتَابِعِ، وَالْقَضَاءِ الْوَاقِعِ، وَمَصَارِعَ بَعْدَ مَصَارِعَ، إِلَى كِتَابِ اللهِ، وَهِيَ كَافِرَةٌ جَاحِدَةٌ، أَوْ مُبَايِعَةٌ حَائِدَةٌ .

1. This is in reference to the verse: We sent no warner into any city except its man who lived at ease said, "We disbelieve in the Message you have been sent with." (Qur'an, 34:34).
2. 'Utbah ibn Rabi'ah.
3. Hanzalah ibn Abi Sufyan.
4. al-Walid ibn 'Utbah.
5. This prophecy of Amir al-mu'minin is about the battle of Siffin. Herein he has depicted the whole picture in very few words. Thus, on one side Mu'awiyah was bewildered on account of the attacks of the Iraqis and was thinking to run away, and on the other, his army was crying under the constant onslaught of death, and, eventually, when there was no way of escape, they raised the Qur'an on spears and shouted for peace. By this device, the remaining persons saved their lives. "This prophecy" as Ibn Abi'l-Hadid al-Mu'tazili says, "is either true prophetic keen eye of Amir al-mu'minin which is really a significant power,or it is an information through knowledge of the unknown ('ilmu'l -ghayb) which is too most significant and wonderful. However, both cases are in the state of extreme significance and wonderfulness."
Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has further quoted the same prophecy from other letters of Amir al-mu'minin to Mu'awiyah. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol. 15, pp.83-85)
This prophecy cannot be attributed to imagination, guessing or the drawing of inference from events, nor can these details be ascertained by wit or far-reaching intelligence. Only he can disclose them whose source of information is either the Prophet's own revelation-bearing tongue or Divine inspiration.

Letter 11: Given to the contingent sent to confront the enemy.

Part of instructions to his marshal when Imam Ali (a) sent him to a battle [1]

ومن وصية

وصّى بها(عليه السلام) جيشاً بعثه إلى العدو

When you proceed towards the enemy or he proceeds towards you, the position of your force should be on the approaches high ground or on the edges of mountains or the bends of rivers, so that it may serve you as a help and a place to return to. Your encounter should be from one side or two sides.

Place watchers on the peaks of mountains and the raised sides of the high ground so that the enemy may not approach you from any place, whether of danger or safety. And know that the vanguard of an army serves as their eyes, and the eyes of the vanguard are their informers. Beware of dispersal. When you halt do so together and when you move you should move together. When night comes fix your spears in a circle and do not sleep except for dozing or napping.

فَإِذَا نزَلتُمْ بِعَدُوّ أَوْ نَزَلَ بِكُمْ، فَلْيَكُنْ مُعَسْكَرُكُمْ فِي قُبُلِ الاَشْرَافِ، أَوْ سِفَاحِ الْجِبَالِ، أَوْ أَثْنَاءِ الاَنْهَارِ، كَيْما يَكُونَ لَكُمْ رِدْءاً، وَدُونَكُمْ مَرَدّاً، وَلْتَكُنْ مُقَاتَلَتُكُمْ مِنْ وَجْه وَاحِد أَوِ اثْنيْنِ، واجْعَلُوا لَكُمْ رُقَبَاءَ فِي صَيَاصِي الْجِبَالِ، وَمَنَاكِبِ الْهِضَابِ، لِئَلاَّ يَأْتِيَكُمُ الْعَدُوُّ مِنْ مَكَانِ مَخَافَة أَوْ أَمْن. وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ مُقَدِّمَةَ الْقَومِ عُيُونُهُمْ، وَعُيُونَ الْمُقَدِّمَةِ طَلاَئِعُهُمْ.

وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَالتَّفَرُّقَ، فَإِذَا نَزَلْتُمْ فَانْزِلُوا جَمِيعاً، وَإِذا ارْتحَلْتُمْ فَارْتَحِلُوا جَمِيعاً، وَإِذَا غشِيكُمُ اللَّيْلُ فَاجْعَلُوا الرِّمَاحَ كِفَّةً، وَلاَ تَذُوقُوا النَّوْمَ إِلاَّ غِرَاراً أَوْ مَضْمَضَةً.

1. When Amir al-mu'minin put Ziyad ibn an-Nadr al-Harithi and Shurayh ibn Hani al-Harithi in command of contingents of eight thousand and four thousand strong at the camp of an-Nukhaylah and ordered them to advance towards Syria (ash-Sham), some dispute arose between them about their ranks, of which they apprised Amir al-mu'minin and wrote letters of complaints about each other. In reply, Amir al-mu'minin wrote to them that when they marched jointly the command of the whole force would be with Ziyad ibn an-Nadr al-Harithi and when they marched separately each would be in command of the force over which he had been placed.
In this letter Amir al-mu'minin also wrote for them certain instructions. Here as-Sayyid ar-Radi has taken down only the portion containing the instructions. These instructions are not only useful as concerns the strategies of fighting of those days, but their utility and importance in bringing out the principles of fighting in these days also is undeniable. These instructions are that at the time of encounter with the enemy the forces should be encamped on the tops of mountains and

turns of rivers, because in this way the low areas of the rivers would serve as trenches and the peaks of mountains as the walls of the fortress and thus it would be possible to feel secure and face the enemy from the other side. Secondly, that tile attack should be from one side or at the most from two sides, because by distribution of the entire force on several fronts weakness would inevitably arise. Thirdly, that the watchers should be put in position on the tops of high ground and the peaks of mountains so that they may give warning before the attack. Sometimes it happens that instead of attacking from the expected side the enemy attacks from a different side.

Therefore, if watchers are in position in high places they will detect the enemy from the cloud of dust seen from a distance. To clarify the useful aspect of these instructions Ibn Ahi'l-Hadid has recorded (in vol. 15, p.91) a historical incident that when Qahtabah (ibn Shabib at-Ta'i) encamped in a village after leaving Khurasan, he and Khalid ibn Barmak went and sat on the top of a nearby hill. No sooner had they sat down than Khalid noticed flocks of deer coming running from the forest. On seeing this he said to Qahtabah, "O' commander, get up and announce to the army that they should at once fall in line and takeup arms." Hearing this, Qahtabah was startled and stood up but looking hither and thither said, "I do not see the enemy's men anywhere." He replied, "O' Amir, this is not the time that should be lost in conversation. You see these deer which are proceeding towards the people, leaving their abodes. This means that the army of the enemy is marching from their rear." Consequently, he ordered his army to get ready. As soon as the army got ready the noise of horses' hoofs was heard and within moments the enemy was on them. Since they had prepared themselves for defence in time, they defended themselves against the enemy thoroughly. Now, if Khalid had not been at such a height and had not acted with such sagacity, the enemy would have attacked them unawares and annihilated them. Fourthhly, that the reconnaissance should be spread here and there, so that they can be aware of the movements and intentions of the enemy, and thereby foil his plans. Fifthly, that when the army camps it should camp together and when it moves it should move together so that the enemy does not attack you in a state of dispersal and overpower you easily. Sixthly, that at night the guard should be formed by fixing spears in a circle in the ground so that if the enemy attacks in the night, it is possible to prepare for defence by taking up arms at once and if the enemy showers arrows that too can be defied. Seventhly, that deep sleep should be avoided lest you remain unaware of the enemy's approach and he succeed in attacking you before you get ready.

Letter 12: to Ma'qil ibn Qays ar-Riyahi

When Imam Ali (a) sent an expedition of 3000 soldiers under Ma'qil bin Qays Riyahi against the Syrians, he issued the following instructions.

(ومن وصيته (عليه السلام

لمعقل بن قيس الرياحي

حين أنفذه إلى الشام في ثلاثة آلاف مقدّمةً له

Fear Allah before Whom attendance is inevitable, and with other than Whom there is no meeting. Do not fight except with those who fight you. Travel in the two cool periods (i.e., morning and evening). Let the

men have a midday sleep. March easily and do not travel during the early night for Allah has made it for resting and has ordained it for staying, nor for journeying. Therefore, give rest to your body in the night and let your carrier-beasts also rest.

When you are sure that morning has appeared and when dawn has dawned, commence your journey with Allah's blessings. If and when you face the enemy stand in the midst of your comrades. Do not get too near the foe like one who wants to commence the fighting, nor remain too distant like one who is afraid of action, till you receive my orders. Hatred for them should not lead you to fight before inviting them (to guidance) and exhausting your pleas before them.

اتَّقِ اللهَ الَّذِي لاَبُدّ لَكَ مِنْ لِقَائِهِ، وَلاَ مُنْتَهَى لَكَ دُونَهُ، وَلاَ تُقَاتِلَنَّ إِلاَّ مَنْ قَاتَلَكَ، وَسِرِ الْبَرْدَيْنِ،غَوِّرْ بِالنَّاسِ، وَرَفِّهْ فِي السَّيْرِ، وَلاَ تَسِرْ أَوَّلَ اللَّيْلِ، فَإِنَّ اللهَ جَعَلَهُ سَكَناً، وَقَدَّرَهُ مُقَاماً لاَ ظَعْناً، فَأَرِحْ فِيهِ بَدَنَكَ، وَرَوِّحْ ظَهْرَكَ، فَإِذَا وَقَفْتَ حِينَ يَنْبَطِحُ السَّحَرُ، أَوْ حِينَ يَنْفَجِرُ الْفَجْرُ، فَسِرْ عَلَى بَرَكَةِ اللهِ، فَإِذَا لَقِيتَ الْعَدُوَّ فَقِفْ مِنْ أَصْحَابِكَ وَسَطاً، وَلاَ تَدْنُ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ دُنُوَّ مَنْ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُنْشِبَ الْحَرْبَ، وَلاَ تَبَاعَدْ منهم تَبَاعُدَ مَنْ يَهَابُ الْبَأْسَ، حَتَّى يَأْتِيَكَ أَمْرِي، وَلاَ يَحْمِلَنَّكُمْ شَنَآنُهُمْ عَلَى قِتَالِهِمْ، قَبْلَ دُعَائِهِمْ وَالاْعْذَارِ إِلَيْهِمْ.

Letter 13: To two of the officers in his army

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى أميرين من أُمراء جيشه

I have placed Malik [1] ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar in command over you and over all those under you. Therefore, follow his commands and take him as the armour and shield for yourselves, because he is one of those from whom I have no fear of weakness nor any mistake, nor laziness where haste is more appropriate, nor haste where slackness is expected of him.

وَقَدْ أَمَّرْتُ عَلَيْكُمَا وَعَلى مَنْ فِي حَيِّزِكُمَا مَالِكَ بْنَ الْحَارِثِ الاْشْتَرِ، فَاسْمَعَا لَهُ وَأَطِيعاً، واجْعَلاَهُ دِرْعاً وَمِجَنّاً، فَإِنّهُ مِمَّنْ لاَ يُخَافُ وَهْنُهُ، وَلاَ سَقْطَتُهُ، وَلاَ بُطْؤُهُ عَمَّا الاْسْرَاعُ إِلَيْهِ أَحْزَمُ، وَلاَ إِسْرَاعُهُ إِلَى مَا الْبُطءُ عَنْهُ أَمْثَلُ.

1. When Amir al-mu'minin sent a vanguard contingent twelve thousand strong under Ziyad ibn an-Nadr al-Harithi and Shurayh ibn Ham al-Harithi to Syria, on the way, near Sur ar-Rum, they encountered with Abu'l-A'war ('Amr ibn Sulayman) as-Sulami who was camping there with a contingent of the Syrians. Both of them informed Amir al-mu'minin of this through al-Harith ibn Jumhan al-Ju'fi, whereupon he sent Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar as the Officer-in-command and wrote this

letter to inform them. The brief but comprehensive words in which Amir al-mu'minin has mentioned Malik al-Ashtar in this letter gives an indication of his intelligence, sagacity, courage, daring, expanse and versatility in the art of war and his personal greatness and importance.

Letter 14: To his soldiers before the Battle of Siffin

Given to the army before the encounter with the enemy at Siffin [1]

(ومن وصيّته (عليه السلام

لعسكره قبل لقاء العدو بصفّين

Do not fight them unless they initiate the fighting, because, by the grace of Allah, you are in the right and to leave them till they begin fighting will be another point from your side against them. If, by the will of Allah, the enemy is defeated then do not kill the runner away, do not strike a helpless person, do not finish off the wounded. Do not inflict pain on women even though they may attack your honour with filthy words and abuse your officers, because they are weak in character, mind and intelligence. We have been ordered to desist from them although they may be unbelievers. Even in the pre-Islamic (al-jahiliyyah) period if a man struck a woman with a stone or a stick he was rebuked along with his offspring after him.

لاَ تُقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى يَبْدَأُوكُمْ، فَإِنَّكُمْ بِحَمْدِ اللهِ عَلَى حُجَّة، وَتَرْكُكُمْ إِيَّاهُمْ حَتَّى يَبْدَأُوكُمْ حُجَّةٌ أُخْرَى لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ، فَإِذَا كَانَتِ الْهَزِيمَةُ بِإِذْنِ اللهِ فَلاَ تَقْتُلُوا مُدْبِراً، وَلاَ تُصيبُوا مُعْوِراً، وَلاَ تُجْهِزُوا عَلَى جَرِيح،لاَ تَهيجُوا النِّسَاءَ بِأَذىً، وَإِنْ شَتَمْنَ أَعْرَاضَكُمْ، وَسَبَبْنَ أُمَرَاءَكُمْ، فَإِنَّهُنَّ ضَعِيفَاتُ الْقُوَى وَالاَنْفُسِ وَالْعُقُولِ، إِنْ كُنَّا لَنُؤْمَرُ بِالْكَفِّ عَنْهُنَّ وَإِنَّهُنَّ لَمُشْرِكَاتٌ، وَإِنْ كَانَ الرَّجُلُ لَيَتَنَاوَلُ الْمَرْأَةَ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ بِالْفِهْرِ أَوِ الْهِرَاوَةِ فَيُعَيَّرُ بِهَا وَعَقِبُهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ.

1. The responsibility for the war and fighting that took place between Amir al-mu'minin and Mu'awiyah lies solely on Mu'awiyah because he brought about the war by laying the wrong blame for 'Uthman's blood on Amir al-mu'minin, although the real facts about the causes of 'Uthman's killing and by whom he was killed were not unknown to him. But since there was no way for him to achieve his end save by creating an occasion for war, he entered into war to retain his authority which was evidently offensive and which cannot by any means be considered as permissible, because revolt and rebellion against the rightful Imam is unlawful according to the general consensus of Muslims. Thus, Abu Zakariyya Yahya ibn Sharaf an-Nawawi (631/1233-676/1277) writes:
Do not fight against those in authority in matters of governance, nor raise objections against them except when you observe them committing things which you know are definitely against Islam. If you see them doing such things regard it bad for

them and speak the truth wherever you may be, but rising against them or fighting is prohibited by the consensus of Muslims. (Sharh Sahih Muslim, vol.2, p.125. In agreement with this view, see also, al-Qadi Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn at-Tayyib al-Baqillani [338/950 - 403/1013], the Ash'arite great scholar, in at- Tamhid, p.186; and Sa'du'd-Din Mas'ud ibn 'Umar at-Taftazani [712/1312 - 793/1390] in Sharh al-Maqasid, vol.2, p.272)

Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Karim ash- Shahrastani writes:

Whoever rises against the true Imam, by the unanimity of opinion of the (Muslim) community, is known as a Kharijite, the deviator. The same is the case of rising, during the days of the companions, against the rightful Imams, or even after them against those who followed them in virtue. (al-Milal wa'n-nihal, vol.1, p.114)

There is no doubt that Mu'awiyah's action was the result of uprising and revolt, and to take up arms for the purpose of stopping the advance of the one who revolts is not to be regarded as being against any code of peacefulness or peace-loving. Rather, it is a natural right of the oppressed; and if he is deprived of this right then there will remain no way of preventing oppression and tyranny or of safeguarding rights in the world. That is why Allah has permitted taking up arms against rebels. Thus, Allah says:

And if two parties of the believers fall into a quarrel (among themselves), restore ye peace between them two; but if one of the two transgresseth against the other, (then) fight ye (all against) that which transgresseth until it complieth with the command of Allah; and if it complieth then restore ye peace between the two with justice, and act ye justly; Verily, Allah loveth the just ones. (Qur'an, 49:9)

It was the first plea to which Amir al-mu'minin pointed out by saying, "By the Grace of Allah you are in the right," but even after exhaustion of this plea he prevented his army from taking the initiative in fighting, because he wished that the initiative should not be from his side and that he should take up the sword only in defence. Consequently, when all his effort for peace and tranquility proved futile and the enemy took the step towards war, this was the second argument in their favour, after which Amir al-mu'minin could not be blamed for getting ready to fight, nor accused of aggressive action. It was rather an obligation to stop oppression and tyranny that he had to discharge and which Allah has permitted in plain words. Thus, Allah's command is that:

And fight in the cause of Allah (against) those who fight you but be not aggressive; for verily Allah loveth not the aggressors. (Qu'an, 2:190)

Besides, fighting against Amir al-mu'minin means fighting against the Prophet, as the Prophet's saying: "O' 'Ali, your peace is my peace and your war is my war" (Ibn al-Maghazili, al-Manaqib, p.5; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.18, p.24). In this way whatever punishment should be for fighting against the Prophet should be for fighting against Amir al-mu'minin. For him who wages war against the Prophet, Allah has laid down the following punishment.

To recompense of those who war against Allah and His Apostle, and strive in the land, spreading mischief (therein), is only that they be slain or crucified or their hands and their feet should be cut off, from the opposite sides, or be banished from the land; This for them shall be the disgrace in this world, and for them, in the hereafter, shall be a great torment. (Qur'an, 5:33)

Apart from this, the instructions that Amir al-mu'minin issued in connection with the war, namely that no runner away or wounded should be molested, are so high from the moral point of view that they can be regarded as a sublime specimen of moral values and the high standard of Islamic fighting. Then, these instructions were not confined to mere words but Amir al-mu'minin followed them to the letter, and ordered others also to follow them strictly. He did not, on any occasion, tolerate the chasing of a runner away, attack the helpless or molest women, in fact, on the battlefield of Jamal, where the command of the opposite force was with a woman, he did not change his principle. After the defeat and vanquishment of the foe he gave proof of his high character and sent 'A'ishah to Medina under guard. Had there been someone other than Amir al-mu'minin he would have proposed the same punishment as that which ought to be awarded for such a step! Thus, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written:

What she did with Amir al-mu'minin, if she had done the same with (Caliph) 'Umar and had spread rebellion against him among the people, he would , after securing victory over her, have killed her and cut her into pieces, but Amir al-mu'minin was very forbearing and large-hearted .(Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.17, p.254)

Letter 15: His invocation to Allah whenever he faced an enemy.

Made by Amir al-mu'minin when he used to face the enemy

وكان (عليه السلام) يقول إذا لقى العدوّ محارباً:

O My God! Hearts are drawn to You, necks stretch (towards You), eyes are fixed (on You), steps are in motion (towards You) and bodies have turned lean. O My God! Hidden animosity has become manifest and the cauldrons of malice are boiling.

اللَّهُمَّ إِلَيْكَ أَفْضَتِ الْقُلُوبُ، وَمُدَّتِ الاَعْنَاقُ، وَشَخَصَتِ الاَبْصَارُ، وَنُقِلَتِ الاَقْدَامُ، وَأُنْضِيَتِ الاَبْدَانُ. اللَّهُمَّ قَدْ صَرَّحَ مَكْنُونُ الشَّنَآنِ، وَجَاشَتْ مَرَاجِلُ الاَضْغَانِ

O My God! We complain to You of the absence of our Prophet, the numerousness of our enemy and the diffusion of our passions.

Our Lord! Decide between us and between our people with truth, and You are the Best of Deciders. (Qur'an, 7:89)

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَشْكُوا إِلَيكَ غَيْبَةَ نَبِيِّنَا، وَكَثْرَةَ عَدُوِّنَا، وَتَشَتُّتَ أَهْوَائِنَا.

(رَبَّنَا افْتَحْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ قَوْمِنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْفَاتِحِينَ)

Letter 16: His advice to his followers during a battle

He used to give to his followers at the time of battle

وكان يقول (عليه السلام)

لاصحابه عند الحرب

The retreat after which return is intended and the withdrawal after which attack is in view should not make you unhappy. Do justice with the swords (allow your swords to do their duties). Keep ready a place for the falling of bodies (of your foe); prepare yourselves for hurling strong spears and striking swords with full force, and keep your voices down as that keeps off cowardice.

لاَ تَشْتَدَّنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ فَرَّةٌ بَعْدَهَا كَرَّةٌ، وَلاَ جَوْلَةٌ بَعْدَهَا حَمْلَةٌ، وَأَعْطُوا السُّيُوفَ حُقُوقَهَا، وَوَطِّنُوا لِلْجُنُوبِ مَصَارِعَهَا، وَاذْمُرُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ عَلَى الطَّعْنِ الدَّعْسِيِّ، وَالضَّرْبِ الطِّلَحْفِيِّ، وَأَمِيتُوا الأَصْوَاتَ، فإِنَّهُ أَطْرَدُ لِلْفَشَلِ

By Him Who broke open the seed (for growing) and created living beings, they had not accepted Islam but they had secured safety (by verbally professing it) and had hidden their misbelief. Consequently when they found helpers for their misbelief they disclosed it.

[فـ.] والَّذِي فَلَقَ الْحَبَّةَ، وَبَرَأَ النَّسَمَةَ، مَا أَسْلَمُوا وَلَكِنِ اسْتَسْلَمُوا، وَأَسَرُّوا الْكُفْرَ، فَلَمَّا وَجَدُوا أَعْوَاناً عَلَيْهِ أَظْهَرُوهُ

Letter 17: In reply to a letter from Mu'awiyah

In reply to a letter from Mu'awiyah [1]

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى معاوية، جواباً عن كتاب منه

As for your demand to me to (hand over) Syria, I cannot give you today what I denied you yesterday. As regards your saying that the war has eaten up Arabia save its last breath, you should know that he whom right has eaten up goes to Paradise and he whom wrong has eaten up goes to Hell. As for our equality in (the art of) war and in (numbers of) men, certainly you cannot be more penetrating in doubtfulness (of belief) than I am in certainty (of belief), and the people of Syria are not more greedy for this world than the people of Iraq are for the next world.

وَأَمَّا طَلَبُكَ إِلَيَّ الشَّامَ، فَإِنِّي لَمْ أَكُنْ لِاعْطِيَكَ الْيَوْمَ مَا مَنَعْتُكَ أَمْسِ. وَأَمَّا قَوْلُكَ: إِنَّ الْحَرْبَ قَدْ أَكَلَتِ الْعَرَبَ إِلاَّ حُشَاشَاتِ أَنْفُس بَقِيَتْ، فَمَنْ أَكَلَهُ الْحَقُّ فَإِلَى الْجَنَّةِ،مَنْ أَكَلَهُ الْبَاطِلُ فَإِلَى النّارِ. وَأَمَّا اسْتِوَاؤُنَا فِي الْحَرْبِ والرِّجَالِ،

فَلَسْتَ بِأَمْضَى عَلَى الشَّكِّ مِنِّي عَلَى الْيَقِينِ، وَلَيْسَ أَهْلُ الشَّامِ بِأَحْرَصَ عَلَى الدُّنْيَا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْعِرَاقِ عَلَى الاْخِرَةِ.

As for your saying that both of us are sons of 'Abd Manaf, it is no doubt so, but Umayyah cannot be like Hashim, nor Harb like Abd al-Muttalib, nor can Abu Sufyan be like Abu Talib. The muhajir (immigrant) cannot be a match for him who was set free (on the day of fall of Mecca), nor can one of pure descent be a match for him who has been adopted, nor the pursuer of truth be a match of the adherent to wrong, nor a believer be a match for a hypocrite. How bad are the successors who go on following their predecessors who have fallen in the fire of Hell!

وَأَمَّا قَوْلُكَ: إِنَّا بَنُو عَبْدِ مَنَاف، فَكَذلِكَ نَحْنُ، وَلكِنْ لَيْسَ أُمَيَّةُ كَهَاشِمَ، وَلاَ حَرْبٌ كَعَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ، وَلاَ أَبُوسُفْيَانَ كَأَبِي طَالِب، وَلاَ الْمُهَاجِرُ كَالطَّلِيقِ، وَلاَ الصَّرِيحُ كَاللَّصِيقِ، وَلاَ الْمُحِقُّ كَالْمُبطِلِ، وَلاَ الْمُؤْمِنُ كَالْمُدْغِلِ، وَلَبِئْسَ الْخَلَفُ خَلَفٌ يَتْبَعُ سَلَفاً هَوَى فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ.

Besides that, we also have the distinction of prophethood among us, by virtue of which we subdued the strong and raised up the down-trodden. When Allah made Arabia enter (the fold of) His religion, and the people submitted to it willingly or unwillingly, you were among those who entered the religion either from greed or from fear, at a time when those who had gone first had preceded and the first muhajirun had acquired their (peculiar) distinction. Now, do not allow Satan have a share with you nor let him have his sway over you; and that is an end to the matter.

وَفِي أَيْدِينَا بعْدُ فَضْلُ النُّبُوَّةِ الَّتِي أَذْلَلْنَا بِهَا الْعَزِيزَ، وَنَعَشْنَا بِهَا الذَّلِيلَ. وَلَمَّا أَدْخَلَ اللهُ الْعَرَبَ فِي دِينِهِ أَفْوَاجاً، وَأَسْلَمَتْ لَهُ هذِهِ الاْمَّةُ طَوْعاً وَكَرْهاً، كُنْتُمْ مِمَّنْ دَخَلَ فِي الدِّين: إِمَّا رَغْبَةً وَإِمَّا رَهْبَةً، عَلَى حِينَ فَازَ أَهْلُ السَّبْقِ بِسَبْقِهِمْ، وَذَهَبَ الْمُهَاجِرُونَ الاْوَّلُونَ بِفَضْلِهِمْ. فَلاَ تَجْعَلَنَّ لِلشَّيْطَانِ فِيكَ نَصِيباً، وَلاَ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ سَبِيلاً، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

1. During the battle of Siffin, Mu'awiyah thought of again demanding the province of Syria from Amir al-mu'minin and to play such a trick as to succeed in his designs. In this connection, he consulted 'Amr ibn al-'As. But the latter did not agree with this idea and said, "O' Mu'awiyah, think a little, what effect will this writing of yours have on 'Ali? How can he fall in this trap by your persuasion." On this Mu'awiyah said, "We are all descendants of 'Abd Manaf. What difference is there between 'Ali and me that he may score over me and I may not succeed in deceiving him?" 'Amr ibn al-'As said, "If you think so, then write and see (the outcome)." Mu'awiyah therefore wrote a letter to Amir al-mu'minin wherein he made a demand for Syria and also wrote: "We are descendants of 'Abd Manaf. There is no distinction of one over the other among us." Then, Amir al-mu'minin wrote this letter in reply and mentioning his own predecessors along with those of Mu'awiyah disproved his contention of equality. Although the origin of both was the same and the paternal chain of both joined at 'Abd Manaf, the progeny of 'Abd Shams was the source of all evil in morality and character and was involved in heresy and vice whereas the house of Hashim was the worshipper of one God and kept aloof from idolatory. If the branches growing out of the same root bear both flowers as well as thorns, then both cannot be deemed equal. Consequently, it does not need any detailed explanation to show that Umayyah and Hashim, Harb and 'Abd al-Muttalib and Abu Sufyan and Abu Talib were not match of each other from any angle. This is not denied by any historian nor by any biographer. In fact, after this reply even Mu'awiyah did not dare refute it, because the fact could be concealed that after 'Abd Manaf it was Hashim alone who possessed conspicuous prestige among the Quraysh, and the most important positions with relation to the Ka'bah namely siqayah (i.e., the superintendence of the water-supply, especially with a veiw to the needs of pilgrims) and rifadah

(provisioning of pilgrims) was assigned to him. As such, at the time of hajj, caravan after caravan used to come and stay with him and he was such a generous host to them that those who partook of his generosity and benevolence would praise him for long thereafter.

The worthy son of this very large-hearted and courageous father was 'Abd al-Muttalib whose name was Shaybah and surname was Sayyidu'l-Batha' (the Chief of the Valley of Mecca). He was the successor to the distinction of Abraham's line and owner of the greatness and chiefdom of Quraysh. The high courage and far-sightedness showed by him before Abraham is a shining star of the family of 'Abd Manaf.'Abd Manaf was a pearl and 'Abd al-Muttalib was the lustre of the pearl.

'Abd al-Muttalib's son was Ahu Talib whose lap served as the cradle for 'Abdullah's orphan child and the training place of the Prophet. He brought up the Prophet in his care, and shielded him against his enemies. To compare Abu Sufyan, Harb and Umayyah with them or to regard them as their matches is the same as to close one's eyes to the lustre of light and to regard it as darkness.

After recounting this geneological difference the next point of distinction that Amir al-mu'minin has described is that he himself is a muhajir (immigrant from Mecca) while Mu'awiyah is a taliq (i.e., one of those whom the Prophet had spared on the day of fall of Mecca). Therefore, when the Prophet entered Mecca victorious he enquired from the Quraysh how they thought he would deal with them, and all said that being a generous son of a generous father they expected only good from him, whereupon the Prophet said, "Go away, you have all been spared." That is, "you did deserve to be detained as slaves but as a mark of obligation you have been left free." These spared ones included Mu'awiyah and Abu Sufyan also. Thus, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid and ash-Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh have recorded the following note in their annotations to this letter "Abu Sufyan and Mu'awiyah both were among the spared ones." (Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. 17, p. 119;'Abduh, vol.3, p. 17)

The third point of distinction is that Amir al-mu'minin's lineage is pure and clear and there is no doubtful point anywhere. As against this, for Mu'awiyah he has used to the word "lasiq". Men of letters have given lasiq to mean "One who is attributed to other than his father." In this connection, the first doubt that is entertained about Umayyah is whether he was the son of 'Abd Shams or only his slave who began to be known as his son because of having been brought up by him. Thus, al-'Allamah al-Majlisi has related from Kamil al-Baha'i that: Umayyah was a Byzantinian slave of 'Abd Shams. When he found him intelligent and sagacious he freed him and adopted him as hisson, as a result of which he began to be called Umayyah son of 'Abd Shams, as Zayd (ibn al-Harithah) was called Zayd ibn Muhammad before the verse was revealed (to prohibit it).(Bihar al-anwar, 1st ed., vol.8, p.383)

The second doubt in the Umayyad lineage is whether Harb who is known as the son of Umayyah was really his son or a slave brought up by him. In this connection, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has quoted from Abu'l-Faraj al-Isbahani's book that:

Mu'awiyah enquired from the lineage expert Daghfal (Ibn Hanzalah) whether he had seen 'Abd al-Muttalib and he replied in the affirmative.He further enquired how he found him and Daghfal replied, "He was prestigious, handsome and a man of open forehead, while his face bore the brightness of Prophethood." Then, Mu'awiyah enquired whether he had seen Umayyah ibn 'Abd Shams also, and he replied that he had seen him too. He enquired how he found him and he replied, "Weak bodied, bent stature and blind in the eyes. In front of him was his slave Dhakwan who led here and there." Mu'awiyah said it was his son Abu 'Amr (Harb) whereupon he said, "You say so but the Quraysh only know that he was his slave." (al-Aghani, vol. 1, p. 12; Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol. 17, pp.231-232)

In this connection, the third doubt is about Mu'awiyah himself. Thus Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written that:

Mu'awiyah's mother Hind led a life of vileness and immorality. az-Zamakhshari (Abu'l-Qasim Mahmud ibn 'Umar [467/1075-538/1144]) has written in his book Rabi'u 'l-abrar that Mu'awiyah's parentage was traced back to four persons who were: Musafir ibn Abi 'Amr, 'Umarah ibn al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah, al-'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib and as-Sabbah (a singer for 'Umarah). (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol. 1, p.336)

The fourth point of distinction that Amir al-mu'minin has stated is that he himself was the devotee of right while Mu'awiyah was the devotee of wrong and this fact needs no proof, for the whole life of Mu'awiyah was spent in suppressing right and hankering after wrong. No where is his step seen advancing towards right.

The fifth distinction that Amir al-mu'minin has mentioned is that he himself was a believer whereas Mu'awiyah was a mischief-monger and a hypocrite. Just as there can be no doubt about Amir al-mu'minin's belief, there can be no doubt about Mu`awiyah's mischief-mongering and hypocricy. Thus, Amir al-mu'minin has exposed his hypocricy in the earlier

writing in these words.
These people had not accepted Islam but they had secured safety by verbally professing it and had hidden their misbelief. Consequently, when they found helpers for their mischief they disclosed it.

Letter 18: To `Abdullah ibn al- `Abbas, his Governor of Basrah

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى عبد الله بن العباس وهو عامله على البصرة

You should know that Basrah is the place where Satan descends and mischiefs happen. Keep the people of this place pleased with good treatment and remove the knots of fear from their hearts.

وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الْبَصْرَةَ مَهْبِطُ إِبْلِيسَ، وَمَغْرِسُ الْفِتَنِ، فَحَادِثْ أَهْلَهَا بِالاْحْسَانِ إِلَيْهِمْ، وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةَ الْخَوْفِ عَنْ قُلُوبِهِمْ.

I have come to know of your strictness with Banu Tamim [1] and your harshness over them. Banu Tamim are those that if one star sets another one rises for them. They were never exceeded in (the art of) war in pre-Islamic times or after Islam. They have a special kinship with us and a particular relationship. We shall be rewarded if we pay heed to the kinship and be deemed sinful if we disregard it. O Abu'l-`Abbas, may Allah have mercy on you. keep yourself restrained in whatever you say or do, good or bad about your people, as we are both partners in this (responsibility). Prove yourself according to my good impressions about you, and do not prove my opinion (about you) wrong; and that is an end to the matter.

وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي تَنَمُّرُكَ لِبَنِي تَمِيم، وَغِلْظَتُكَ عَلَيْهِمْ، وَإِنَّ بَنِي تَمِيم لَمْ يَغِبْ لَهُمْ نَجْمٌ إِلاَّ طَلَعَ لَهُمْ آخَرُ، وَإِنَّهُمْ لَمْ يُسْبَقُوا بِوَغْم فِي جَاهِلِيَّة وَلاَ إِسْلاَم، وَإِنَّ لَهُمْ بِنَا رَحِماً مَاسَّةً، وَقَرَابَةً خَاصَّةً، نَحْنُ مَأْجُورُونَ عَلَى صِلَتِهَا، وَمَأْزُورُونَ عَلَى قَطِيعَتِهَا. فَارْبَعْ أَبَا الْعَبَّاسِ، رَحِمَكَ اللهُ، فِيَما جَرَى عَلَى يَدِكَ وَلِسَانِكَ مِنْ خَيْر وَشَرّ! فَإِنَّا شَرِيكَانِ فِي ذلِكَ،كُنْ عِنْدَ صَالِحِ ظَنِّي بِكَ، وَلاَ يَفِيلَنَّ رَأْيِي فِيكَ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

1. When Talhah and az-Zubayr reached Basrah it was Banu Tamim who took active part in the movement to avenge `Uthman's blood and werc foremost in fanning this mischief. Therefore, when `Abdullah ibn al-Abbas took over as the Governor of Basrah, in view of their breach of faith and animosity, he thought they deserved harsh treatment and was to some extent severe with them. But in this tribe there were also a few sincere followers of Amir al-mu'minin. When they saw this behaviour of Ibn 'Abbas with their tribe they sent a letter to Amir al-mu'minin through Jariyah ibn Qadamah wherein

they complained of Ibn 'Abbas's harsh treatment.
Thereupon, Amir al-mu'minin wrote this letter to Ibn 'Abbas in which he instructed him to change his ways and to behave well with them, and has drawn his attention to the kinship existing between Banu Hashim and Banu Tamim. That kinship was this that Banu Hashim and Banu Tamim join the lineal line at Ilyas ibn Mudar because Hashim is the descendant of Mudrikah ibn Ilyas, while Tamim is the descendant of Tabikhah ibn Ilyas.

Letter 19: To one of his officers

The following is a letter to one of his governors. It speaks volumes about the ways of Divine Rule. It shows how Imam Ali (a) was training the Muslims to behave tolerantly towards other religions, how minority was to be treated and what should those who hold a different creed, expect of a Muslim ruler.

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى بعض عماله

Now, the cultivators 1 (dahaqin, plural of dihqan) of your city have complained of your strictness, hard heartedness, humiliating treatment and harshness. I thought over it and found that since they are unbelievers they cannot be brought near nor kept away or treated severely because of the pledge with them. Behave with them in between strictness and softness and adopt for them a mingling or remoteness and aloofness with nearness and closeness if Allah so wills.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ دَهَاقِينَ أَهْلِ بَلَدِكَ شَكَوْا مِنْكَ غِلْظَةً وَقَسْوَةً، وَاحْتِقَاراً وَجَفْوَةً، وَنَظَرْتُ فَلَمْ أَرَهُمْ أَهْلاً لاَنْ يُدْنَوْا لِشِرْكِهِمْ، وَلاَ أَنْ يُقْصَوا وَيُجْفَوْا لِعَهْدِهِمْ، فَالْبَسْ لَهُمْ جِلْبَاباً مِنَ اللِّينِ تَشُوبُهُ بِطَرَف مِنَ الشِّدَّةِ، وَدَاوِلْ لَهُمْ بَيْنَ الْقَسْوَةِ وَالرَّأْفَةِ، وَامْزُجْ لَهُمْ بَيْنَ التَّقْرِيبِ وَالاْدْنَاءِ، وَالاْبْعَادِ وَالاْقْصَاءِ، إِنْ شَاءَاللهُ.

1. These people were Magians (majus). That is why the treatment of Amir al-mu'minin's officer with them was not the same as with Muslims. Disgusted with this they wrote a letter of complaint to Amir al-mu'minin and spoke of the Officer's harshness. In reply, Amir al-mu'minin wrote to his officer that he should meet out treatment to them in which there should be neither harshness nor such leniency which they may exploit to create mischief because if they are let loose they get involved in machinations against the government and disturb the country's administration by creating one mischief or the other, while a wholly repressive policy cannot be justified because they are counted among the subjects and their rights as such cannot be ignored.

Letter 20: To Ziyad ibn Abih

To Ziyad ibn Abih (son of his [unknown] father), when 'Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas was the Governor of Basrah, the suburbs of Ahwaz, Fars and Kirman while Ziyad was his deputy in Basrah.

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى زياد بن أبيه

وهو خليفة عامله عبدالله بن العباس على البصرة، وعبد الله عامل أميرالمؤمنين (عليه السلام) يومئذ عليها وعلى كور الاهواز فارس وكرمان و

I truthfully swear by Allah that if I come to know that you have misappropriated the funds of the Muslims, small or big, I shall inflict upon you such punishment which will leave you empty handed, heavy backed and humiliated; and that is an end to the matter.

وَإِنّي أُقْسِمُ بِاللهِ قَسَماً صَادِقاً، لَئِنْ بَلَغَني أَنَّكَ خُنْتَ مِنْ فَيْءِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ شَيْئاً صَغِيراً أَوْ كَبِيراً، لاَشُدَّنَّ عَلَيْكَ شَدَّةً تَدَعُكَ قَلِيلَ الْوَفْرِ، ثَقِيلَ الظَّهْرِ، ضَئِيلَ الأَمْرِ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

Letter 21: Also to Ziyad

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إليه أيضاً

Give up lavishness and be moderate. Every day remember the coming day. Hold back from the funds what you need and send forward the balance for the day of your need.

فدَعِ الاْسْرَافَ مُقْتَصِداً، وَاذْكُرْ فِي الْيَوْمِ غَداً، وَأَمْسِكْ مِنَ الْمَالِ بِقَدْرِ ضَرُورَتِكَ، وَقَدِّمِ الْفَضْلَ لِيَوْمِ حَاجَتِكَ.

Do you expect that Allah may give you the reward of the humble while you yourself remain vain in His view? And do you covet that He may give you the reward of those practising charity while you enjoy comforts and deny them to the weak and the widows? Certainly, a man is awarded according as he acts and meets what he has sent forward; and that is an end to the matter.

أَتَرْجُوا أَنْ يُعْطِيَكَ اللهُ أَجْرَ الْمُتَوَاضِعِينَ وَأَنْتَ عِنْدَهُ مِنَ الْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ! وَتَطْمَعُ ـ وَأَنْتَ مُتَمَرِّغٌ فِي النَّعِيمِ، تَمْنَعُهُ الضَّعِيفَ والأَرْمَلَةَ ـ أَنْ يُوجِبَ لَكَ ثَوَابَ الْمتَصَدِّقِينَ؟ وَإِنَّمَا الْمَرْءُ مَجْزِيٌّ بَمَا [أ] سلَفَ، وَقَادِمٌ عَلَى مَا قَدَّمَ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

Letter 22: To `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas.

`Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas used to say, "Apart from the Prophet's sayings I did not derive greater benefit from any saying than this one."

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى عبدالله بن العباس

وكان ابن عباس يقول: ما انتفعت بكلام بعد كلام رسول الله كانتفاعي بهذا الكلام

Let it be known to you that sometimes a man gets pleased at securing a thing which he was not going to miss at all and gets displeased at missing a thing which he would not in any case get. Your pleasure should be about what you secure in respect of your next life and your grief should be for what you miss in respect thereof. Do not be much pleased on what you secure from this world, nor get extremely grieved over what you miss out of it. Your worry should be about what is to come after death.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ الْمَرْءَ قَدْ يَسُرُّهُ دَرَكُ مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيَفُوتَهُ، وَيَسُوؤُهُ فَوْتُ مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُدْرِكَهُ، فَلْيَكُنْ سُرُورُكَ بِمَا نِلْتَ مِنْ آخِرَتِكَ، وَلْيَكُنْ أَسَفُكَ عَلَى مَا فَاتَكَ مِنْهَا، وَمَا نِلْتَ مِنْ دُنْيَاكَ فَلاَ تُكْثِرْ بِهِ فَرَحاً، وَمَا فَاتَكَ مِنْهَا فَلاَ تَأْسَ عَلَيْهِ جَزَعاً، وَلْيَكُنْ هَمُّكَ فِيَما بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ.

Letter 23: Instructions to his family a little before his martyrdom.

Made shortly before his martyrdom when he had been fatally wounded by a blow from the sword of (*`Abd ar-Rahman*) *Ibn Muljam* (*the curse of Allah be upon him*).

(ومن كلام له (عليه السلام

قاله قُبَيْلَ موته لمّا ضربه ابن ملجم على سبيل الوصية

I enjoin upon you as my dying wish not to regard anything by way of partner with Allah, not to disregard the sunnah of Muhammad (may Allah bless him and his descendants), establish these two pillars and light these two lamps. You will then be free from evil.

وَصِيَّتِي لَكُمْ: أَنْ لاَ تُشْرِكُوا بِاللهِ شَيْئاً، وَمُحَمَّدٌ (صلى الله عليه وآله) فَلاَ تُضَيِّعُوا سُنَّتَهُ، أَقِيمُوا هذَيْنِ الْعَمُودَينِ، وَخَلاَ كُمْ ذَمٌّ.

Yesterday I was your companion and today I am (just) a lesson for you, while tomorrow I shall be leaving you. If I survive I shall be the master of my blood (to avenge or not to avenge it), and if I die then death is a promised event. If I forgive, it is for me a means of nearness (to Allah) and for you a good act. Therefore, do forgive.

What! Love you not that Allah should forgive you? **(Qur'an, 24:22)**

By Allah, this sudden death is not an event that I dislike, nor is it an accident that I hate. I am just like a night traveller who reaches the spring (in the morning) or like or seeker who secures (his aim):

And whatever is with Allah is the best for the righteous ones. **(Qur'an, 3:198)**

أَنَا بالأمْسِ صَاحِبُكُمْ، وَالْيَوْمَ عِبْرَةٌ لَكُمْ، وَغَداً مُفَارِقُكُمْ، إِنْ أَبْقَ فَأَنَا وَلِيُّ دَمِي، وَإِنْ أَفْنَ فَالْفَنَاءُ مِيعَادِي، وَإِنْ أَعْفُ فَالْعَفْوُ لِي قُرْبَةٌ، وَهُوَ لَكُمْ حَسَنَةٌ، فَاعْفُوا (أَلاَ تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللهُ لَكُمْ). وَاللهِ مَا فَجَأَنِي مِنَ الْمَوْتِ وَارِدٌ كَرِهْتُهُ، وَلاَ طَالِعٌ أَنْكَرْتُهُ، وَمَا كُنْتُ إِلاَّ كَقَارِب وَرَدَ، وَطَالِب وَجَدَ، (وَمَا عِنْدَ اللهِ خَيْرٌ لِلأبْرَارِ)

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: A part of this utterance has already appeared in the sermons but it was found necessary to record it again because of some additional matter.

قال السيد الشريف رضي الله عته : أقول: وقد مضى بعض هذا الكلام فيما تقدّم من الخطب، إلاّ أنّ فيه هاهنا زيادة أوجبت تكريره.

Letter 24: His Will

The following is the will of Imam Ali (a) in which he has left instructions as to how to treat his property and estate. It was written after his return from the Battle of Siffin.

(ومن وصية له (عليه السلام

بما يُعمل في أمواله، كتبها بعد منصرفه من صفين

This is what `Ali ibn Abi Talib, the slave of Allah has laid down about his property, in pursuance of seeking Allah's pleasure so that He may by virtue of it give him entry into Paradise and accord him peace.

هذَا مَا أَمَرَ بِهِ عَبْدُ اللهِ عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِب أَمِيرُالْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي مَالِهِ، ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ اللهِ، لِيُولِجَنِي(1) بِهِ الْجَنَّةَ، وَيُعْطِيَنِي الأَمَنَةَ

A part of the same

منها:

It will be administered by Hasan ibn `Ali. He will take from it a suitable portion for his livelihood and spend it on charity. If something happens to Hasan, and Husayn survives he will adminster it after Hasan, and deal with it accordingly. In the charitable estate of the two sons of Fatimah they have the same rights as the all (other) sons of `Ali. I have laid down the (functions of) administration of the two sons of Fatimah in order to seek the pleasure of Allah and nearness to the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and his descendants) with due regard for his honour and consideration of his kinship.

فَإِنَّهُ يَقُومُ بِذلِكَ الْحَسنُ بْنُ عليّ، يأْكُلُ مِنْهُ بِالْمعْروف، وَيُنْفِقُ مِنْهُ فِي المَعْروف، فَإِنْ حَدَثَ بِحَسَن حَدَثٌ وَحُسَيْنٌ حَيٌّ، قَامَ بِالأَمْرِ بَعْدَهُ، وَأَصْدَرَهُ مَصْدَرَهُ. وَإِنَّ لِابْنَيْ فَاطِمَةَ مِنْ صَدَقةِ عَلِيّ مِثْلَ الَّذِي لِبَنِي عَلِيّ، وَإِنّي إِنَّمَا جَعَلْتُ

الْقِيَامَ بِذلِكَ إِلَى ابْنَيْ فَاطِمَةَ ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ اللهِ، وَقُرْبَةً إِلَى رَسُولِ اللهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله)، وَتَكْرِيماً لِحُرْمَتِهِ، وَتَشْرِيفاً لِوُصْلَتِهِ

It is obligatory on him who administers it that he retains the estate as it is, and spends the usufruct as he has been ordered and instructed. He should not sell the seedlings in the plantations of these villages till the land changes its face by turning them into plants. As for those of my slave girls who were under me, if any one of them has a child or is pregnant, she will be retained for the sake of the child and will form part of his share. If the child dies and she survives, then she is free, bondage is removed from her and liberty is given to her.[1]

وَيَشْتَرِطُ عَلَى الَّذِي يَجْعَلُهُ إِلَيْهِ أَنْ يَتْرُكَ الْمَالَ عَلَى أُصُولِهِ، وَيُنْفِقَ مِنْ ثَمَرِهِ حَيْثُ أُمِرَ بِهِ وَهُدِيَ لَهُ،أَلاَّ يَبِيعَ مِنْ أَوْلاَدِ نَخِيلَ هذِهِ الْقُرَى وَدِيَّةً حَتَّى تُشْكِلَ أَرْضُهَا غِرَاساً. وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ إِمَائِي ـ اللاَّتِي أَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِنَّ ـ لَهَا وَلَدٌ، أَوْهِيَ حَامِلٌ، فَتُمْسَكُ عَلَى وَلَدِهَا وَهِيَ مِنْ حَظِّهِ، فَإِنْ مَاتَ وَلَدُهَا وَهِيَ حَيَّةٌ فَهِيَ عَتِيقَةٌ، قَدْ أَفْرَجَ عَنْهَا الرِّقُّ، وَحَرَّرَهَا الْعِتْقُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: In this will in Amir al-mu' minin's phrase "alla yabi`a min nakhliha wadiyyatan", the word "wadiyyah" means seedling of date-palm and its plural is "wadiyy". And his words "hatta tushkila arduha ghirasan",is one of the most eloquent form of expression and it means that when a number of date plants grow on the land then he who had seen it before the growth would regard it as a different land.

قال الشريف: قوله (عليه السلام) في هذه الوصية: "وألا يبيع من نخلها وَدِيَّةً"، الوَدِيَّةُ: الفَسِيلَةُ، وجمعها وَدِيٌّ. وَقوله (عليه السلام): "حتى تشكل أرضها غراساً" هو من أفصح الكلام، والمراد به: أن الارض يكثر فيها غراس النخل حتّى يراها الناظر على غير تلك الصفة التي عرفها بها فيشكل عليه أمرها ويحسبها غيرها.

1. The life of Amir al-mu'minin was that of a labourer or a cultivator. He worked in fields of other persons, cultivated barren and untilled lands, providing means of irrigating them, made them cultivable and planted orchards therein . Since these lands were cultivated by him they were his Property but he never paid heed to property, and, declaring them a trust, gave up his proprietorship; but in consideration of the Prophet's kinship he assigned the management rights of this trust to Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn one after the other. Yet he did not tolerate any additional rights for them but like other children gave them merely the right to take from it only for their livelihood, while the balance he ordered to be spent for the common good of the Muslims and for charitable purposes. Thus, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid writes:
Everyone knows that in Medina, Yanbu' and Suwayqah, Amir al-mu'minin had dug several springs from under the land and brought under cultivation many barren and uncultivable lands. Thereafter, he gave up rights over them and declared them as trusts for the Muslims. When he left the world, nothing was owned by him. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah,vol. 15, p. 146)

Letter 25: Instructions to assessors and collectors of Zakat

Amir al-mu'minin used to write to whoever he appointed for the the collection of zakat and charities. Ash-Sharif says: We have recorded a few portions of it here to show that he always erected the pillars of right and created examples of justice in all matters, small or big, delicate or serious.

(ومن وصية له (عليه السلام

كان يكتبها لمن يستعمله على الصدقات

و إنما ذكرنا منها جملاً هاهنا ليُعلَمَ بها أنه (عليه السلام) كان يقيم عماد الحق، ويشرع أمثلة العدل، في صغير الامور وكبيرها، ودقيقها وجليلها.

Move on with the fear of Allah Who is One and has no partner. Do not frighten any Muslim. Do not pass over his lands so as to make him feel unhappy. Do not take from him more than Allah's share in his property. When you go to a tribe, you should get down at their watering place instead of entering their houses. Then proceed towards them with peace and dignity till you stand among them. Then salute them and do not be remiss in greeting them, then say to them, "O servants of Allah, the vicegerent of Allah and His caliph has sent me to you to collect from you Allah's share in your properties. Is there anything of His share in your properties? If so, give it to His vicegerent."

انْطَلِقْ عَلَى تَقْوَى اللهِ وَحْدَهُ لاَ شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَلاَ تُرَوِّعَنَّ مُسْلِماً، وَلاَ تَجْتَازَنَّ عَلَيْهِ كَارِهاً، وَلاَ تَأْخُذَنَّ مِنْهُ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ حَقِّ اللهِ فِي مَالِهِ. فَإِذَا قَدِمْتَ عَلَى الْحَيِّ فَانْزِلْ بِمَائِهِمْ مِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ تُخَالِطَ أَبْيَاتَهُمْ، ثُمَّ امْضِ إِلَيْهِمْ بِالسَّكِينَةِ وَالْوَقَارِ، حَتَّى تَقُومَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَتُسَلِّمَ عَلَيْهِمْ، وَلاَ تُخْدِجْ بِالتَّحِيَّةِ لَهُمْ، ثُمَّ تَقُولَ: عِبَادَ اللهِ، أَرْسَلَنِي إِلَيْكُمْ وَلِيُّ اللهِ وَخَلِيفَتُهُ، لِاٰخُذَ مِنْكُمْ حَقَّ اللهِ فِي أَمْوَالِكُمْ، فَهَلْ لِلَّهِ فِي أَمْوَالِكُمْ مِنْ حَقّ فَتُؤَدُّوهُ إِلَى وَلِيِّهِ؟

If someone among them says "No", then do not repeat the demand. If someone speaks to you in the affirmative, then go with him without frightening him, threatening him, pressuring him or oppressing him. Take what he gives you such as gold or silver (coins). If he has cattle or camels do not enter upon them save with his permission, because their major part is his. Therefore, when you get there do not enter upon them like one who has full control over them or in a violent manner. Do not scare any animal, do not tease anyone and do not let the owner feel grieved about anyone.

فَإِنْ قَالَ قَائِلٌ: لاَ، فَلاَ تُرَاجِعْهُ، وَإِنْ أَنْعَمَ لَكَ مُنْعِمٌ فَانْطَلِقْ مَعَهُ مِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ تُخِيفَهُ أَوْ تُوعِدَهُ أَوْ تَعْسِفَهُ أَوْ تُرْهِقَهُ، فَخُذْ مَا أَعْطَاكَ مِنْ ذَهَب أَوْ فِضَّة، فَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَهُ مَاشِيَةٌ أَوْ إِبِلٌ فَلاَ تَدْخُلْهَا إِلاَّ بِإِذْنِهِ، فَإِنَّ أَكْثَرَهَا لَهُ، فَإِذَا أَتَيْتَهَا فَلاَ تَدْخُلْها دُخُولَ مُتَسَلِّط عَلَيْهِ وَلاَ عَنِيف بِهِ، وَلاَ تُنَفِّرَنَّ بَهِيمَةً وَلاَ تُفْزِعَنَّهَا،وَلاَ تَسُوءَنَّ صَاحِبَهَا فِيهَا،

Divide the property into two parts and let the owner choose one. When he has chosen do not object to it. Then divide the remaining into two parts and let him choose one and when he has chosen do not raise any objection. Continue like this till only that much remains which is enough to satisfy Allah's dues. Then take Allah's due from it. If he disputes your action allow his views, then mix the two (separated) parts and repeat what you had done before till you take Allah's due from his property.

Do not take an old, decrepit, broken-limbed, sick or unsound animal. Do not entrust the animals (for custody) except to one whom you trust to take care of Muslims' property till he hands it over to their chief who will distribute it. Do not entrust it to anyone except he who is a well wisher, God-fearing, trustworthy and watchful, and who is not harsh on Muslims' property, nor makes them run too much, nor tires them, nor labours them. Then send to us all that you have collected and we shall deal with it as Allah has ordered.

وَاصْدَعِ الْمَالَ صَدْعَيْنِ، ثُمَّ خَيِّرْهُ، فَإِذَا اخْتَارَ فَلاَ تَعْرِضَنَّ لِمَا اخْتَارَهُ، ثُمَّ اصْدَعِ الْبَاقِيَ صَدْعَيْنِ، ثُمَّ خَيِّرْهُ، فَإِذَا اخْتَارَ فَلاَ تَعْرِضَنَّ لِمَا اخْتَارَ، فَلاَ تَزَالُ بِذلِكَ حَتَّى يَبْقَى مَا فِيهِ وَفَاءٌ لِحَقِّ اللهِ فِي مَالِهِ، فَاقْبِضْ حَقَّ اللهِ مِنْهُ، فَإِنِ اسْتَقَالَكَ فَأَقِلْهُ، ثُمَّ اخْلِطْهُمَا، ثُمَّ اصْنَعْ مِثْلَ الَّذِي صَنَعْتَ أَوَّلاً حَتَّى تَأْخُذَ حَقَّ اللهِ فِي مَالِهِ. وَلاَ تَأْخُذَنَّ عَوْداً، وَلاَ هَرِمَةً، وَلاَ مَكْسُورَةً، وَلاَ مَهْلُوسَةً، وَلاَ ذَاتَ عَوَار. وَلاَ تَأْمَنَنَّ عَلَيْهَا إِلاَّ مَنْ تَثِقُ بِدِينِهِ، رَافِقاً بِمَالِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ حَتَّى يُوصِلَهُ إِلَى وَلِيِّهِمْ فَيَقْسِمَهُ بَيْنَهُمْ. وَلاَ تُوَكِّلْ بِهَا إِلاَّ نَاصِحاً شَفِيقاً، وَأَمِيناً حَفِيظاً، غَيْرَ مُعَنِّف وَلاَ مُجْحِف، وَلاَ مُلْغِب وَلاَ مُتْعِب. ثُمَّ احْدُرْ إِلَيْنَا مَا اجْتَمَعَ عِنْدَكَ، نُصَيِّرْهُ حَيْثُ أَمَرَ اللهُ بِهِ.

When your trustee takes over (the animal) tell him that he should not separate the she-camel from its young and should not milk all its milk because that would affect its young, and also that he should not exert it in riding. In this matter, he should behave justly between it and all its companions. He should allow rest to camels (who are tired), and drive with ease those whose hoofs have been rubbed off.

When you pass a water spring stay the camels there for drinking and do not take them away from vegetated land to barren paths. He should allow them rest now and then, and give them time near water and grass. In this way, when they reach us by leave of Allah, they will be fat with plenty of marrow and would not be fatigued or distressed. We will then distribute them according to the (commands of) the Book of Allah and the sunnah of His Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny). Certainly, this will be a great source of reward for you and a means to secure guidance, if Allah so wills.

فَإِذَا أَخَذَهَا أَمِينُكَ فَأَوْعِزْ إِلَيْهِ: أَلاَّ يَحُولَ بَيْنَ نَاقَة وَبَيْنَ فَصِيلِهَا، وَلاَ يَمْصُرَ لَبَنَهَا فَيَضُرَّ ذلِكَ بِوَلَدِهَا، وَلاَ يَجْهَدَنَّهَا رُكُوباً، وَلْيَعْدِلْ بَيْنَ صَوَاحِبَاتِهَا فِي ذلِكَ وَبَيْنَهَا، وَلْيُرَفِّهْ عَلَى اللاَّغِبِ، وَلْيَسْتَأْنِ بِالنَّقِبِ وَالظَّالِعِ، وَلْيُوِرِدْهَا مَا تَمُرُّ بِهِ مِنَ الْغُدُرِ، وَلاَ يَعْدِلْ بِهَا عَنْ نَبْتِ الاَرْضِ إِلَى جَوَادِّ الطُّرُقِ، وَلْيُرَوِّحْهَا فِي السَّاعَاتِ، وَلْيُمْهِلْهَا عِنْدَ النِّطَافِ

وَالاْعْشَابِ، حَتَّى تَأْتِيَنَا بِإِذْنِ اللهِ بُدَّناً مُنْقِيَات، غَيْرَ مُتْعَبَات وَلاَ مَجْهُودَات، لِنَقْسِمَهَا عَلَى كِتَابِ اللهِ وَسُنَّةِ نَبِيِّهِ(عليه السلام) فَإِنَّ ذلِكَ أَعْظَمُ لاِجْرِكَ، وَأَقْرَبُ لِرُشْدِكَ، إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ.

Letter 26: Instruction Given to one of his officers whom he sent for the collection of zakat and charities

(ومن عهد له (عليه السلام

إلى بعض عمّاله، وقد بعثه على الصدقة

He (Amir al-mu'minin) ordered him to fear Allah in his secret matters and hidden actions, where there is no witness except He and no one watches save He. He also orders him that whatever he does in obedience to Allah openly should not be different from what he does secretly. He whose hidden position is not different from his open position, and whose action is not different from his words, has discharged his obligation and his worship is pure.

He also ordered him that he should not harass them, should not be harsh on them and should not turn away from them because of superiority of official position over them, because they are brethren in faith and help in the recovery of levies.

آمَرَهُ بِتَقْوَى اللهِ فِي سَرَائِرِ أُمُورِهِ وَخَفِيَّاتِ أَعْمَالِهِ، حَيْثُ لاَ شَهِيدَ غَيْرُهُ، وَلاَ وَكِيلَ دُونَهُ. وَآمَرَهُ أَلاَّ يَعْمَلَ بَشَيْءٍ مِنْ طَاعَةِ اللهِ فِيما ظَهَرَ فَيُخَالِفَ إِلَى غَيْرِهِ فِيَما أَسَرَّ، وَمَنْ لَمْ يَخْتَلِفْ سِرُّهُ عَلاَنِيَتُهُ، وَفِعْلُهُ وَمَقَالَتُهُ، فَقَدْ أَدّى الاْمَانَةَ، وَأَخْلَصَ الْعِبَادَةَ. وَآمَرَهُ أَلاَّ يَجْبَهَهُمْ، وَلاَ يَعْضَهَهُمْ، وَلاَ يَرْغَبَ عَنْهُمْ تَفَضُّلاً بِالاْمَارَةِ عَلَيْهِمْ، فَإِنَّهُمُ الاْخْوَانُ فِي الدِّينِ، وَالاْعْوَانُ عَلَى اسْتِخْرَاجِ الْحُقُوقِ.

Certainly, you have a fixed share and a known right in this levy, and there are other sharers who are poor, weak and starving. We shall discharge your rights. So, you should discharge their rights. If you do not do so you will have the largest number of enemies on the Day of Judgement. How wretched is the man whose enemies in the view of Allah are the needy, the destitute, the beggars, the turned away, the indebted and (penniless) travellers. He who treats the trust lightly and indulges in treachery and does not

keep himself and his faith untarnished by it has certainly secured humiliation in this world, and his humiliation and disgrace in the next world will be greater. Surely, the greatest treachery is the treachery against the Muslim community, and the ugliest deceit is the deceit towards the Muslim leaders; and that is an end to the matter.

وَإِنَّ لَكَ في هذِهِ الصَّدَقَةِ نَصِيباً مَفْرُوضاً، وَحَقّاً مَعْلُوماً، وَشُرَكَاءَ أَهْلَ مَسْكَنَة، وَضَعَفَاءَ ذَوِي فَاقَة،إِنَّا مُوَفُّوكَ حَقَّكَ، فَوَفِّهِمْ حُقُوقَهُمْ، وَإِلاَّ تَفْعَلْ فَإِنَّكَ مِنْ أَكْثَرِ النَّاسِ خُصُوماً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَبُؤْساً لِمَنْ خَصْمُهُ عِنْدَ اللهِ الْفُقَرَاءُ وَالْمَسَاكِينُ وَالسَّائِلُونَ وَالْمَدْفُوعُونَ وَالْغَارِمُ وَابْنُ السَّبِيلِ! وَمَنِ اسْتَهَانَ بِالأَمَانَةِ، وَرَتَعَ فِي الْخِيَانَةِ، وَلَمْ يُنَزِّهَ نَفْسَهُ وَدِينَهُ عَنْهَا، فَقَدْ أَحَلَّ بِنَفْسِهِ فِي الدُّنْيَا الْخِزْيَ، وَهُوَ فِي الاْخِرَةِ أَذَلُّ وَأَخْزَى. وَإِنَّ أَعْظَمَ الْخِيَانَةِ خِيَانَةُ الأُمَّةِ، وَأَفْظَعَ الْغِشِّ غِشُّ الأَئِمَّةِ، وَالسَّلاَم.

Letter 27: Instruction Given to Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him), when Amir al-mu'minin appointed him as the Governor of Egypt

(ومن عهد له (رضي الله عنه

إلى محمد بن أبي بكر حين قلّده مصر

Behave humbly with the people, keep yourself lenient, meet them large-heartedly, accord them equal treatment so that the big should not expect injustice from you in their favour and the low should not be despondent of your justice to them. Allah, the Sublime, will certainly question you, O community of His creatures, about your actions, small or big, open or concealed. If He punishes you it is because you have been oppressive, and if He forgives, then it is because He is the Most Generous.

فَاخْفِضْ لَهُمْ جَنَاحَكَ، وَأَلِنْ لَهُمْ جَانِبَكَ، وَابْسُطْ لَهُمْ وَجْهَكَ، وَآسِ بَيْنَهُمْ فِي اللَّحْظَةِ وَالنَّظْرَةِ، حَتَّى لاَ يَطْمَعَ الْعُظَمَاءُ فِي حَيْفِكَ لَهُمْ، وَلاَ يَيْأَسَ الضُّعَفَاءُ مِنْ عَدْلِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ. وَإِنَّ اللهَ تَعَالَى يُسَائِلُكُمْ مَعْشَرَ عِبَادِهِ عَنِ الصَّغِيرَةِ مِنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ وَالْكَبِيرَةِ، وَالظَّاهِرَةِ وَالْمَسْتُورَةِ، فَإِنْ يُعَذِّبْ فَأَنْتُمْ أَظْلَمُ، وَإِنْ يَعْفُ فَهُوَ أَكْرَمُ.

Know, O creatures of Allah, that the God-fearing have shared the joys of this transient world as well as the next coming world, for they shared with the people of this world in their worldly matters while their people did not share with them in the matters of the next world. They lived in this world in the best manner of living and ate the choicest food and consequently they enjoyed herein all that the people with ease of life enjoyed, and secured from it what the haughty and the vain secured. Then, they departed from it after taking provision enough to take them to the end of their journey and after doing a profitable transaction. They tasted the pleasure of renouncing the world in this world, and they firmly believed that on the coming day in their next life they would be neighbours of Allah, where their call would not be repulsed nor would their share of pleasure be small.

وَاعْلَمُوا عِبَادَ اللهِ، أَنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ذَهَبُوا بِعَاجِلِ الدُّنْيَا وَآجِلِ الاْخِرَةِ، فَشَارَكُوا أَهْلَ الدُّنْيَا فِي دُنْيَاهُمْ، وَلَمْ يُشَارِكُهم أَهْلُ الدُّنْيَا فِي آخِرَتِهِمْ; سَكَنُوا الدُّنْيَا بَأَفْضَلِ مَا سُكِنَتْ، وَأَكَلُوهَا بِأَفْضَلِ مَا أُكِلَتْ، فَحَظُوا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَا حَظِيَ بِهِ الْمُتْرَفُونَ، وَأَخَذُوا مِنْهَا مَا أَخَذَهُ الْجَبَابِرَةُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُونَ، ثُمَّ انْقَلَبُوا عَنْهَا بِالزَّادِ الْمُبَلِّغِ، وَالْمَتْجَرِ الرَّابِحِ، أَصَابُوا لَذَّةَ زُهْدِ الدُّنْيَا فِي دُنْيَاهُمْ، وَتَيَقَّنُوا أَنَّهُمْ جِيرَانُ اللهِ غَداً فِي آخِرَتِهِمْ، لاَ تُرَدُّ لَهُمْ دَعْوَةٌ، وَلاَ يَنْقُصُ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِنْ لَذَّة.

Therefore, O creatures of Allah, be afraid of death and its nearness and keep ready all that is needed for it. It will come as a big event and a great affair, either as a good in which there will never be any evil, or an evil in which there will never be any good. Who is nearer to Paradise than he who works towards it, and who is nearer to Hell than he who works for it?

You are being chased by death. If you stop, it will catch you, and if you run away from it, it will grip you. It is more attached to you than your shadow. Death is tied to your fore-locks while the world is being wrapped up from behind you. Therefore, fear the Fire whose hollow is deep, whose flames are severe and whose punishment is novel. It is a place wherein there is no mercy. No call is heard in it. No pain is healed in it. If it is possible for you to have severe fear of Allah and to rest hope in Him, then do both these things because every individual has hope in His Lord to the extent of his fear of His Lord. Certainly, the most hopeful person with Allah is he who fears Him most.

فَاحْذَرُوا عِبَادَ اللهِ الْمَوْتَ وَقُرْبَهُ، وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُ عُدَّتَهُ، فَإِنَّهُ يَأْتِي بِأَمْرٍ عَظِيم، وَخَطْب جَلِيل، بِخَيْر لاَ يَكُونُ مَعَهُ شَرٌّ أَبَداً، أَوْ شَرّ لاَ يَكُونُ مَعَهُ خَيْرٌ أَبَداً، فَمَنْ أَقْرَبُ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ مِنْ عَامِلِهَا! وَمَنْ أَقْرَبُ إِلى النَّارِ مِنْ عَامِلِهَا! وَأَنْتُمْ طُرَدَاءُ الْمَوْتِ، إِنْ أَقَمْتُمْ لَهُ أَخَذَكُمْ، وَإِنْ فَرَرْتُمْ مِنْهُ أَدْرَككُمْ، وَهُوَ أَلْزَمُ لَكُمْ مِنْ ظِلِّكُمْ، الْمَوْتُ مَعْقُودٌ بِنَوَاصِيكُمْ، وَالدُّنْيَا تُطْوَى مِنْ خَلْفِكُمْ. فَاحْذَرُوا نَاراً قَعْرُهَا بَعِيدٌ، وَحَرُّهَا شَدِيدٌ، وَعَذَابُهَا جَدِيدٌ، دَارٌ لَيْسَ فِيها رَحْمَةٌ، وَلاَ تُسْمَعُ فِيهَا دَعْوَةٌ، وَلاَ تُفَرَّجُ فِيهَا كُرْبَةٌ. وَإِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ يَشْتَدَّ خَوْفُكُمْ مِنَ اللهِ، وَأَنْ يَحْسُنَ ظَنُّكُمْ بِهِ، فَاجْمَعُوا بَيْنَهُمَا، فَإِنَّ الْعَبْدَ إِنَّمَا يَكُونُ حُسْنُ ظَنِّهِ بِرَبِّهِ عَلَى قَدْرِ خَوْفِهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ، وَإِنَّ أَحْسَنَ النَّاسِ ظَنّاً بِاللهِ أَشَدُّهُمْ خَوْفاً لله.

O Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, know that I have given you charge of Egypt which is my biggest force. So you are duty-bound to oppose your passions and serve as a shield against your religion even though you may get only an hour in the world; and do not enrage Allah for pleasing others because (Allah) is

such that He may take the place of others, but others cannot take the place of Allah. Say prayers at the appointed time. Do not say it earlier for the sake of (available) leisure nor delay it on account of pre-occupation. Remember that every act of yours is dependent on your prayer.

وَاعْلَمْ ـ يَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنَ أَبِي بَكْر ـ أَنِّي قَدْ وَلَّيْتُكَ أَعْظَمَ أَجْنَادِي فِي نَفْسِي أَهْلَ مِصْرَ، فَأَنْتَ مَحْقُوقٌ أَنْ تُخَالِفَ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ، وَأَنْ تُنَافِحَ عَنْ دِينِكَ، وَلَوْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكَ إِلاَّ سَاعَةٌ مِنَ الدَّهْرِ، وَلاَ تُسْخِطِ اللهَ بِرِضَى أَحَد مِنْ خَلْقِهِ، فَإِنَّ فِي اللهِ خَلَفاً مِنْ غَيْرِهِ، وَلَيْسَ مِنَ اللهِ خَلَفٌ فِي غَيْرِهِ. صَلِّ الصَّلاَةَ لِوَقْتِهَا الْمُوَقَّتِ لَهَا، وَلاَ تُعَجِّلْ وَقْتَهَا لِفَرَاغ، وَلاَ تُؤَخِّرْهَا عَنْ وَقْتِهَا لاشْتِغَال، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ كُلَّ شَيْء مِنْ عَمَلِكَ تَبَعٌ لِصَلاَتِكَ.

A part of the same

ومن هذا العهد:

The leader of guidance and the leader of destruction cannot be equal, nor the friend of the Prophet and the enemy of the Prophet. The Messenger of Allah (S) has told me that: "I have no fear for my Ummah from either a believer or an unbeliever. As for the believer Allah will afford him protection because of his belief, and as for the unbeliever Allah will humiliate him because of his unbelief. But I fear for you every one who is a hypocrite in his heart and learned of speech. He speaks what you hold good but does what you dislike."

فَإِنَّهُ لاَ سَوَاءَ، إِمَامُ الْهُدَى وَإِمَامُ الرَّدَى،وَوَلِيُّ النَّبِيِّ وَعَدُوُّ النَّبِيِّ، وَلَقَدْ قَالَ لِي رَسُولُ اللهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله): "إِنِّي لاَ أَخَافُ عَلَى أُمَّتِي مُؤْمِناً وَلاَ مُشْرِكاً، أَمَّا الْمُؤمِنُ فَيَمْنَعُهُ اللهُ بِإِيمَانِهِ، وَأَمَّا الْمُشْرِكُ فَيَقْمَعُهُ اللهُ بِشِرْكِهِ،لكِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ كُلَّ مَنَافِقِ الْجَنَانِ، عَالِمِ اللِّسَانِ، يَقُولُ مَا تَعْرِفُونَ،وَيَفْعَلُ مَا تُنْكِرُونَ".

Letter 28: In reply to Mu'awiyah, and it is one ot his most elegant writings

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى معاوية جواباً

وهو من محاسن الكتب.

Now, your letter 1 has reached me wherein you recall that Allah chose Muhammad (S) for His religion and helped him through those companions who helped him. Strange things about you have remained concealed (by the irony of fate) from us, since you have started telling us of Allah's trials for us and His bounties to us through our Prophet. In this matter, you are like the person who carries dates to Hajar, or who challenges his own master to a duel in archery.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ أَتَانِي كِتَابُكَ تَذْكُرُ [فِيهِ] اصْطِفَاءَ اللهِ تعالى مُحَمَّداً(صلى الله عليه وآله) لِدِينِهِ، وَتَأْيِيدَهُ إِيَّاهُ بِمَنْ أَيَّدَهُ مِنْ أَصْحَابِهِ، فَلَقَدْ خَبَّأَ لَنَا الدَّهْرُ مِنْكَ عَجَباً، إِذْ طَفِقْتَ تُخْبِرُنَا بِبَلاَءِ اللهِ عِنْدَنَا، وَنِعْمَتِهِ عَلَيْنَا فِي نَبِيِّنَا، فَكُنْتَ فِي ذلك كَنَاقِلِ التَّمْرِ إِلَى هَجَرَ، أَوْ دَاعِي مُسَدِّدِهِ إِلَى النِّضَالِ

You think that so – and– so are the most distinguished persons in Islam. You have said such a thing which if it be true, you have nothing to do with it, but if it be not so, then its defect will not affect you. And what are you to do with the question of who is better and who is worse, or who is the ruler and who is the ruled. What have the freed ones and their sons to do with distinguishing between the first muhajirun and determining their position or defining their ranks. What a pity! the sound of an arrow is being produced by what is not a real arrow, and he against whom the judgement is to be passed is sitting in judgement. O man, why do you not see your own lameness and remain within bounds, and why do not you realize the shortness of your measure and stay back where destiny has placed you. You have no concern with the defeat of the defeated or the victory of the victor.

وَزَعَمْتَ أَنَّ أَفْضَلَ النَّاسِ فِي الاْسْلاَمِ فُلاَنٌ وَفُلاَنٌ، فَذَكَرْتَ أَمْراً إِنْ تَمَّ اعْتَزَلَكَ كُلُّهُ، وَإِنْ نَقَصَ لَمْ يَلْحَقْكَ ثَلْمُهُ، وَمَا أَنْتَ وَالْفَاضِلَ وَالْمَفْضُولَ، وَالسَّائِسَ وَالْمَسُوسَ! وَمَا لِلطُّلَقَاءِ وَأَبْنَاءِ الطُّلَقَاءِ، وَالتَّمْيِيزَبَيْنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الاْوَّلِينَ، وَتَرْتِيبَ دَرَجَاتِهِمْ، وَتَعْرِيفَ طَبَقَاتِهِمْ! هَيْهَاتَ لَقَدْ حَنَّ قِدْحٌ لَيْسَ مِنْهَا، وَطَفِقَ يَحْكُمُ فِيهَا مَنْ عَلَيْهِ الْحُكْمُ لَهَا! أَلاَ تَرْبَعُ أَيُّهَا الاْنْسَانُ عَلَى ظَلْعِكَ، وَتَعْرِفُ قُصُورَ ذَرْعِكَ، وَتَتَأَخَّرُ حَيْثُ أَخَّرَكَ الْقَدَرُ! فَمَا عَلَيْكَ غَلَبَةُ الْمَغْلُوبِ، وَلاَ لَكَ ظَفَرُ الظَّافِرِ!

You are wandering in bewilderment and straying from the right path. Do you not realize it? I am not giving you any news: I am just recounting Allah's bounty, namely that a number of people from among the muhajirun (immigrants from Mecca) and ansar (helpers) fell as martyrs in the way of Allah the Sublime, and that each of them is distinguished (on that account), but when one of us secured martyrdom he was named the Chief of all martyrs, and the Messenger of Allah (S) gave him the peculiar honour of saying seventy takbir (Allahu Akbar) during his funeral prayer.

Do you not know that a number of people lost their hands in the way of Allah, and that everyone is distinguished (on that account), but when the same thing occurred to one of us he was given the name "the flier in Paradise"; and "the two winged". If Allah had not forbidden self–praise, the writer would have

mentioned numerous distinctions which the believer knows full well and which the ears of hearers do not wish to forget.

وَإِنَّكَ لَذَهّابٌ فِي التِّيهِ، رَوَّاغٌ عَنِ الْقَصْدِ. أَلاَ تَرَى ـ غَيْرَ مُخْبِرٍ لَكَ، لكِنْ بِنِعْمَةِ اللهِ أُحَدِّثُ ـ أَنَّ قَوْماً اسْتُشْهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ مِنَ الْمُهاجِرِينَ،لِكُلٍّ فَضْلٌ، حَتَّى إِذَا اسْتُشْهِدَ شَهِيدُنَا قِيلَ: سَيِّدُ الشُّهَدَاءِ، وَخَصَّهُ رَسُولُ اللهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) بِسَبْعِينَ تَكْبِيرَةً عِنْدَ صَلاَتِهِ عَلَيْهِ! أَوَلاَ تَرَى أَنَّ قَوْماً قُطِّعَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ ـ وَلِكُلٍّ فَضْلٌ ـ حَتَّى إِذَا فُعِلَ بِوَاحِدِنَا كَمَا فُعِلَ بِوَاحِدِهِمْ، قِيلَ: الطَّيَّارُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَذُوالْجَنَاحَيْنِ! وَلَوْ لاَ مَا نَهَى اللهُ عَنْهُ مِنْ تَزْكِيَةِ الْمَرْءِ نَفْسَهُ، لَذَكَرَ ذَاكِرٌ فَضَائِلَ جَمَّةً، تَعْرِفُهَا قُلُوبُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، وَلاَ تَمُجُّهَا آذَانُ السَّامِعِينَ.

Better leave those whose arrows miss the mark. We are the direct recipients of our Lord's favours while others receive favours from us after that. In spite of our old established honour and our well-known superiority over your people, we did not stay away from mixing with you and married and got married (among you) like equals although you were not so. And how could you be so when (the position is that) among us is the Prophet while among you is the opposer, among us is the lion of Allah while among you is the lion of the opposing groups, among us are the two masters of the youth of Paradise [2] while among you are the children of Hell, among us is the choicest of all the women of the worlds [3] while among you is the bearer of firewood, and many more distinctions on our side and shortcomings on your side.

فَدَعْ عَنْكَ مَنْ مَالَتْ بِهِ الرَّمِيَّةُ، فَإِنَّا صَنَائِعُ رَبِّنَا، وَالنَّاسُ بَعْدُ صَنَائِعُ لَنَا. لَمْ يَمْنَعْنَا قَدِيمُ عِزِّنَا وَلاَ عَادِيُّ طَوْلِنَا عَلَى قَوْمِكَ أَنْ خَلَطْنَاكُمْ بِأَنفُسِنَا، فَنَكَحْنَا وَأَنْكَحْنا، فِعْلَ الأَكْفَاءِ، وَلَسْتُمْ هُنَاكَ! وَأَنَّى يَكُونُ ذلِكَ كَذَلِكَ وَمِنَّا النَّبِيُّ وَمِنْكُمُ الْمُكَذِّبُ، وَمِنَّا أَسَدُ اللهِ وَمِنْكُمْ أَسَدُ الأَحْلاَفِ، وَمِنَّا سَيِّدَا شَبَابِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ وَمِنْكُمْ صِبْيَةُ النَّارِ، وَمِنَّا خَيْرُ نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ وَمِنْكُمْ حَمَّالَةُ الْحَطَبِ، فِي كَثِيرٍ مِمَّا لَنَا وَعَلَيْكُمْ!

Our Islam is well-known and our (greatness in the) pre-Islamic period too cannot be denied. Whatever remains has been mentioned in the words of Allah the Glorified, the Sublime:

And blood relations have the better claim in respect of one to the other, according to the Book of Allah... **(Qur'an, 33:6)**

He (Allah) the Sublime, also says:

***Verily, of men the nearest to Abraham are surely those who followed him and this* (*Our*) *Prophet* (*Muhammad*) *and those who believe; and verily, Allah, is the Guardian of the faithful*. (Qur'an, 3:68)**

فَإِسْلاَمُنَا مَا قَدْ سُمِعَ، وَجَاهِلِيَّتُنَا لاَ تُدْفَعُ، وَكِتَابُ اللهِ يَجْمَعُ لَنَا مَا شَذَّ عَنَّا، وَهُوَ قَوْلُهُ سُبْحَانَهُ: (وَأُولُو الأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَى بِبَعْضٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللهِ)، وَقَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى: (إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ لَلَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهذَا النَّبِيُّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاللهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)،

Thus, we are superior firstly because of kinship and secondly because of obedience. When at Saqifah (of Banu Sa'idah) the Muhajirun contended kinship with the Messenger of Allah (S) against the Ansar, they scored over them. If that success was based on kinship then the right would be ours better than yours. Otherwise, the Ansar's contention stands. You think that I have been jealous of every caliph and have revolted against them. Even if this be so, it is not an offence against you and therefore no explanation is due to you.

"*This is a matter for which no blame comes to you".*

فَنَحْنُ مَرَّةً أَوْلَى بِالْقَرَابَةِ، وَتَارَةً أَوْلَى بِالطَّاعَةِ. وَلَمَّا احْتَجَّ الْمُهَاجِرُونَ عَلَى الأَنْصَارِ يَوْمَ السَّقِيفَةِ بِرَسُولِ الله (صلى الله عليه وآله) فَلَجُوا عَلَيْهِمْ، فَإِنْ يَكُنِ الْفَلَجُ بِهِ فَالْحَقُّ لَنَا دُونَكُمْ، وَإِنْ يَكُنْ بِغَيْرِهِ فَالأَنْصَارُ عَلَى دَعْوَاهُمْ.

وَزَعَمْتَ أَنِّي لِكُلِّ الْخُلَفَاءِ حَسَدْتُ، وَعَلَى كُلِّهِمْ بَغَيْتُ، فَإِنْ يَكُنْ ذلِكَ كَذلِكَ فَلَيْسَ الْجِنَايَةُ عَلَيْكَ، فَيَكُونَ الْعُذْرُ إِلَيْكَ.

"وَتِلْكَ شَكَاةٌ ظَاهِرٌ عَنْكَ عَارُهَا"

You have said that I was dragged like a camel with a nose string to swear allegiance (to Abu Bakr at Saqifah). By the Eternal Allah, you had intended to revile me but you have praised me, and to humiliate me but have yourself been humiliated. What humiliation does it mean for a Muslim to be the victim of oppression so long as he does not entertain any doubt in his religion, nor any misgiving in his firm belief! This argument of mine is intended for others, but I have stated it to you only in so far as it was appropriate.

وَقُلْتَ: إِنِّي كُنْتُ أُقَادُ كَمَا يُقَادُ الْجَمَلُ الْمَخْشُوشُ حَتَّى أُبَايِعَ، وَلَعَمْرُ اللهِ لَقَدْ أَرَدْتَ أَنْ تَذُمَّ فَمَدَحْتَ، وَأَنْ تَفْضَحَ فَافْتَضَحْتَ! وَمَا عَلَى الْمُسْلِمِ مِنْ غَضَاضَةٍ فِي أَنْ يَكُونَ مَظْلُوماً مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ شَاكّاً فِي دِينِهِ، وَلاَ مُرْتَاباً بِيَقِينِهِ!

وَهذِهِ حُجَّتِي إِلَى غَيْرِكَ قَصْدُهَا، وَلكِنِّي أَطْلَقْتُ لَكَ مِنْهَا بِقَدْرِ مَا سَنَحَ مِنْ ذِكْرِهَا.

Then you have recalled my position vis-a- vis 'Uthman, and in this matter an answer is due to you because of your kinship with him. So (now tell me), which of us was more inimical towards 'Uthman and who did more to bring about his killing; or who offered him his support but he made him sit down and stopped him; or who was he whom he called for help but who turned his face from him and drew his death near him till his fate over took him? No, no; by Allah:

Indeed knoweth Allah those who hinder others among you and those who say unto their brethren "Come hitherunto us", and they come not to fight but a little. **(Qur'an 33:18)**

ثُمَّ ذَكَرْتَ مَا كَانَ مِنْ أَمْرِي وَأَمْرِ عُثْمانَ، فَلَكَ أَنْ تُجَابَ عَنْ هذهِ لِرَحِمِكَ منْهُ، فَأَيُّنَا كَانَ أَعْدَى لَهُ،أَهْدَى إِلَى مَقَاتِلِهِ! أَمْ مَنْ بَذَلَ لَهُ نُصْرَتَهُ فَاسْتَقْعَدَهُ وَاسْتَكَفَّهُ، أَمْ مَنِ اسْتَنْصَرَهُ فَتَرَاخى عَنْهُ بَثَّ الْمَنُونَ إِلَيْهِ، حَتَّى أَتَى قَدَرُهُ عَلَيْهِ، كَلاَّ وَاللهِ (لَقَد عَلِمَ اللهُ الْمُعَوّقِينَ مِنْكُمْ وَالْقَائِلِينَ لِاِخْوَانِهِمْ هَلُمَّ إِلَيْنَا وَلاَ يَأْتُونَ الْبَأْسَ إِلاَّ قَلِيلاً).

I am not going to offer my excuse for reproving him for (some of) his innovations, for if my good counsel and guidance to him was a sin then very often a person who is blamed has no sin and “sometimes the only reward a counseller 4 reaps is suspicion (of evil)”.

***I desired naught but reform what I am able to* (*do*)*; and my guidance is not but with Allah; On Him* (*alone*) *do I rely, and unto Him* (*alone*) *do I turn.* (Qur'an, 11:88)**

وَمَا كُنْتُ لِاِعْتَذِرَ مِنْ أَنِّي كُنْتُ أَنْقِمُ عَلَيْهِ أَحْدَاثاً، فَإِنْ كَانَ الذَّنْبُ إِلَيْهِ إِرْشَادِي وَهِدَايَتِي لَهُ، فَرُبَّ مَلُوم لاَ ذَنْبَ لَهُ

"وَقَدْ يَسْتَفِيدُ الظِّنَّةَ الْمُتَنَصِّحُ"

(وَمَا أَرَدْتُ إِلاَّ الاْصْلاَحَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ وَمَا تَوْفِيقِي إِلاَّ بِاللهِ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ).

You have mentioned that for me and for my followers you have only the sword. This makes even a weeping person laugh. Did you ever see the descendants of 'Abd al-Muttalib running away from battle, or being frightened by swords? "Wait a little till Hamal 5 joins the battle" shortly, then he whom you are seeking will seek you and he whom you think to be far away will approach near you. I am (shortly) speeding towards you with a force of Muhajirun and Ansar and those who follow them in virtue. Their number will be great and their dust will spread all round. They will be wearing their shrouds and their most coveted desire is to meet Allah. They will be accompanied by the descendants of those who took part in the battle of Badr, and they will have Hashimite swords whose cut you have already seen in the case of your brother, maternal uncle, your grandfather and your kinsmen.

***Nor are they far distant from the unjust ones.* (Qur'an, 11:83)**

وَذَكَرْتَ أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ لِي وَلاَ لِاِصْحَابِي عِنْدَكَ إِلاَّ السَّيْفُ، فَلَقَدْ أَضْحَكْتَ بَعْدَ اسْتِعْبَار! مَتَى أُلْفِيَتْ بَنُو عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ عَنِ الاْعْدَاءِ نَاكِلِينَ، وبِالسُّيُوفِ مُخَوَّفِينَ؟! " فَ لَبِّثْ قَلِيلاً يَلْحَقِ الْهَيْجَا حَمَلْ"

سَيَطْلُبُكَ مَنْ تَطْلُبُ، وَيَقْرُبُ مِنْكَ مَا تَسْتَبْعِدُ، وَأَنَا مُرْقِلٌ نَحْوَكَ فِي جَحْفَل مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالاْنْصَارِ، وَالتَّابِعِينَ [لَهُمْ] بِإِحْسَان، شَدِيد زِحَامُهُمْ، سَاطِع قَتَامُهُمْ، مُتَسَرْبِلِينَ سَرَابِيلَ الْمَوْتِ، أَحَبُّ اللِّقَاءِ إِلَيْهِمْ لِقَاءُ رَبِّهِمْ، قَدْ صَحِبَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّةٌ (بَدْرِيَّةٌ، وَسُيُوفٌ هَاشِمِيَّةٌ، قَدْ عَرَفْتَ مَوَاقِعَ نِصَالِهَا فِي أَخِيكَ وَخَالِكَ وَجَدِّكَ وَأَهْلِكَ، (وَمَا هِيَ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ بِبَعِيد

1. This letter of Amir al-mu'minin's is in reply to Mu'awiyah's letter which he sent to Kufah through Abu Umamah al-Bahili, and it also contains replies to some points which Mu'awiyah had written in the letter sent through Abu Muslim al-Khawlani.

In Abu Umamah's letter, Mu'awiyah had mentioned the deputation of the Prophet and his ascension to the position of revelation and wrote in such a manner as though it was a matter not known to or not understood by Amir al-mu'minin and that he was in need of being informed and told of it. This is just like a stranger who may draw the map of a house for the guidance of those who dwell in it and apprise them of things already known to them. That is why Amir al-mu'minin has compared him to the man who carried dates to Hajar which was itself noted for abundant growth of dates.

This is a proverb employed when someone beings to tell a person matters which he already knows better. The basis of this proverb is that a man of Hajar, which is a town near Bahrain (Persian Gulf), went to Basrah to sell goods and make purchases. After finishing the sale, he looked about the market to make his purchases and found nothing cheaper than dates. He therefore decided to purchase dates, and when he reached Hajar with his load of dates their plenty and cheapness there did not leave him any alternative but to store them so as to sell them later when their price had risen. The price however continued to fall day by day till all of them became rotten leaving to him nothing except their stones. In short, after referring to the Prophet's ascension to prohphethood Mu'awiyah recounted the distinction and merits of the three Caliphs according to his view and wrote:

The most distinguished among the companions and the highest ranking in the view of the Muslims was the first Caliph who collected all the Muslims under one voice, removed their disunity and fought those who were forsaking Islam. After him is the second Caliph who won victories, founded cities and humiliated the unbelievers. Then comes the third Caliph who was the victim of oppression. He propagated religion and spread the word of Allah far and wide. (Siffin, al-Minqari, pp.86-87; al-'Iqd al-farid, vol.4, pp.334-335; Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.15, p.186)
Mu'awiyah's purpose behind in bringing up these pointless warblings was to injur Amir al-mu'minin's feelings and to rouse his temper so as to make him produce such words through his tongue or pen which would so disparage the caliphs that he would instigate the people of Syria and Iraq against him by exploiting them. In fact, he had already set it in the minds of these people that Amir al-mu'minin had instigated the people against 'Uthman, had got Talhah and az-Zubayr killed, had turned 'A'ishah out from her house and had shed the blood of thousands of Muslims. Being unaware of the real facts they were convinced of these beseless allegations, yet to strengthen the opposition, he thought it advisable to make them believe that Amir al-mu'minin did not recognize the achievements of the three caliphs and bore enmity and malice towards them, and to produce Amir al-mu'minin's writing in evidence, and also to use it for rousing the people of Iraq, because their majority was much impressed with the environment created by the caliphs and with their greatness. But Amir al-mu'minin guessed his intention and gave him such a reply which put a knot in his tongue and which he could not dare show to anyone.

So, Amir al-mu'minin exposed his lowness by referring to his enmity towards Islam and his accepting subjugation under force, and advised him to keep within his bounds, and warned him against fixing grades of distinction among those muhajirun who were in any case superior to him in so far as they had been the preceders in hijrah (immigration from Mecca). Whereas since Mu'awiyah himself was only one of those whose life had been spared (on the day of fall of Mecca), he had not the remotest connection with the muhajirun. Consequently, in the matter under discussion Amir al-mu'minin has put Mu'awiyah's position as that of a false arrow among real arrows. This is a proverb which is employed when a man boasts over persons with whom he has no connection. As regards his statement that so - and - so is greater in distinction, Amir al-mu'minin has, by using the word "you think", shown that it is his personal opinion which has not the remotest connection with fact, because this word is used when a false or unreal statement is made.

After refuting this claim of being the most distinguished, Amir al-mu'minin has referred to these qualities and distinctions of Banu Hashim which show conspicuously the high degree of their attainments. Thus, the people who took part in jihad with the Prophet and secured martyrdom attained high positions but the distinction that fell to Hamzah by virtue of his high performance was not secured by anyone else. The Prophet gave him the title of Master of the Martyrs and said his funeral prayer fourteen times whereby the number of takbir (Allahu akbar) rose to seventy. Similarly, in various battles the hands of

the fighters were cut off. For example, in the battle of Badr the hands of Khubayb ibn Isaf al-Ansari and Mu'adh ibn Jabal and in the battle of Uhud those of 'Amr ibn al-Jamuh as-Salami and 'Ubayd ('Atik) ibn at-Tayyihan (brother of Abu'l-Haytham at-Tayyihan) were cut off, but when in the battle of Mu'tah the hands of Ja'far ibn Abi Talib were cut off, the Prophet singled him out by naming him "the flier in Paradise" and the "two-winged". After recounting the peculiar achievements of Banu Hashim, Amir al-mu'minin has referred to his own attainments with which the histories and traditions are replete and which could not be tarnished with doubts and misgivings. Thus, traditionists like Ahmad ibn Hanbal (164/780-241/855), Ahmad ibn 'Ali an-Nasa'i (215/830 - 303/915) and others say that: The number of traditions that have been related through reliable sources in regard to the distinctions of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib have not been related about any other companion of the Prophet. (al-Mustadrak, vol.3, p.107; al-Isti'db, vol.3, p.1115; Tabaqat al-hanabilah, vol.1, p.3l9; al-Kamil, vol.3, p.399; Tahdhib at-tahdhib, vol.7, p.339; Fath al-bari, vol.7, p.57)

An important distinction out of these particular distinctions of Ahlul Bayt (the Household of the Holy Prophet) is the one to which Amir al-mu'-minin has referred in these words that "We are the direct recipients of Allah's favours while others receive favours from us." This is the height of distinction that even the highest personality cannot reach its sublimity and every other distinction looks small before it. Acknowledging the greatness and supremacy of this sentence, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid writes:

Amir al-mu'minin intends to convey that we are not under obligation of any person since Allah has bestowed all blessings on us directly, there being no intermediary between us and Allah, while all other people are under our obligation and protection, being the intermediary between them and Allah, the Glorified; this is a high position indeed. Its apparent meaning is what the words show but its real sense is that the Ahlul Bayt are the obedient servants of Allah and the people must be their obedient followers. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.15, p.194)

Now, since these people are the first recipients of the bounties of Allah and the source of bounties for the rest of the people, no one from among the people can be compared with them, nor can anyone be regarded as their equal on the basis of social contacts with them, much less than those individuals who were in direct contrast to the attainments and characteristics of these people, and used to oppose truth and right on every occasion. Amir al-mu'minin places both the sides of the picture before Mu'awiyah and says:
The Prophet was from us while your father Abu Sufyan was foremost in opposing him. Hamzah was from us and the Prophet gave him the title of "Lion of Allah" while your maternal grandfather, 'Utbah ibn Rabi'ah was proud of being the "lion of swearers (against the Prophet)."

When in the battle of Badr, Hamzah and 'Utbah ibn Rabi'ah came face to face, Hamzah said, "I am Hamzah son of 'Abd al-Muttalib; I am the lion of Allah and the lion of His Prophet," whereupon 'Utbah said, "I am the lion of swearers (against the Prophet)." In another version, the word "Asadu'l-ahlaf" has been recorded. The meaning is that he was the Chief of the allying parties. The story of swearing is that when Banu 'Abd Manaf acquired a distinct position among the Arab tribes they thought they should take over from Banu 'Abdi'd-Dar the offices relating to the Ka'bah and to depose them from these offices. In this connection, Banu 'Abd Manaf allied with themselves the tribes of Banu Asad ibn 'Abdi'l-'Uzza, Banu Taym, Banu Zuhrah and Banu al-Harith, and concluded an agreement with them.In order to solemnize this agreement they drenched their hands in tib (perfume) and swore that they would help each other. For this reason, these tribes were called: "Tribes of sworn chaste parties".

On the other side the tribes of Banu 'Abdi'd-Dar, Banu Makhzum, Banu Sahm and Banu 'Adi also swore that they would resist Banu 'Abd Manaf and their allies. These tribes are called the "allies". 'Utbah has deemed himself the head of the allying parties. Some commentators have taken the word Asadu'l-ahlaf to mean Abu Sufyan, because he made different tribes swear against the Prophet in the battle of the Trench, while some commentators take it to mean Asad ibn 'Abdi'l-'Uzzah, but this interpretation does not carry weight because here Amir al-mu'minin is addressing Mu'awiyah and this interpretation does not hit Mu'awiyah since Banu 'Abd Manaf were a party to this alliance. Then Amir al-mu'minin says, "they have among themselves the masters of the youth of Paradise". Referring to the Prophet's saying, "al-Hasan and al-Husayn are the masters of the youth of Paradise", while the boys of the other side are in Hell. This reference is to the sons

of 'Uqbah ibn Abi Mu'ayt, about whom the Prophet has said, "For you and your sons is Hell". Then Amir al-mu'minin says that among them is the chief of all the women of the worlds, namely Fatimatu'z-Zahra' (p.b.u.h.), while in the other party is the bearer of the wood which refers to Umm Jamil, the sister of Abu Sufyan. This woman used to spread thorns in the path of the Prophet. She has been mentioned in the Qur'an along with Abu Lahab, in these words:
In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful May perish both the hands of Abu Lahab, may perish (he himself); Shall avail him not his wealth nor what he earneth; Soon shall he burn in the flaming fire; And his wife, the bearer of the firewood; Upon her neck shall be a halter of twisted rope. (Qur'an, 111)

2. It is narrated from Amir al-mu'minin, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, Hudhayfah ibn Yaman, Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, Abu Hurayrah, etc., that the Holy Prophet (may Allah bless him and his descendants) said:
Verily, Fatimah is the Supreme Lady of the women of Paradise, and al-Hasan and al-Husayn are the two Supreme Youth of Paradise. But their father ('Ali) is Superior to them. (al-Jami'as -sahih,at-Tirmidhi, vol.5, pp.656, 661; al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol. 3, pp.3,62,64, 82; vol.5, pp.391, 392; as-Sunan, Ibn Majah, vol.1, p. 56; al-Mustadrak, al-Hakim, vol.3, p. 167; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.9, pp. 183, 184,201; Kanz al-'ummal, al-Muttaqi, vol.13, pp. 127, 128; al-Isti'ab, vol.4, p.1895; Usd al-ghabah, vol.5, p.574; Tarikh Baghdad, vol.1, p.140; vol.6, p.372; vol.10, p.230; at-Tarikh, Ibn 'Asakir, vol.7, p.365).
3. It is narrated from 'Imran ibn al-Husayn and Abu Tha'labah al-Khushni that the Holy Prophet (S) said to Fatimah (p.b.u.h.):
"O' my little daughter, are you not satisfied that you are verily the Supreme Lady of all women in the worlds?" She said, "O' father, then what about Maryam (Mary) daughter of 'Imran?" He said, "She was the Supreme Lady of her age, and you are the Supreme Lady of your age. Truly, by Allah, I married you to one who is the Master in this world and the hereafter. No one hates him save a hypocrite." (Hilyah al-awliya', vol.2, p.92; al-Isti'ab, vol.4, p. 1895; al-Isabah, vol.4, p.275)
Also, A'ishah narrated that the Holy Prophet (S) said:
O' Fatimah, will you not be satisfied to be the Supreme Lady of the women of the worlds (or) to be the Supreme Lady of all women of this ummah (community) or of the women believers? (as-Sahih, al-Bukhari, vol.8, p.79; as-Sahih, Muslim, vol.7, pp. 142-l44; as-Sunan,Ibn Majah, vol.1, p.518; al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.6, p.282; al-Mustadrak 'ala as-sahihayn, al-Hakim, vol.3, p.156)
4. The meaning is that the person who goes too far in counselling others will be thought to have his personal ends in so doing, even though his counsel may well be based on sincerity of intention and selflessness. This line is used as a proverb on such occasions. The whole couplet runs as follows:
How often a good counsel I offered you, but sometimes the only reward a counsellor reaps is suspicion.
5. This line is of Hamal ibn Badr. The full couplet runs thus:
Wait a bit till Hamal reaches the battlefield; How pretty is death when it comes.
The story behind it is that Malik ibn Zuhayr threatened Hamal ibn Badr with battle and in reply he recited this couplet and then attacked Malik and killed him. When Malik's brother saw this, he killed Hamal and his brother Hudhayfah in revenge. Then, he described this in his following couplet:
I appeased my heart by killing Hamal ibn Badr and my sword appeased me by killing Hudhayfah.

Letter 29: To the People of Basrah

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى أهل البصرة

Whatever disunity and schism you have is not hidden to you. I have forgiven your wrong-doers and held back my sword from those who ran away. I received everyone who came to me from among you. If devastating matters and wrong and silly views are prompting you to break the pledge with me and to oppose me then (listen) I have kept ready my horses and put saddles (on my riding camels), and if you force me to advance towards you I shall come down in such a manner that before it the battle of Jamal too would appear like the last licking of the tongue. At the same time I know the high position of the obedient among you and the right of the sincere without confusing the sinless with the offenders or the faithful with the pledge-breakers.

وَقَدْ كَانَ مِن انْتِشَارِ حَبْلِكُمْ وَشِقَاقِكُمْ مَا لَوْ تَغْبَوْا عَنْهُ، فَعَفَوْتُ عَنْ مُجْرِمِكُمْ، وَرَفَعْتُ السَّيْفَ عَنْ مُدْبِرِكُمْ، وَقَبِلْتُ مِنْ مُقْبِلِكُمْ. فَإِنْ خَطَتْ بِكُمُ الاْمُورُ الْمُرْدِيَةُ، وَسَفَهُ الاْرَاءِ الْجَائِرَةِ . إِلَىَّ مُنَابَذَتِي وَخِلاَفِي، فَهَا أَنَاذَا قَدْ قَرَّبْتُ جِيَادِي، وَرَحَلْتُ رِكَابِي. وَلَئِنْ أَلْجَأْتُمُونِي إِلَى الْمَسِيرِ إِلَيْكُمْ، لاَوقِعَنَّ بِكُمْ وَقْعَةً لاَ يَكُونُ يَوْمُ الْجَمَلِ إِلَيْهَا إِلاَّ كَلَعْقَةِ لاَعِق، مَعَ أَنِّي عَارِفٌ لِذِي الطَّاعَةِ مِنْكُمْ فَضْلَهُ، وَلِذِي النَّصِيحَةِ حَقَّهُ، غَيْرُ مُتَجَاوِز مُتَّهَماً إِلَى بَرِيّ، وَلاَ ناكِثاً إِلَى وَفِيّ.

Letter 30: To Mu'awiyah

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى معاوية

Fear Allah regarding what you have amassed and find out your true right therein, and turn to understand for what you will not be excused on the grounds of ignorance. Certainly, for (following the path of) obedience there are clear signs, shining ways, straight highways and a fixed aim.

The shrewd proceed towards them while the mean turn away from them. Whoever turns his face from them deviates from the right and gropes in bewilderment. Allah takes away His bounty from him and afflicts him with His chastisement. Therefore, beware of yourself. Allah has already shown you your way and the end where your affairs will terminate. You are speeding towards the aim of loss and the position of unbelief. Your ego has pushed you towards evil, thrown you into misguidance conveyed you to destruction and created difficulties in your way.

فَاتَّقِ اللهَ فِيما لَدَيْكَ، وَانْظُرْ في حَقِّهِ عَلَيْكَ، وَارْجِعْ إِلَى مَعْرِفَةِ مَا لاَ تُعْذَرُ بَجَهَالَتِهِ، فَإِنَّ لِلطَّاعَةِ أَعْلاَماً وَاضِحَةً، وَسُبُلاً نَيِّرَةً، وَمَحَجَّةً نَهْجَةً، وَغَايَةً مُطَّلَبَةً، يَرِدُهَا الاْكْيَاسُ، وَيُخَالِفُهَا الاْنْكَاسُ، مَنْ نَكَبَ عَنْهَا جَارَ عَنِ الْحَقِّ، وَخَبَطَ فِي التِّيهِ،

وَغَيَّرَ اللهُ نِعْمَتَهُ، وَأَحَلَّ بِهِ نِقْمَتَهُ. فَنَفْسَكَ نَفْسَكَ! فَقَدْ بَيَّنَ اللهُ لَكَ سَبِيلَكَ، وَحَيْثُ تَنَاهَتْ بِكَ أُمُورُكَ، فَقَدْ أَجْرَيْتَ إِلَى غَايَةِ خُسْرٍ، وَمَحَلَّةِ كُفْرٍ، وَإِنَّ نَفْسَكَ قَدْ أَوْحَلَتْكَ شَرّاً، وَأَقْحَمَتْكَ غَيّاً، وَأَوْرَدَتْكَ الْمَهَالِكَ، وَأَوْعَرَتْ عَلَيْكَ الْمَسَالِكَ.

Letter 31: Advice to one of his sons after returning from the Battle of Siffin

He wrote this letter for al-Hasan ibn `Ali 1 (*his son – peace be upon them*)*, when Amir al-mu'minin encamped at al-Hadirin on his way back from Siffin.*

(ومن وصيّته (عليه السلام

(للحسن بن علي (عليه السلام،

كتبها إليه بـ "حاضرين" عند انصرافه من صفّين

From the father who is (shortly) to die, who acknowledges the hardships of the times, who has turned away from life, who has submitted himself to the (calamities of) time, who realizes the evils of the world, who is living in the abodes of the dead and is due to depart from them any day; to the son who yearns for what is not to be achieved, who is treading the path of those who have died, who is the victim of ailments, who is entangled in the (worries of the) days, who is a target of hardships, a slave of the world, a trader of its deception, a debtor of wishes, a prisoner of mortality, an ally of worries, a neighbour of grief, a victim of distresses, who has been overpowered by desires, and who is a successor of the dead.

مِنَ الْوَالِدِ الْفَانِ، الْمُقِرِّ لِلزَّمَانِ، الْمُدْبِرِ الْعُمُرِ، الْمُسْتَسْلِمِ لِلدَّهْرِ، الذَّامِ لِلدُّنْيَا، السَّاكِنِ مَسَاكِنَ الْمَوْتَى، الظَّاعِنِ عَنْهَا غَداً، إِلَى الْمَوْلُودِ الْمُؤَمِّلِ مَا لاَ يُدْرِكُ، السَّالِكِ سَبِيلَ مَنْ قَدْ هَلَكَ، غَرَضِ الأَسْقَامِ،رَهِينَةِ الأَيَّامِ، وَرَمِيَّةِ الْمَصَائِبِ، وَعَبْدِ الدُّنْيَا، وَتَاجِرِ الْغُرُورِ، وَغَرِيمِ الْمَنَايَا، وَأَسِيرِ الْمَوْتِ، وَحَلِيفِ الْهُمُومِ،قَرِينِ الأَحْزَانِ، وَنُصْبِ الآفَاتِ، وَصَرِيعِ الشَّهَوَاتِ، وَخَلِيفَةِ الأَمْوَاتِ.

Now (you should know that) what I have learnt from the turning away of this world from me, the onslaught of time over me and the advancing of the next world towards me is enough to prevent me from remembering anyone except myself and from thinking beyond myself. But when I confined myself to my own worries leaving the worries of others, my intelligence saved me and protected me from my

desires. It clarified to me my affairs and led me to seriousness wherein there was no trickery and truth which was not tarnished by falsehood. Here, I found you a part of myself, rather I found you my whole, so much so that if anything befell you, it was as though it befell me and if death came to you it was as though it came to me. Consequently, your affairs meant to me what my own matters meant to me. So, I have written this piece of advice (to you) as an instrument of seeking help through it, whether I remain alive for you or cease to exist.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ فِيمَا تَبَيَّنْتُ مِنْ إِدْبَارِ الدُّنْيَا عَنِّي، وَجُمُوحِ الدَّهْرِعَلَيَّ، وَإِقْبَالِ الْاخِرَةِ إِلَيَّ، مَا يَزَعُنِي عَنْ ذِكْرِ مَنْ سِوَايَ، وَالاْهْتِمامِ بِمَا وَرَائِي غَيْرَ أَنِّي حَيْثُ تَفَرَّدَ بِي دُونَ هُمُومِ النَّاسِ هَمُّ نَفْسِي، فَصَدَفَنِي رَأْيِي، وَصَرَفَنِي عَنْ هَوَايَ، وَصَرَّحَ لِي مَحْضُ أَمْرِي فَأَفْضَى بِي إِلَى جِدٍّ لاَ يَكُونُ فِيهِ لَعِبٌ، وَصِدْقٍ لاَ يَشُوبُهُ كَذِبٌ . وَوَجَدْتُكَ بَعْضِي، بَلْ وَجَدْتُكَ كُلِّي، حَتَّى كَأَنَّ شَيْئاً لَوْ أَصَابَكَ أَصَابَنِي، وَكَأَنَّ الْمَوْتَ لَوْ أَتَاكَ أَتَانِي، فَعَنَانِي مِنْ أَمْرِكَ مَا يَعْنِيني مِنْ أَمْرِ نَفْسِي، فَكَتَبْتُ إِلَيْكَ كِتَابِي هَذا، مُسْتَظْهِراً بِهِ إِنْ أَنا بَقِيتُ لَكَ أَوْ فَنِيتُ.

I advise you to fear Allah, O my child, abide by His commands, fill your heart with remembrance of Him and cling to hope from Him. No connection is more reliable than the connection between you and Allah provided you take hold of it. Enliven your heart with preaching, kill it by denial, energise it with firm belief, enlighten it with wisdom, humiliate it by recalling death, make it believe in mortality, make it see the misfortunate of this world, make it fear the authority of the time and the severity of some changes during the nights and the days, place before it the events of past people, recall to it what befell those who were before you and walk among their cities and ruins, then see what they did and from what they have gone away and where they have gone and stayed. You will find that they departed from (their) friends and remain in loneliness. Shortly, you too will be like one of them. Therefore, plan for your place of stay and do not sell your next life with this world.

فَإِنِّي أُوصِيكَ بِتَقْوَى اللهِ أَيْ بُنَيَّ، وَلُزُومِ أَمْرِهِ، وَعِمَارَةِ قَلْبِكَ بِذِكْرِهِ، وَالاْعْتِصَامِ بِحَبْلِهِ، وَأَيُّ سَبَب أَوْثَقُ مِنْ سَبَب بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ اللهِ إِنْ أَنْتَ أَخَذْتَ بِهِ، أَحْيِي قَلْبَكَ بِالْمَوْعِظَةِ، وَأَمِتْهُ بِالزَّهَادَةِ، وَقَوِّهِ بِالْيَقِينِ، وَنَوِّرْهُ بِالْحِكْمَةِ، وَذَلِّلْ ه بِذِكْرِ الْمَوْتِ، وَقَرِّرْهُ بِالْفَنَاءِ، وَبَصِّرْهُ فَجَائِعَ الدُّنْيَا، وَحَذِّرْهُ صَوْلَةَ الدَّهْرِ، وَفُحْشَ تَقَلُّبِ اللَّيَالِي وَالاْيَّامِ، وَاعْرِضْ عَلَيْهِ أَخْبَارَ الْمَاضِينَ، وَذَكِّرْهُ بِمَا أَصَابَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكَ مِنَ الاْوَّلِينَ، وَسِرْ فِي دِيَارِهِمْ وَآثَارِهِمْ، فَانْظُرْ فِيمَا فَعَلُوا وَعَمَّا انْتَقَلُوا، وَأَيْنَ حَلُّوا وَنَزَلُوا، فَإِنَّكَ تَجِدْهُمُ انْتَقَلُوا عَنِ الاْحِبَّةِ، وَحَلُّوا دارَ الْغُرْبَةِ، وَكَأَنَّكَ عَنْ قَلِيل قَدْ صِرْتَ كَأَحَدِهِمْ، فَأَصْلِحْ مَثْوَاكَ، وَلاَ تَبِعْ آخِرَتَكَ بِدُنْيَاكَ،

Give up discussing what you do not know and speaking about what does not concern you. Keep off track from which you fear to go astray because refraining (from moving) when fear of straying is better than embarking on dangers. Ask others to do good; you will thus be among good doers. Desist others from evil with your action as well as speech and keep off, to the best of your ability, from he who commits it. Struggle for Allah as is His due; and the insults of a reviler should not stop you in matters of Allah.

Leap into dangers for the sake of right wherever it be. Acquire insight into religious law. Accustom yourself to endure hardships since the best trait of character is endurance in matters of right. In all affairs resign yourself to Allah, because you will thus be resigning yourself to a secure shelter and a strong protector. You should ask only from your Lord because in His hand is all the giving and depriving. Seek good (from Allah) as much as you can. Understand my advice an do not turn away from it, because the best saying is that which benefits. Know that there is no good in that knowledge which does not benefit, and if knowledge is not made use of then its acquisition is not justified.

وَدَعِ الْقَوْلَ فِيمَا لاَ تَعْرِفُ، وَالْخِطَابَ فِيمَا لَمْ تُكَلَّفْ، وَأَمْسِكْ عَنْ طَرِيقٍ إِذَا خِفْتَ ضَلاَلَتَهُ فَإِنَّ الْكَفَّ عِنْدَ حَيْرَةِ الضَّلاَلِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ رُكُوبِ الأَهْوَالِ. وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ تَكُنْ مِنْ أَهْلِهِ، وَأَنْكِرِ الْمُنْكَرَ بِيَدِكَ وَلِسَانِكَ، وَبَايِنْ مَنْ فَعَلَهُ بِجُهْدِكَ، وَجَاهِدْ فِي اللهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ، وَلاَ تَأْخُذْكَ فِي اللهِ لَوْمَةُ لاَئِمٍ، وَخُضِ الْغَمَرَاتِ لِلْحَقِّ حَيْثُ كَانَ، وَتَفَقَّهْ فِي الدِّينِ، وَعَوِّدْ نَفْسَكَ التَّصَبُّرَ عَلَى الْمَكْرُوهِ، وَنِعْمَ الْخُلُقُ التَّصَبُّرُ فِي الْحَقِّ! وَأَلْجِئْ نَفْسَكَ فِي أُمُورِكَ كُلِّهَا إِلَى إِلهِكَ، فَإِنَّكَ تُلْجِئُهَا إِلَى كَهْفٍ حَرِيزٍ، وَمَانِعٍ عَزِيزٍ. وَأَخْلِصْ فِي الْمَسْأَلَةِ لِرَبِّكَ، فَإِنَّ بِيَدِهِ الْعَطَاءَ وَالْحِرْمَانَ، وَأَكْثِرِ الاِسْتِخَارَةَ، وَتَفَهَّمْ وَصِيَّتِي، وَلاَ تَذْهَبَنَّ عَنْكَ صَفْحاً، فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الْقَوْلِ مَا نَفَعَ. وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لاَ خَيْرَ فِي عِلْمٍ لاَ يَنْفَعُ، وَلاَ يُنْتَفَعُ بِعِلْمٍ لاَ يَحِقُّ تَعَلُّمُهُ.

O my child, when I noticed I was of goodly age and noticed I was increasing in weakness I hastened with my will for you and wrote down prominent points of it in case death overtook before I divulged to you what I have in my heart, or in case my wit be affected as my body has been affected, or forces of passions or mischief of the world overtake you making you like a stubborn camel. Certainly, the heart of a young man is like uncultivated land. It accepts whatever is strewn on it. So, I hastened to mould you properly before your heart hardened up and your mind became occupied, so you might be ready to accept through your intelligence the results of the experience of others and be saved from going through these experiences yourself. In this way, you would avoid the hardship of seeking them and the difficulties of experimenting. Thus, you are getting to know what we had experienced and even those things are becoming clear to you which we might have missed.

أَيْ بُنَيَّ، إِنِّي لَمَّا رَأَيْتُنِي قَدْ بَلَغْتُ سِنّاً، وَرَأَيْتُنِي أَزْدَادُ وَهْناً، بَادَرْتُ بِوَصِيَّتِي إِلَيْكَ، وَأَوْرَدْتُ خِصَالا مِنْهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَعْجَلَ بِي أَجَلِي دُونَ أَنْ أُفْضِيَ إِلَيْكَ بِمَا فِي نَفْسِي، أَوْ أَنْ أُنْقَصَ فِي رَأْيِي كَمَا نُقِصْتُ فِي جِسْمِي، أَوْ يَسْبِقَنِي إِلَيْكَ بَعْضُ غَلَبَاتِ الْهَوَى وَفِتَنِ الدُّنْيَا، فَتَكُونَ كَالصَّعْبِ النَّفُورِ. وَإِنَّمَا قَلْبُ الْحَدَثِ كَالأَرْضِ الْخَالِيَةِ مَا أُلْقِيَ فِيهَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ قَبِلَتْهُ، فَبَادَرْتُكَ بِالأَدَبِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَقْسُوَ قَلْبُكَ، وَيَشْتَغِلَ لُبُّكَ، لِتَسْتَقْبِلَ بِجِدِّ رَأْيِكَ مِنَ الأَمْرِ مَا قَدْ كَفَاكَ أَهْلُ التَّجَارِبِ بُغْيَتَهُ وَتَجْرِبَتَهُ، فَتَكُونَ قَدْ كُفِيتَ مَؤُونَةَ الطَّلَبِ، وَعُوفِيتَ مِنْ عِلاَجِ التَّجْرِبَةِ، فَأَتَاكَ مِنْ ذلِكَ مَا قَدْ كُنَّا نَأْتِيهِ، وَاسْتَبَانَ لَكَ مَا رُبَّمَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْنَا مِنْهُ.

O my child, even though I have not reached the age which those before me have, yet I looked into their behaviour and thought over events of their lives. I walked among their ruins till I was as one of them. In fact, by virtue of those of their affairs that have become known to me it is as though I have lived with them from the first to the last. I have therefore been able to discern the impure from the clean and the benefit from the harm.

يْ بُنَيَّ، إِنِّي وَإِنْ لَمْ أَكُنْ عُمِّرْتُ عُمُرَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلِي، فَقَدْ نَظَرْتُ فِي أَعْمَالِهِمْ ، وَفَكَّرْتُ فِي أَخْبَارِهِمْ ، وَسِرْتُ فِي آثَارِهِمْ; حَتَّى عُدْتُ كَأَحَدِهِمْ; بَلْ كَأَنِّي بِمَا انْتَهَى إِلَيَّ مِنْ أُمُورِهِمْ قَدْ عُمِّرْتُ مَعَ أَوَّلِهِمْ إِلَى آخِرِهِمْ، فَعَرَفْتُ صَفْوَ ذلِكَ مِنْ كَدَرِهِ، وَنَفْعَهُ مِنْ ضَرَرِهِ،

I have selected for you the choicest of those matters and collected for you their good points and have kept away from you their useless points. Since I feel for your affairs as a living father should feel and I aim at giving you training, I thought it should be at a time when you are advancing in age and new on the stage of the world, possessing upright intention and clean heart and that I should begin with the teaching of the Book of Allah, and its interpretation, the laws of Islam and its commands, its lawful matters and unlawful matters and that I should not go beyond these for you. Then I feared lest you should get confused as other people had been confused on account of their passions and (different) views. Therefore, in spite of my dislike for you being so warned, I thought it better for me to make this position strong rather than leave you in a position where I do not regard you safe from falling into destruction. I hoped that Allah would help you in your straightforwardness and guide you in your resoluteness. Consequently, I wrote this piece of my will for you.

فَاسْتَخْلَصْتُ لَكَ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْر نخيله، وَتَوَخَّيْتُ لَكَ جَمِيلَهُ، وَصَرَفْتُ عَنْكَ مَجْهُولَهُ، وَرَأَيْتُ حَيْثُ عَنَانِي مِنْ أَمْرِكَ مَا يَعْنِي الْوَالِدَ الشَّفِيقَ، وَأَجْمَعْتُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَدَبِكَ أَنْ يَكُونَ ذلِكَ وَأَنْتَ مُقْبِلُ الْعُمُرِ وَمُقْتَبَلُ الدَّهْرِ، ذُو نِيَّة سَلِيمَة، وَنَفْس صَافِيَة، وَأَنْ أَبْتَدِئَكَ بِتَعْلِيمِ كِتَابِ اللهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَتَأْوِيلِهِ، وَشَرَائِعِ الاْسْلاَمِ وَأَحْكَامِهِ ، وَحَلاَلِهِ وَحَرَامِهِ ، لاَ أُجَاوِزُ ذلِكَ بِكَ إِلَى غَيْرِهِ. ثُمَّ أَشْفَقْتُ أَنْ يَلْتَبِسَ عَلَيْكَ مَا اخْتَلَفَ النَّاسُ فِيهِ مِنْ أَهْوَائِهِمْ وَآرَائِهِمْ مِثْلَ الَّذِي الْتَبَسَ عَلَيْهِمْ، فَكَانَ إِحْكَامُ ذلِكَ عَلَى مَا كَرِهْتُ مِنْ تَنْبِيهِكَ لَهُ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ إِسْلاَمِكَ إِلَى أَمْرٍ لاَ آمَنُ عَلَيْكَ بِهِ الْهَلَكَةَ وَرَجَوْتُ أَنْ يُوَفِّقَكَ اللهُ فِيهِ لِرُشْدِكَ، وَأَنْ يَهْدِيَكَ لِقَصْدِكَ، فَعَهِدْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَصِيَّتِي هذِهِ.

Know O my child, what I love most for you to adopt from my will is to fear Allah, to confine yourself to what Allah has made obligatory on you, and to follow the actions of your forefathers and the virtuous people of your household, because they did not fall short in seeing for themselves what you will see for yourself, and they did about their affairs as you would like to think (about your affairs). Thereafter, their thinking led them to discharge the obligations they came to know of and to desist from what they were not required to do. If your heart does not accept this without acquiring knowledge as they acquired it, then your search should first be by way of understanding and learning and not by falling into doubts or getting entangled in quarrels.

وَاعْلَمْ يَا بُنَيَّ أَنَّ أَحَبَّ مَا أَنْتَ آخِذٌ بِهِ إِلَيَّ مِنْ وَصِيَّتِي تَقْوَى اللهِ وَالاْقْتِصَارُ عَلَى مَا فَرَضَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْكَ، وَالاْخْذُ بِمَا مَضَى عَلَيْهِ الاْوَّلُونَ مِنْ آبَائِكَ، وَالصَّالِحُونَ مِنْ أَهْلِ بَيْتِكَ، فَإِنَّهُمْ لَمْ يَدَعُوا أَنْ نَظَرُوا لاِنْفُسِهِمْ كَمَا أَنْتَ نَاظِرٌ، وَفَكَّرُوا كَمَا أَنْتَ مُفَكِّرٌ، ثُمَّ رَدَّهُمْ آخِرُ ذلِكَ إِلَى الاْخْذِ بِمَا عَرَفُوا، وَالاْمْسَاكِ عَمَّا لَمْ يُكَلَّفُوا، فَإِنْ أَبَتْ نَفْسُكَ أَنْ تَقْبَلَ ذلِكَ دُونَ أَنْ تَعْلَمَ كَمَا عَلِمُوا فَلْيَكُنْ طَلَبُكَ ذلِكَ بِتَفَهُّم وَتَعَلُّم، لاَ بِتَوَرُّطِ الشُّبُهَاتِ، وَعُلَقِ الْخُصُومَاتِ.

And before you probe into this, you should begin by seeking your Allah's help and turning to Him for

competence and keeping aloof from everything that throws you into doubt or flings you towards misguidance. When you have made sure that your heart is clean and humble and your thoughts have come together and you have only one thought which is about this matter, then you will see what I have explained to you; but if you have not been able to achieve that peace of observation and thinking which you would like to have, then know that you are only stamping the ground like a blind she-camel and falling into darkness while a seeker of religion should not grope in the dark or create confusion. It is better to avoid this.

وَابْدَأْ قَبْلَ نَظَرِكَ فِي ذلِكَ بِالاْسْتِعَانَةِ بِإِلهِكَ، وَالرَّغْبَةِ إِلَيْهِ فِي تَوْفِيقِكَ، وَتَرْكِ كُلِّ شَائِبَة أَوْلَجَتْكَ فِي شُبْهَة، أَوْ أَسْلَمَتْكَ إِلَى ضَلاَلَة. فَإِنْ أَيْقَنْتَ أَنْ قَدْ صَفَا قَلْبُكَ فَخَشَعَ، وَتَمَّ رَأْيُكَ فَاجْتَمَعَ، وَكَانَ هَمُّكَ فِي ذلِكَ هَمّاً وَاحِداً، فَانْظُرْ فِيمَا فَسَّرْتُ لَكَ، وَإِنْ أنت لَمْ يَجْتَمِعْ لَكَ مَا تُحِبُّ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ، وَفَرَاغِ نَظَرِكَ وَفِكْرِكَ، فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّكَ إِنَّمَا تَخْبِطُ الْعَشْوَاءِ، وَتَتَوَرَّطُ الظَّلْمَاءَ. وَلَيْسَ طَالِبُ الدِّينِ مَنْ خَبَطَ أَوْ خَلَطَ، وَالاْمْسَاكُ عَنْ ذلِكَ أَمْثَلُ.

Appreciate my advice, O my child, and know He Who is the Master of death is also the Master of life, that the Creator causes death as well; that He Who destroys is also the restorer of life and that He Who inflicts disease is also the curer. This world continues in the way Allah has made it with regard to its pleasures, trials, rewards on the Day of Judgement and all that He wishes and you do not know. If anything of this advice is not understood by you then attribute it to your ignorance of it, because when you were first born you were born ignorant. Thereafter, you acquired knowledge. There are many matters of which you are ignorant and in which your sight first wonders and your eye wanders then after this you see them. Therefore, cling to Him Who created you, fed you and put you in order. Your worship should be for Him, your eagerness should be towards Him and your fear should be of Him.

فَتَفَهَّمْ يَا بُنَيَّ وَصِيَّتِي، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ مَالِكَ الْمَوْتِ هُوَ مَالِكُ الْحَيَاةِ، وَأَنَّ الْخَالِقَ هُوَ الْمُمِيتُ، وَأَنَّ الْمُفْنِيَ هُوَ الْمُعِيدُ، وَأَنَّ الْمُبْتَلِيَ هُوَ الْمُعَافِي، وَأَنَّ الدُّنْيَا لَمْ تَكُنْ لِتَسْتَقِرَّ إِلاَّ عَلَى مَا جَعَلَهَا اللهُ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ النَّعْمَاءِ، وَالابْتِلاَءِ، وَالْجَزَاءِ فِي الْمَعَادِ، أَوْ مَا شَاءَ مِمَّا لاَ تَعْلَمُ، فَإِنْ أَشْكَلَ عَلَيْكَ شَيْءٌ مِنْ ذلِكَ فَاحْمِلْهُ عَلَى جَهَالَتِكَ، فَإِنَّكَ أَوَّلُ مَا خُلِقْتَ بِهِ جَاهِلا ثُمَّ عُلِّمْتَ، وَمَا أَكْثَرَ مَا تَجْهَلُ مِنَ الاْمْرِ، وَيَتَحَيَّرُ فِيهِ رَأْيُكَ، وَيَضِلُّ فِيهِ بَصَرُكَ ثُمَّ تُبْصِرُهُ بَعْدَ ذلِكَ! فَاعْتَصِمْ بِالَّذِي خَلَقَكَ وَرَزَقَكَ وَسَوَّاكَ، وَلْيَكُنْ لَهُ تَعَبُّدُكَ، وَإِلَيْهِ رَغْبَتُكَ، وَمِنْهُ شَفَقَتُكَ.

Know O my child, that no one received messages from Allah, the Glorified, as the Prophet (S) did. Therefore, regard him as your forerunner and leader towards deliverance. Certainly, I shall spare no effort in giving you advice and surely even if you try, you cannot acquire that insight for your welfare as I have for you.

وَاعْلَمْ يَا بُنَيَّ أَنَّ أَحَداً لَمْ يُنْبِئْ عَنِ اللهِ سُبْحَانَهُ كَمَا أَنْبَأَ عَنْهُ نبيّنا ـ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ ـ فَارْضَ بِهِ رَائِداً، وَإِلَى النَّجَاةِ قَائِداً، فَإِنِّي لَمْ آلُكَ نَصِيحَةً. وَإِنَّكَ لَنْ تَبْلُغَ فِي النَّظَرِ لِنَفْسِكَ وَإِنِ اجْتَهَدْتَ مَبْلَغَ نَظَرِي لَكَ.

Know O my child, if there had been a partner with your Lord, his messengers too should have come to you and you would have seen signs of his authority and power and have known his deeds and qualities. But He is only One God as He has described Himself. No one can dispute with Him in His authority. He is from ever and will be for ever. He is before all things without any beginning. He will remain after all things without any end. He is far too great to have His divinity proved by the encompassing heart or eye. When you have understood this then you should do what is done by him who is like you by way of his low position, his lack of authority, his increasing incapability, and his great need of his Lord for seeking His obedience,fearing His chastisement and apprehending His anger, because He does not command you save for virtue and does not refrain you save from evil.

وَاعْلَمْ يَا بُنَيَّ أَنَّهُ لَوْ كَانَ لِرَبِّكَ شَرِيكٌ لاَتَتْكَ رُسُلُهُ، وَلَرَأَيْتَ آثَارَ مُلْكِهِ وَسُلْطَانِهِ، وَلَعَرَفْتَ أَفْعَالَهُ وَصِفَاتَهُ، وَلكِنَّهُ إِلهٌ وَاحِدٌ كَمَا وَصَفَ نَفْسَهُ، لاَ يُضَادُّهُ فِي مُلْكِهِ أَحَدٌ، وَلاَ يَزُولُ أَبَداً وَلَمْ يَزَلْ. أَوَّلٌ قَبْلَ الأَشْيَاءِ بِلاَ أَوَّلِيَّة، وَآخِرٌ بَعْدَ الأَشْيَاءِ بِلاَ نِهَايَة. عَظُمَ عَنْ أَنْ تَثْبُتَ رُبُوبِيَّتُهُ بِإِحَاطَةِ قَلْب أَوْ بَصَر. فَإِذَا عَرَفْتَ ذلِكَ فَافْعَلْ كَمَا يَنْبَغِي لِمِثْلِكَ أَنْ يَفْعَلَهُ فِي صِغَرِ خَطَرِهِ، وَقِلَّةِ مَقْدِرَتِهِ، وَكَثْرَةِ عَجْزِهِ، وَعَظِيمِ حَاجَتِهِ إِلَى رَبِّهِ، فِي طَلَبِ طَاعَتِهِ، وَالْخَشْيَةِ مِنْ عُقُوبَتِهِ، وَالشَّفَقَةِ مِنْ سُخْطِهِ، فَإِنَّهُ لَمْ يَأْمُرْكَ إِلاَّ بِحَسَن، وَلَمْ يَنْهَكَ إِلاَّ عَنْ قَبِيح.

O my child, I have informed you about the world, its condition,decay and its passing away and I have informed you of the next world and of what has been provided in it for its people. I have recounted to you parables about it so that you may draw instruction from them and act upon them. The example of those who have understood the world is like those travellers who, being disgusted with drought-stricken places set off for greenery and a fruitful place. Then they endure difficulties on the way, separation from friends, hardships of the journey and unwholesome food in order to reach their fields of plenty and place of stay. Consequently, they do not feel any pain in all this and do not regard any expenditure to be waste.

Nothing is more lovable to them than what takes them near their goal and carries them closer to their place of stay. (Against this), the example of those who are deceived by this world is like the people who were in a green place but they became disgusted with it and went to a drought-stricken place. Therefore, for them nothing is more detestable or abominable than to leave the place where they were to go to a place which they will reach unexpectedly and for which they are heading.

يا بُنَيَّ إِنِّي قَدْ أَنْبَأْتُكَ عَنِ الدُّنْيَا وَحَالِهَا، وَزَوَالِهَا وَانْتِقَالِهَا، وَأَنْبَأْتُكَ عَنِ الاْخِرَةِ وَمَا أُعِدَّ لِاَهْلِهَا، وَضَرَبْتُ لَكَ فِيهِمَا الاْمْثَالَ، لِتَعْتَبِرَ بِهَا، وَتَحْذُوَ عَلَيْهَا. إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ مَنْ خَبَرَ الدُّنْيَا كَمَثَلِ قَوْم سَفْر نَبَا بِهِمْ مَنْزِلٌ جَدِيبٌ، فَأَمُّوا مَنْزِلا خَصِيباً وَجَنَاباً مَرِيعاً، فَاحْتَمَلُوا وَعْثَاءَ الطَّرِيقِ، وَفِرَاقَ الصَّدِيقِ، وَخُشُونَةَ السَّفَرِ، وَجُشُوبَةَ الْمَطْعَمِ، لِيَأْتُوا سَعَةَ دَارِهِمْ، وَمَنْزِلَ قَرَارِهِمْ، فَلَيْسَ يَجِدُونَ لِشَيْء مِنْ ذلِكَ أَلَماً، وَلاَ يَرَوْنَ نَفَقَةً فِيهِ مَغْرَماً. وَلاَ شَيْءَ أَحَبُّ إِلَيْهِمْ مِمَّا قَرَّبَهُمْ مِنْ مَنْزِلِهِمْ وَأَدْنَاهُمْ أَلى مَحَلَّتِهِمْ. وَمَثَلُ مَنِ اغْتَرَّ بِهَا كَمَثَلِ قَوْم كَانُوا بِمَنْزِل خَصِيب، فَنَبَا بِهِمْ إِلَى مَنْزِل جَدِيب، فَلَيْسَ شَيْءٌ أَكْرَهَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلاَ أَفْظَعَ عِنْدَهُمْ مِنْ مُفَارَقَةِ مَا كَانُوا فِيهِ، إِلَى مَا يَهْجُمُونَ عَلَيْهِ، وَيَصِيرُونَ إِلَيْهِ.

O my child, make yourself the measure (for dealings) between you and others. Thus, you should desire

for others what you desire for yourself and hate for others what you hate for yourself. Do not oppress as you do not like to be oppressed. Do good to others as you would like good to be done to you. Regard bad for yourself whatever you regard bad for others. Accept that (treatment) from others which you would like others to accept from you. Do not talk about what you do not know even though what you know be very little. Do not say to others what you do not like to be said to you.

Know that self-admiration is contrary to propriety (of action) and is a calamity for the mind. Therefore, increase your striving and do not become a treasurer for (wealth to be inherited by) others. When you have been guided on the right path humble yourself before Allah as much as you can.

يَا بُنَيَّ اجْعَلْ نَفْسَكَ مِيزَاناً فِيمَا بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ غَيْرِكَ، فَأَحْبِبْ لِغَيْرِكَ مَا تُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِكَ، وَاكْرَهْ لَهُ مَا تَكْرَهُ لَهَا، وَلاَ تَظْلِمْ كَمَا لاَ تُحِبُّ أَنْ تُظْلَمَ، وَأَحْسِنْ كَمَا تُحِبُّ أَنْ يُحْسَنَ إِلَيْكَ، وَاسْتَقْبِحْ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ مَا تَسْتَقْبِحُهُ مِنْ غَيْرِكَ، وَارْضَ مِنَ النَّاسِ بِمَا تَرْضَاهُ لَهُمْ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ، وَلاَ تَقُلْ مَا لاَ تَعْلَمُ وَإِنْ قَلَّ مَا تَعْلَمُ، وَلاَ تَقُلْ مَا لاَ تُحِبُّ أَنْ يُقَالَ لَكَ.

وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الاْعْجَابَ ضِدُّ الصَّوَابِ، وَآفَةُ الاْلْبَابِ، فَاسْعَ فِي كَدْحِكَ، وَلاَ تَكُنْ خَازِناً لِغَيْرِكَ، وَإِذَا أَنْتَ هُدِيتَ لِقَصْدِكَ فَكُنْ أَخْشَعَ مَا تَكُونُ لِرَبِّكَ.

Know in front of you lies a road of long distance and severe hardship and you cannot avoid seeking it. Take your requirements of provision keeping the burden light. Do not load your back beyond your power lest its weight become a mischief for you. Whenever you come across a needy person who can carry for you your provision to hand it back to you on the Day of Judgement when you will need it, then accept him as a good opportunity and get him to carry it. Put in that provision as much-as you are able to, for it is likely that if you may need him (afterwards), you may not get hold of him. If a person is willing to borrow from you in the days of your affluence to pay it back to you at the time of your need then make use of this opportunity.

وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ أَمَامَكَ طَرِيقاً ذَا مَسَافَةٍ بَعِيدَةٍ، وَمَشَقَّةٍ شَدِيدَةٍ، وَأَنَّهُ لاَ غِنَى بِكَ فِيهِ عَنْ حُسْنِ الاِرْتِيَادِ، وَقَدْرِ بَلاَغِكَ مِنَ الزَّادِ، مَعَ خِفَّةِ الظَّهْرِ، فَلاَ تَحْمِلَنَّ عَلَى ظَهْرِكَ فَوْقَ طَاقَتِكَ، فَيَكُونَ ثِقْلُ ذلِكَ وَبَالا عَلَيْكَ، وَإِذَا وَجَدْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْفَاقَةِ مَنْ يَحْمِلُ لَكَ زَادَكَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، فَيُوَافِيكَ بِهِ غَداً حَيْثُ تَحْتَاجُ إِلَيْهِ فَاغْتَنِمْهُ وَحَمِّلْهُ إِيَّاهُ، وَأَكْثِرْ مِنْ تَزْوِيدِهِ وَأَنْتَ قَادِرٌ عَلَيْهِ، فَلَعَلَّكَ تَطْلُبُهُ فَلاَ تَجِدُهُ . وَاغْتَنِمْ مَنِ اسْتَقْرَضَكَ فِي حَالِ غِنَاكَ، لِيَجْعَلَ قَضَاءَهُ لَكَ فِي يَوْمِ عُسْرَتِكَ.

Know that in front of you lies an impassable valley wherein the light-burdened man will be in a better condition than the heavy-burden one, and the slow- paced would be in a worse condition than the swift-paced. Your terminating point at the other end of this passage will necessarily be either Paradise or Hell. Therefore, investigate for yourself before alighting, and prepare the place before getting down, because after death there can be no preparation nor return to this world.

وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ أَمَامَكَ عَقَبَةً كَؤُوداً، الْمُخِفُّ فِيهَا أَحْسَنُ حَالا مِنَ الْمُثْقِلِ، وَالْمُبْطِئُ عَلَيْهَا أَقْبَحُ حَالا مِنَ الْمُسْرِعِ، وَأَنَّ مَهْبِطَكَ بِهَا لاَ مَحَالَةَ إِمَّا عَلَى جَنَّة أَوْ عَلَى نَار، فَارْتَدْ لِنَفْسِكَ قَبْلَ نُزُولِكَ، وَوَطِّئِ الْمَنْزِلَ قَبْلَ حُلُولِكَ، فَلَيْسَ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ مُسْتَعْتَبٌ، وَلاَ إِلَى الدُّنْيَا مُنْصَرَفٌ.

Know that He Who owns the treasuries of the heavens and of the earth has permitted you to pray to Him and has promised you acceptance of the prayer. He has commanded you to beg from Him in order that He may give you and to seek His mercy in order that He may have mercy on you. He has not placed any thing between you and Him that may veil Him from you. He has not required you to get a mediator for you to Him, and if you err, He has not prevented you from repentance. He does not hasten with punishment. He does not taunt you for repenting, nor does He humiliate you when humiliation is more appropriate for you. He has not been harsh in accepting repentance. He does not severely question you about your sins. He does not disappoint you of His mercy. Rather He regards abstention from sin as a virtue. He counts your one sin as one while He counts your one virtue as ten.

وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ خَزَائِنُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالاْرْضِ قَدْ أَذِنَ لَكَ فِي الدُّعَاءِ، وَتَكَفَّلَ لَكَ بِالاْجَابَةِ، وَأَمَرَكَ أَنْ تَسْأَلَهُ لِيُعْطِيَكَ، وَتَسْتَرْحِمَهُ لِيَرْحَمَكَ، وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ مَنْ يَحْجُبُكَ عَنْهُ، وَلَمْ يُلْجِئْكَ إِلَى مَنْ يَشْفَعُ لَكَ إِلَيْهِ، وَلَمْ يَمْنَعْكَ إِنْ أَسَأْتَ مِنَ التَّوْبَةِ، وَلَمْ يُعَاجِلْكَ بِالنِّقْمَةِ، وَلَمْ يَفْضَحْكَ حَيْثُ تَعَرَّضْتَ الْفَضِيحَةُ، وَلَمْ يُشَدِّدْ عَلَيْكَ فِي قَبُولِ الاْنَابَةِ، وَلَمْ يُنَاقِشْكَ بِالْجَرِيمَةِ، وَلَمْ يُؤْيِسْكَ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ، بَلْ جَعَلَ نُزُوعَكَ عَنِ الذَّنْبِ حَسَنَةً، وَحَسَبَ سَيِّئَتَكَ وَاحِدَةً، وَحَسَبَ حَسَنَتَكَ عَشْراً ،

He has opened for you the door of repentance. Therefore, whenever you call Him He hears your call, and whenever you whisper to Him He knows the whisper. You place before Him your needs, unveil yourself before Him, complain to Him of your worries, beseech Him to remove your troubles, seek His help in your affairs and ask from the treasuries of His mercy that which no one else has power to give, namely length of life, health of body and increase in sustenance. Then He has placed the keys of His treasuries in your hands in the sense that He has shown you the way to ask Him.

وَفَتَحَ لَكَ بَابَ الْمَتَابِ، وَبَابَ الاْسْتِعْتَابِ; فَإِذَا نَادَيْتَهُ سَمِعَ نِدَاءَكَ، وَإِذَا نَاجَيْتَهُ عَلِمَ نَجْوَاكَ، فَأَفْضَيْتَ إِلَيْهِ بِحَاجَتِكَ، وَأَبْثَثْتَهُ ذَاتَ نَفْسِكَ، وَشَكَوْتَ إِلَيْهِ هُمُومَكَ، وَاسْتَكْشَفْتَهُ كُرُوبَكَ، وَاسْتَعَنْتَهُ عَلَى أُمُورِكَ، وَسَأَلْتَهُ مِنْ خَزَائِنِ رَحْمَتِهِ مَا لاَ يَقْدِرُ عَلَى إِعْطَائِهِ غَيْرُهُ، مِنْ زِيَادَةِ الاْعْمَارِ، وَصِحَّةِ الاْبْدَانِ، وَسَعَةِ الاْرْزَاقِ. ثُمَّ جَعَلَ فِي يَدَيْكَ مَفَاتِيحَ خَزَائِنِهِ بِمَا أَذِنَ لَكَ فِيهِ مِنْ مَسْأَلَتِهِ،

Therefore, wherever you wish, open the doors of His favour with prayer, and let abundant rains of His mercy fall on you. Delay in acceptance of prayer should not disappoint you because grant of prayer is according to the measure of (your) intention. Sometimes acceptance (of prayer) is delayed with a view to its being a source of greater reward to the asker and of better gifts to the expectant. Sometimes you ask for a thing but it is not given to you, and a better thing is given to you later, or a thing is taken away from you for some greater good of yours, because sometimes you ask for a thing which contains ruin for your

religion if it is given to you. Therefore, your request should be for things whose beauty should be lasting and whose burden should remain away from you. As for wealth it will not last for you nor will you live for it.

فَمَتَى شِئْتَ اسْتَفْتَحْتَ بِالدُّعَاءِ أَبْوَابَ نِعْمَتِهِ، وَاسْتَمْطَرْتَ شَآبِيبَ رَحْمَتِهِ، فَلاَ يُقَنِّطَنَّكَ إِبْطَاءُ إِجَابَتِهِ، فَإِنَّ الْعَطِيَّةَ عَلَى قَدْرِ النِّيَّةِ، وَرُبَّمَا أُخِّرَتْ عَنْكَ الاْجَابَةُ، لِيَكُونَ ذلِكَ أَعْظَمَ لاِجْرِ السَّائِلِ، وَأَجْزَلَ لِعَطَاءِ الاْمِلِ. وَرُبَّمَا سَأَلْتَ الشَّيْءَ فَلاَ تُؤْتَاهُ، وَأُوتِيتَ خَيْراً مِنْهُ عَاجِلا أَوْ آجِلا، أَوْ صُرِفَ عَنْكَ لِمَا هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكَ، فَلَرُبَّ أَمْر قَدْ طَلَبْتَهُ فِيهِ هَلاَكُ دِينِكَ لَوْ أُوتِيتَهُ، فَلْتَكُنْ مَسْأَلَتُكَ فِيمَا يَبْقَى لَكَ جَمَالُهُ، وَيُنْفَى عَنْكَ وَبَالُهُ; فَالْمَالُ لاَ يَبْقَى لَكَ وَلاَ تَبْقَى لَهُ.

O my child, know that you have been created for the next world, not for this world, for destruction (in this world) not for lasting, and for dying not for living. You are in a place which does not belong to you, a house for making preparations and a passage towards the next world. You are being chased by death from which the runner –away cannot escape, as it would surely overtake him. So, be on guard against it lest it overtakes you at a time when you are in a sinful state and you are thinking of repenting but it creates obstruction between you and repentance. In such a case you will ruin yourself.

وَاعْلَمْ يَا بُنَيَّ أَنَّكَ إِنَّمَا خُلِقْتَ لِلاْخِرَةِ لاَ لِلدُّنْيَا، وَلِلْفَنَاءِ لاَ لِلْبَقَاءِ، وَلِلْمَوْتِ لاَ لِلْحَيَاةِ; وَأَنَّكَ فِي منزل قُلْعَة، وَدارِ بُلْغَة، وَطَرِيق إِلَى الاْخِرَةِ، وَأَنَّكَ طَرِيدُ الْمَوْتِ الَّذِي لاَ يَنْجُو مِنْهُ هَارِبُهُ، وَلاَ يَفُوتُهُ طَالِبُهُ، وَلاَبُدَّ أَنَّهُ مُدْرِكُهُ، فَكُنْ مِنْهُ عَلَى حَذَرِ أَنْ يُدْرِكَكَ وَأَنْتَ عَلَى حَال سَيِّئَة، قَدْ كُنْتَ تُحَدِّثُ نَفْسَكَ مِنْهَا بِالتَّوْبَةِ، فَيَحُولُ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ ذلِكَ، فَإِذَا أَنْتَ قَدْ أَهْلَكْتَ نَفْسَكَ.

O my child, remember death very much and the place where you have to go suddenly and reach after death, so that when it comes you are already on your guard against it and have prepared yourself for it and it does not come to you all of a sudden and surprise you. Beware, lest you become deceived by the leanings of the people towards worldly attraction and their rushing upon it. Allah has warned you about it and the world has informed you of its mortal character and unveiled to you its evils.

يَا بُنَيَّ أَكْثِرْ مِنْ ذِكْرِ الْمَوْتِ، وَذِكْرِ مَا تَهْجُمُ عَلَيْهِ، وَتُفْضِي بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ إِلَيْهِ، حَتَّى يَأْتِيَكَ وَقَدْ أَخَذْتَ مِنْهُ حِذْرَكَ، وَشَدَدْتَ لَهُ أَزْرَكَ، وَلاَ يَأْتِيَكَ بَغْتَةً فَيَبْهَرَكَ، وَإِيَّاكَ أَنْ تَغْتَرَّ بِمَا تَرَى مِنْ إِخْلاَدِ أَهْلِ الدُّنْيَا إِلَيْهَا، وَتَكَالُبِهِمْ عَلَيْهَا، فَقَدْ نَبَّأَكَ اللهُ عَنْهَا، وَنَعَتْ هِيَ لَكَ عَنْ نَفْسِهَا، وَتَكَشَّفَتْ لَكَ عَنْ مَسَاوِيهَا،

Surely, those (who go) after it are like barking dogs or devouring carnivore who hate each other. The stronger among them eat away the weaker and the big among them tramples over the small. Some are like tied cattle and some like untied cattle who have lost their wits and are running in unknown directions. They are flocks of calamities wandering in rugged valleys. There is no herdsman to detain them nor any tenderer to take them to grazing. The world has put them on the track of blindness and taken away their eyes from the beacons of guidance. They have therefore perplexed in its bewilderings and sunk in its

pleasures. They took it as a god so it played with them. They too played with it and forgot what is beyond it.

فَإِنَّمَا أَهْلُهَا كِلاَبٌ عَاوِيَةٌ، وَسِبَاعٌ ضَارِيَةٌ، يَهِرُّ بَعْضُهَا عَلَى بَعْض، وَيَأْكُلُ عَزِيزُهَا ذَلِيلَهَا، وَيَقْهَرُ كَبِيرُهَا صَغِيرَهَا. نَعَمٌ مُعَقَّلَةٌ، وَأُخْرَى مُهْمَلَةٌ، قَدْ أَضَلَّتْ عُقُولَهَا، وَرَكِبَتْ مَجْهُولَهَا. سُرُوحُ عَاهَة بِوَاد وَعْث، لَيْسَ لَهَا رَاع يُقِيمُهَا، وَلاَ مُسِيمٌ يُسِيمُهَا. سَلَكَتْ بِهِمُ الدُّنْيَا طَرِيقَ الْعَمَى، وَأَخَذَتْ بِأَبْصَارِهِمْ عَنْ مَنَارِ الْهُدَى، فَتَاهُوا فِي حَيْرَتِهَا، وَغَرِقُوا فِي نِعْمَتِهَا، وَاتَّخَذُوهَا رَبّاً، فَلَعِبَتْ بِهِمْ وَلَعِبُوا بِهَا، وَنَسُوا مَا وَرَاءَهَا.

Darkness is disappearing gradually. Now it is as though travellers have got down and the hasteners will soon meet. Know, O my child, that everyone who is riding on the carriage of night and day is being carried by them even though he may be stationary,and he is covering the distance even though he is staying and resting.

رُوَيْداً يُسْفِرُ الظَّلاَمُ، كَأَنْ قَدْ وَرَدَتِ الاَظْعَانُ; يُوشِكُ مَنْ أَسْرَعَ أَنْ يَلْحَقَ! وَاعْلَمْ يَا بُنَيَّ أَنَّ مَنْ كَانَتْ مَطِيَّتُهُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ، فَإِنَّهُ يُسَارُ بِهِ وَإِنْ كَانَ وَاقِفاً، وَيَقْطَعُ الْمَسَافَةَ وَإِنْ كَانَ مُقِيماً وَادِعاً.

Know with certainty you cannot achieve your desire and exceed your destined life. You are on the track of those before you. Therefore, be humble in seeking and moderate in earning because often seeking leads to deprivation. Every seeker of livelihood does not get it, nor is everyone who is moderate in seeking deprived. Keep yourself away from every low thing even though they may take you to your desired aims, because you will not get any return for your own respect which you spend. Do not be the slave of others for Allah had made you free. There is no good in good which is achieved through evil and no good in comfort that is achieved through (disgracing) hardship.

وَاعْلَمْ يَقِيناً أَنَّكَ لَنْ تَبْلُغَ أَمَلَكَ، وَلَنْ تَعْدُوَ أَجَلَكَ، وَأَنَّكَ فِي سَبِيلِ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكَ. فَخَفِّضْ فِي الطَّلَبِ، وَأَجْمِلْ فِي الْمُكْتَسَبِ، فَإِنَّهُ رُبَّ طَلَب قَدْ جَرَّ إِلَى حَرَب; فَلَيْسَ كُلُّ طَالِب بِمَرْزُوق، وَلاَ كُلُّ مُجْمِل بِمَحْرُوم. وَأَكْرِمْ نَفْسَكَ عَنْ كُلِّ دَنِيَّة وَإِنْ سَاقَتْكَ إِلَى الرَّغَائِبِ، فَإِنَّكَ لَنْ تَعْتَاضَ بِمَا تَبْذُلُ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ عِوَضاً. وَلاَ تَكُنْ عَبْدَ غَيْرِكَ وَقَدْ جَعَلَكَ اللهُ حُرّاً. وَمَا خَيْرُ خَيْر لاَ يُنَالُ إِلاَّ بِشَرّ، وَيُسْر لاَ يُنَالُ إِلاَّ بِعُسْر.

Beware lest bearers of greed should carry you and make you descend down to the springs of destruction. If you can manage that there be no wealthy person between yourself and Allah, do so, because in any case you will find what is for you and get your share. A little received directly from Allah the Glorified, is more dignified than that which is more but is received through (the obligation of) His creatures, although (really) all is from Allah.

وَإِيَّاكَ أَنْ تُوجِفَ بِكَ مَطَايَا الطَّمَعِ، فَتُورِدَكَ مَنَاهِلَ الْهَلَكَةِ. وَإِنِ اسْتَطَعْتَ أَلاَّ يَكُونَ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ اللهِ ذُو نِعْمَة فَافْعَلْ، فَإِنَّكَ مُدْرِكٌ قَسْمَكَ، وَآخِذٌ سَهْمَكَ، وَإِنَّ الْيَسِيرَ مِنَ اللهِ سُبْحَانَهُ أَعْظَمُ وَأَكْرَمُ مِنَ الْكَثِيرِ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ وَإِنْ كَانَ كُلٌّ مِنْهُ.

It is easier to rectify what you miss by silence than to secure what you lose by speaking. Whatever is in a pot can be retained by closing the lid. I should prefer you to retain what is in your hands rather to seek what is in other's hands. Bitterness of disappointment is better than seeking from people. Manual labour. with chastity is better than the riches of a vicious life. A man is the best guard of his own secrets. Often a man strives for what harms him. He who speaks much speaks nonsense. Whoever ponders perceives. Associate with people of virtue; you will become one of them. Keep aloof from people of vice; you will remain safe from them. The worst food is that which is unlawful. Oppressing the weak is the worst oppression.

وَتَلاَفِيكَ مَا فَرَطَ مِنْ صَمْتِكَ أَيْسَرُ مِنْ إِدْرَاكِكَ مَا فَاتَ مِنْ مَنْطِقِكَ، وَحِفْظُ مَا فِي الْوِعَاءِ بِشَدِّ الْوِكَاءِ. وَحِفْظُ مَا فِي يَدَيْكَ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ طَلَبِ مَا فِي يَدَيْ غَيْرِكَ، وَمَرَارَةُ الْيَأْسِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الطَّلَبِ إِلَى النَّاسِ. وَالْحِرْفَةُ مَعَ الْعِفَّةِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الْغِنَى مَعَ الْفُجُورِ، وَالْمَرْءُ أَحْفَظُ لِسِرِّهِ، وَرُبَّ سَاعٍ فِيمَا يَضُرُّهُ! مَنْ أَكْثَرَ أَهْجَرَ، وَمَنْ تَفَكَّرَ أَبْصَرَ. قَارِنْ أَهْلَ الْخَيْرِ تَكُنْ مِنْهُمْ، وَبَايِنْ أَهْلَ الشَّرِّ تَبِنْ عَنْهُمْ. بِئْسَ الطَّعَامُ الْحَرَامُ ! وَظُلْمُ الضَّعِيفِ أَفْحَشُ الظُّلْمِ!

Where leniency is unsuitable, harshness is lenience. Often cure is illness and illness is cure. Often the ill-wisher gives correct advice while the well-wisher cheats. Do not depend upon hopes because hopes are the mainstay of fools. It is wise to preserve one's experience. Your best experience is that which teaches you a lesson. Make use of leisure before it changes into (the hour of) grief. Every seeker does not achieve (what he seeks); and every departed does not return. To lose provision and to earn evil for the Day of Judgement means ruin.

Every matter has a consequence. What is destined for you will shortly come to you. A trader undertakes a risk. Often a small quantity is more beneficial than a large quantity. There is no good in an ignoble helper, nor in a suspicious friend. Be compliant with the world as long as it is in your grip. Do not put yourself to risk as regards anything in expectation for more than that. Beware lest the feeling of enmity should overpower you.

إِذَا كَانَ الرِّفْقُ خُرْقاً كَانَ الْخُرْقُ رِفْقاً. رُبَّمَا كَانَ الدَّوَاءُ دَاءً، وَالدَّاءُ دَوَاءً، وَرُبَّمَا نَصَحَ غَيْرُ النَّاصِحِ، وَغَشَّ الْمُسْتَنْصَحُ. وَإِيَّاكَ وَالاِتِّكَالَ عَلَى الْمُنَى فَإِنَّهَا بَضَائِعُ النَّوْكَى، وَالْعَقْلُ حِفْظُ التَّجَارِبِ، وَخَيْرُ مَا جَرَّبْتَ مَا وَعَظَكَ. بَادِرِ الْفُرْصَةَ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَكُونَ غُصَّةً. لَيْسَ كُلُّ طَالِب يُصِيبُ، وَلاَ كُلُّ غَائِب يَؤُوبُ، وَمِنَ الْفَسَادِ إِضَاعَةُ الزَّادِ، وَمَفْسَدَةُ الْمَعَادِ، وَلِكُلِّ أَمْر عَاقِبَةٌ، سَوْفَ يَأْتِيكَ مَا قُدِّرَ لَكَ، التَّاجِرُ مُخَاطِرٌ، وَرُبَّ يَسِير أَنْمَى مِنْ كَثِير! لاَ خَيْرَ فِي مُعِين مَهِين، وَلاَ فِي صَدِيق ظَنِين. سَاهِلِ الدَّهْرَ مَا ذَلَّ لَكَ قَعُودُهُ، وَلاَ تُخَاطِرْ بِشَيْء رَجَاءَ أَكْثَرَ مِنْهُ، وَإِيَّاكَ أَنْ تَجْمَحَ بِكَ مَطِيَّةُ اللَّجَاجِ.

Bear yourself towards your brother in such a way that if he disregards kinship you keep to it; when he turns away be kind to him and draw near to him; when he withholds spend for him; when he goes away approach him; when he is harsh be lenient; when he commits wrong think of (his) excuse for it, so much so as though you are a slave of him and he is the benevolent master over you. But take care that this

should not be done inappropriately, and that you should not behave so with an undeserving person. Do not take the enemy of your friend as a friend because you will thus antagonize your friend. Give true advice to your brother, be it good or bitter. Swallow your anger because I did not find a sweeter thing than it in the end, and nothing more pleasant in consequence. Be lenient to him who is harsh to you for it is likely that he will shortly become lenient to you. Treat your enemy with favours, because this is sweeter of the two successes (the success of revenge and the success of doing favour).

احْمِلْ نَفْسَكَ مِنْ أَخِيكَ عِنْدَ صَرْمِهِ عَلَى الصِّلَةِ، وَعِنْدَ صُدُودِهِ عَلَى اللُّطْفِ وَالْمُقَارَبَةِ، وَعِنْدَ جُمُودِهِ عَلَى الْبَذْلِ، وَعِنْدَ تَبَاعُدِهِ عَلَى الدُّنُوِّ، وَعِنْدَ شِدَّتِهِ عَلَى اللِّينِ، وَعِنْدَ جُرْمِهِ عَلَى الْعُذْرِ، حَتَّى كَأَنَّكَ لَهُ عَبْدٌ، وَكَأَنَّهُ ذُو نِعْمَة عَلَيْكَ. وَإِيَّاكَ أَنْ تَضَعَ ذلِكَ فِي غَيْرِ مَوْضِعِهِ، أَوْ أَنْ تَفْعَلَهُ بِغَيْرِ أَهْلِهِ. لاَ تَتَّخِذَنَّ عَدُوَّ صَدِيقِكَ صَدِيقاً فَتُعَادِيَ صَدِيقَكَ، وَامْحَضْ أَخَاكَ النَّصِيحَةَ، حَسَنَةً كَانَتْ أَوْ قَبِيحَةً، وَتَجَرَّعِ الْغَيْظَ فَإِنِّي لَمْ أَرَ جُرْعَةً أَحْلَى مِنْهَا عَاقِبَةً، وَلاَ أَلَذَّ مَغَبَّةً. وَلِنْ لِمَنْ غَالَظَكَ، فَإِنَّهُ يُوشِكُ أَنْ يَلِينَ لَكَ، وَخُذْ عَلَى عَدُوِّكَ بِالْفَضْلِ فَإِنَّهُ أَحَد الظَّفَرَيْنِ.

If you intend to cut yourself off from a friend leave some scope for him from your side by which he may resume friendship if it occurs to him some day. If anyone has a good idea about you prove it to be true. Do not disregard interests of your brother depending upon your terms with him, for he is not your brother if you disregard his interests. Your household should not become the most miserable people through you. Do not lean towards him who turns away from you. Your brother should not be more firm in his disregard of kinship than you in paying regard to it, and you should exceed in doing good to him than is evil to you. Do not feel too much the oppression of a person who oppresses you, because he is only busy in harming himself and benefiting you. The reward of him who pleases you is not that you displease him.

وَإِنْ أَرَدْتَ قَطِيعَةَ أَخِيكَ فَاسْتَبْقِ لَهُ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ بَقِيَّةً يَرْجِعُ إِلَيْهَا إِنْ بَدَا لَهُ ذلِكَ يَوْماً مَّا، وَمَنْ ظَنَّ بِكَ خَيْراً فَصَدِّقْ ظَنَّهُ، وَلاَ تُضِيعَنَّ حَقَّ أَخِيكَ اتِّكَالا عَلَى مَا بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ، فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَكَ بِأَخ مَنْ أَضَعْتَ حَقَّهُ. وَلاَ يَكُنْ أَهْلُكَ أَشْقَى الْخَلْقِ بِكَ، وَلاَ تَرْغَبَنَّ فِيمَنْ زَهِدَ عَنْكَ، وَلاَ يَكُونَنَّ أَخُوكَ أَقْوَى عَلَى قَطِيعَتِكَ مِنْكَ عَلَى صِلَتِهِ، وَلاَ تَكُونَنَّ عَلَى الاْسَاءَةِ أَقْوَى مِنْكَ عَلَى الاْحْسَانِ. وَلاَ يَكْبُرَنَّ عَلَيْكَ ظُلْمُ مَنْ ظَلَمَكَ، فَإِنَّهُ يَسْعَى فِي مَضَرَّتِهِ وَنَفْعِكَ، وَلَيْسَ جَزَاءُ مَنْ سَرَّكَ أَنْ تَسُوءَهُ.

Know O my child, that livelihood is of two kinds – a livelihood that you seek and a livelihood that seeks you, which is such that if you do not reach it, it will come to you. How bad it is to bend down at the time of need and to be harsh in riches. You should have from this world only that with which you can adorn your permanent abode. If you cry over what has gone out of your hands then also cry for what has not at all come to you. Infer about what has not yet happened from what has already happened, because occurrences are ever similar. Do not be like those whom preaching does not benefit unless you inflict pain on them, because the wise take instruction from teaching while beasts learn only from beating.

وَاعْلَمْ يَا بُنَيَّ أَنَّ الرِّزْقَ رِزْقَانِ: رِزْقٌ تَطْلُبُهُ، وَرِزْقٌ يَطْلُبُكَ، فَإِنْ أَنْتَ لَمْ تَأْتِهِ أَتَاكَ. مَا أَقْبَحَ الْخُضُوعَ عِنْدَ الْحَاجَةِ،

وَالْجَفَاءَ عِنْدَ الْغِنَى! إِنَّمَا لَكَ مِنْ دُنْيَاكَ مَا أَصْلَحْتَ بِهِ مَثْوَاكَ. وَإِنْ كُنْتَ جَازِعاً عَلَى مَا تَفَلَّتَ مِنْ يَدَيْكَ، فَاجْزَعْ عَلَى كُلِّ مَا لَمْ يَصِلْ إِلَيْكَ. اسْتَدِلَّ عَلَى مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ بِمَا قَدْ كَانَ، فَإِنَّ الاْمُورَ أَشْبَاهٌ. وَلاَ تَكُونَنَّ مِمَّنْ لاَ تَنْفَعُهُ الْعِظَةُ إِلاَّ إِذَا بَالَغْتَ فِي إِيلاَمِهِ، فَإِنَّ الْعَاقِلَ يَتَّعِظُ بِالاْدَابِ، وَالْبَهَائِمَ لاَ تَتَّعِظُ إِلاَّ بِالضَّرْبِ.

Ward off from yourself the onslaught of worries by firmness of endurance and purity of belief. He who gives up moderation commits excess. A companion is like a relation. A friend is he whose absence also proves the friendship. Passion is a partner of distress. Often the near ones are remoter than the distant ones, and often the distant ones are nearer than the near ones. A stranger is he who has no friend. He who transgresses right narrows his own passage. He who stays in his position remains constant upon it. The most trustworthy intermediary is that which you adopt between yourself and Allah the Glorified. He who does not care for your interests is your enemy. When greed leads to ruin deprivation is an achievement. Not every defect can be reviewed, and not every opportunity recurs.

اطْرَحْ عَنْكَ وَارِدَاتِ الْهُمُومِ بِعَزَائِمِ الصَّبْرِ وَحُسْنِ الْيَقِينِ. مَنْ تَرَكَ الْقَصْدَ جَارَ. وَالصَّاحِبُ مُنَاسِبٌ. وَالصَّدِيقُ مَنْ صَدَقَ غَيْبُهُ. وَالْهَوَى شَرِيكُ الْعَمَى. وَرُبَّ بَعِيد أَقْرَبُ مِنْ قَرِيب، وَقَرِيب أَبْعَدُ مِنْ بَعِيد. وَالْغَرِيبُ مَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ حَبِيبٌ. مَنْ تَعَدَّى الْحَقَّ ضَاقَ مَذْهَبُهُ، وَمَنِ اقْتَصَرَ عَلَى قَدْرِهِ كَانَ أَبْقَى لَهُ. وَأَوْثَقُ سَبَب أَخَذْتَ بِهِ سَبَبٌ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ اللهِ سُبْحَانَهُ. وَمَنْ لَمْ يُبَالِكَ فَهُوَ عَدُوُّكَ. قَدْ يَكُونُ الْيَأْسُ إِدْرَاكاً إِذَا كَانَ الطَّمَعُ هَلاَكاً. لَيْسَ كُلُّ عَوْرَة تَظْهَرُ، وَلاَ كُلُّ فُرْصَة تُصَابُ.

Often a person with eyes misses the track while a blind person finds the correct path. Delay an evil because you will be able to hasten it whenever you desire. The disregard of kinship of the ignorant is equal to the regard for kinship of the wise. Whoever takes the world to be safe, it will betray him. Whoever regards the world as great, it will humiliate him. Every one who shoots does not hit. When authority changes, the time changes too. Consult the friend before adopting a course and the neighbour before taking a house. Beware, lest you mention in your speech what may rouse laughter even though you may be relating it from others.

وَرُبَّمَا أَخْطَأَ الْبَصِيرُ قَصْدَهُ، وَأَصَابَ الاْعْمَى رُشْدَهُ. أَخِّرِ الشَّرَّ فَإِنَّكَ إِذَا شِئْتَ تَعَجَّلْتَهُ. وَقَطِيعَةُ الْجَاهِلِ تَعْدِلُ صِلَةَ الْعَاقِلِ. مَنْ أَمِنَ الزَّمَانَ خَانَهُ، وَمَنْ أَعْظَمَهُ أَهَانَهُ. لَيْسَ كُلُّ مَنْ رَمَى أَصَابَ. إِذَا تَغَيَّرَ السُّلْطَانُ تَغَيَّرَ الزَّمَانُ. سَلْ عَنِ الرَّفِيقِ قَبْلَ الطَّرِيقِ، وَعَنِ الْجَارِ قَبْلَ الدَّارِ. إِيَّاكَ أَنْ تَذْكُرَ مِنَ الْكَلاَمِ مَا يَكُونُ مُضْحِكاً، وَإِنْ حَكَيْتَ ذلِكَ عَنْ غَيْرِكَ.

Do not consult women because their view is weak and their determination unstable. Cover their eyes by keeping them under the veil because strictness of veiling keeps them for long. Their coming out is not worse than your allowing an unreliable man to visit them. If you can manage that they should not know anyone other than you, do so. Do not allow a woman matters other than those about hereself, because a woman is a flower not an administrator. Do not pay her regard beyond herself. Do not encourage her to intercede for others. Do not show suspicion out of place, because this leads a correct woman to evil and a chaste woman to deflection. For everyone among your servants fix a work for which you may hold him

responsible. In this way, they will not fling the work one over the other. Respect your kinsmen because they are your wings with which you fly, the origin towards which you return and your hands with which you attack. Place your religion and your world at Allah's disposal and beg Him to ordain the best for you in respect of the near and the far, this world and the next; and that is an end to the matter.

وَإِيَّاكَ وَمُشَاوَرَةَ النِّسَاءِ فَإِنَّ رَأْيَهُنَّ إِلَى أَفْن، وَعَزْمَهُنَّ إِلَى وَهْن. وَاكْفُفْ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ بِحِجَابِكَ إِيَّاهُنَّ، فَإِنَّ شِدَّةَ الْحِجَابِ أَبْقَى عَلَيْهِنَّ، وَلَيْسَ خُرُوجُهُنَّ بِأَشَدَّ مِنْ إِدْخَالِكَ مَنْ لاَ يُوثَقُ بِهِ عَلَيْهِنَّ، وَإِنِ اسْتَطَعْتَ أَلاَّ يَعْرِفْنَ غَيْرَكَ فَافْعَلْ. وَلاَ تُمَلِّكِ الْمَرْأَةَ مِنْ أَمْرِهَا مَا جَاوَزَ نَفْسَهَا، فَإِنَّ الْمَرْأَةَ رَيْحَانَةٌ وَلَيْسَتْ بِقَهْرَمَانَة، وَلاَ تَعْدُ بِكَرَامَتِهَا نَفْسَهَا، وَلاَ تُطْمِعْهَا فِي أَنْ تَشْفَعَ لِغَيْرِهَا. وَإِيَّاكَ وَالتَّغَايُرَ فِي غَيْرِ مَوْضِعِ غَيْرَة، فَإِنَّ ذلِكَ يَدْعُو الصَّحِيحَةَ إِلَى السُّقْمِ، وَالْبَرِيئَةَ إِلَى الرَّيْبِ. وَاجْعَلْ لِكُلِّ إِنْسَان مِنْ خَدَمِكَ عَمَلا تَأْخُذُهُ بِهِ، فَإِنَّهُ أَحْرَى أَلاَّ يَتَوَاكَلُوا فِي خِدْمَتِكَ. وَأَكْرِمْ عَشِيرَتَكَ، فَإِنَّهُمْ جَنَاحُكَ الَّذِي بِهِ تَطِيرُ، وَأَصْلُكَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تَصِيرُ، وَيَدُكَ الَّتِي بِهَا تَصُولُ. إِسْتَوْدِعِ اللهَ دِينَكَ وَدُنْيَاكَ، وَاسْأَلْهُ خَيْرَ الْقَضَاءِ لَكَ فِي الْعَاجِلَةِ وَالاْجِلَةِ، وَالدُّنْيَا وَالاْخِرَةِ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

1. Ibn Maytham al-Bahrani (vol.5, p.2) has quoted Abu Ja`far ibn Babawayh al-Qummi to have stated that Amir al-mu'minin wrote this piece of advice in the name of his son Muhammad ibn al-Hanaffiyyah, while al-`Allamah as-Sayyid ar-Radi has written that its addressee is Imam al-Hasan (p.b.u.h.). But the fact is that Amir al-mu' minin wrote another piece of advice to Ibn al-Hanafiyyab in brief which included a part of the same which he wrote to al-Imam al-Hasan. (Kashf al-mahajjah, Ibn Tawus, pp.157- 159; al-Bihar, vol.77, pp.196-198)
In any case, whether the addressee is al-Imam al-Hasan or Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah, this manifesto of the Imam is a lesson of guidance to action in which the ways of success and achievement can be opened and the straying caravans of mankind can tread the path of guidance. It contains principles of correcting the matters of this world and the next, creating the sense of morality and improving economic and social matters whose like cannot be produced by the epitomes of scholars and philosophers. Its truthful preachings are a strong incentive for recalling to humanity the lessons it has forgotten, reviving the dead lines of social dealings and raising the standards of morality.

Letter 32: To Mu'awiyah

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى معاوية

You have ruined a large group of people whom you have deceived by your misguidance, and have flung them into the currents of your sea where darkness has covered them and misgivings toss them about. As a result they have strayed from the right path and turned on their backs. They turned their backs and pushed forward except those wise ones who came back because they left you after understanding you and ran towards Allah away from your assistance when you put them to troubles and deviated them from

the middle path. Therefore, O Mu'awiyah, fear Allah about yourself and take away your rein from Satan, since this world is shortly to be cut off from you and the next world is near you; and that is an end to the matter.

وَأَرْدَيْتَ جِيلاً مِنَ النَّاسِ كَثِيراً، خَدَعْتَهُمْ بِغَيِّكَ، وَأَلْقَيْتَهُمْ فِي مَوْجِ بَحْرِكَ، تَغْشَاهُمُ الظُّلُمَاتُ،تَتَلاَطَمُ بِهِمُ الشُّبُهَاتُ، فَجاروا عَنْ وِجْهَتِهِمْ، وَنَكَصُوا عَلَى أَعْقَابِهِمْ، وَتَوَلَّوْا عَلَى أَدْبَارِهِمْ، وَعَوَّلُوا عَلَى أَحْسَابِهِمْ، إِلاَّ مَنْ فَاءَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْبَصَائِرِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ فَارَقُوكَ بَعْدَ مَعْرِفَتِكَ، وَهَرَبُوا إِلَى اللهِ سُبحانَهُ مِنْ مُوَازَرَتِكَ، إِذْ حَمَلْتَهُمْ عَلَى الصَّعْبِ، وَعَدَلْتَ بِهِمْ عَنِ الْقَصْدِ.

فَاتَّقِ اللهَ يَا مُعَاوِيَةُ فِي نَفْسِكَ، وَجَاذِبِ الشَّيْطَانَ قِيَادَكَ، فَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا مُنْقَطِعَةٌ عَنْكَ، وَالاْخِرَةَ قَرِيبَةٌ مِنْكَ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

Letter 33: To Qutham ibn al- 'Abbas, his Governor of Mecca

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى قُثَمَ بن العبّاس، وهو عامله على مكّة

My spy in the West has written [1] to me telling me that some people of Syria have been sent for hajj who are blind of heart, deaf of ears and devoid of eyesight. They confound the truth with vanity, obey men in disobeying Allah, claim the milk of the world in the name of religion, and trade in the pleasures of this world by forsaking the rewards of the virtuous and the God- fearing. No one achieves good except he who acts for it, and no one is awarded the recompense of evil except he who commits it. Therefore, behave yourself in your duties like an intelligent, experienced, well-wishing and wise man who follows his superior and is obedient to his Imam. You should avoid what you may have to explain. Do not be exultant and assume superiority in riches nor lose courage in distress; and that is an end to the matter.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ عَيْنِي ـ بِالْمَغْرِبِ ـ كَتَبَ إِلَيَّ يُعْلِمُنِي أَنَّهُ وُجِّهَ إِلَى المَوْسِمِ أُنَاسٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الشَّامِ، الْعُمْيِ الْقُلُوبِ، الصُمِّ الاْسْمَاعِ، الْكُمْهِ الاْبْصَارِ، الَّذِينَ يَلْتَمِسُونَ الْحَقَّ بِالبَاطِلِ، وَيُطِيعُونَ الْمَخْلُوقَ فِي مَعْصِيَةِ الْخَالِقِ، وَيَحْتَلِبُونَ الدُّنْيَا دَرَّهَا بِالدِّينِ، وَيَشْتَرُونَ عَاجِلَهَا بِآجِلِ الاْبْرَارِ الْمُتَّقِينَ، وَلَنْ يَفُوزَ بِالْخَيْرِ إِلاَّ عَامِلُهُ، وَلاَ يُجْزَى جَزَاءَ الشَّرِّ إِلاَّ فَاعِلُهُ. فَأَقِمْ عَلَى مَا فِي يَدَيْكَ قِيَامَ الْحَازِمِ الصَّلِيبِ، وَالنَّاصِحِ اللَّبِيبِ، التَّابِعِ لِسُلْطَانِهِ، الْمُطِيعِ لِإِمَامِهِ. وَإِيَّاكَ وَمَا يُعْتَذَرُ مِنْهُ، وَلاَ تَكُنْ عِنْدَ النَّعْمَاءِ بَطِراً، وَلاَ عِنْدَ الْبَأْسَاءِ فَشِلاً، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

1. Mu'awiyah sent some men in the garb of pilgrims to Mecca in order to create sensation in the peaceful atmosphere of the place, by taking common men into their confidence, by a show of piety and God-fearing and then convincing them that 'Ali ibn Abi Talib has instigated the people against 'Uthman and in the end succeeded in getting him killed. In this way, they were to hold him responsible for the killing of 'Uthman and to turn the people against him, and also to incline the people towards him (Mu'a- wiyah) by mentioning the greatness of his character, the sublimity of his manners and stories of his generosity. But when the men whom Amir al-mu'- minin had put on the job gave him the information, he wrote this letter to Qutham ibn al-'Abbas to keep an eye on their movements and to put a stop to their mischief - mongerings.

Letter 34: To Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr

To Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, when Amir al-mu'minin, peace be on him, heard that he was grieved at being replaced as Governor of Egypt by (*Malik*) *al-Ashtar; then al-Ashtar died on his way to Egypt.*

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى محمد بن أبي بكر

لما بلغه توجّده من عزله بالاشتر عن مصر، ثم توفي الاشتر في توجهه إلى هناك قبل وصوله إليها

I have come to know of your anger at the posting of al-Ashtar in your place, but I did not do so because of any shortcoming on your part or to get you to increase your efforts, but when I had taken away what was under your authority I would have placed you at a position which would have been less exacting and more attractive to you.

أما بعد، وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي مَوْجِدَتُكَ مِنْ تَسْرِيحِ الأشْتَرِ إِلَى عَمَلِكَ وَإِنِّي لَمْ أَفْعَلْ ذلِكَ اسْتِبْطَاءً لَكَ فِي الجَهْدِ، وَلاَ ازدِياداً لَكَ فِي الْجِدِّ، وَلَوْ نَزَعْتُ مَا تَحْتَ يَدِكَ مِنْ سُلْطَانِكَ، لَوَلَّيْتُكَ مَا هُوَ أَيْسَرُ عَلَيْكَ مَؤُونَةً، وَأَعْجَبُ إِلَيْكَ وِلاَيَةً

The man whom I have made Governor of Egypt was my well-wisher, and very severe and vengeful towards our enemies. May Allah have mercy on him, as he has finished his days and met his death. I am quite pleased with him. May Allah too accord him His pleasure, and multiply his reward. Now get ready for your enemy and act according to your intelligence. Prepare for fighting him who fights you and calling to the path of Allah. Seek Allah's help exceedingly. If Allah wills He will assist you in what worries you and help you with what befalls you.

إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ الَّذِي كُنْتُ وَلَّيْتُهُ أَمْرَ مِصْرَ كَانَ رَجُلاً لَنَا نَاصِحاً، وَعَلَى عَدُوِّنَا شَدِيداً نَاقِماً فَرَحِمَهُ اللهُ! فَلَقَدِ اسْتَكْمَلَ أَيَّامَهُ، وَلاَقَى حِمَامَهُ وَنَحْنُ عَنْهُ رَاضونَ، أَوْلاَهُ اللهُ رِضْوَانَهُ، وَضَاعَفَ الثَّوَابَ لَهُ. فَأَصْحِرْ لِعَدُوِّكَ، وَامْضِ عَلَى بَصِيرَتِكَ، وَشَمِّرْ لِحَرْبِ مَنْ حَارَبَكَ، وَادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ، وَأَكْثِرِ الاِسْتِعَانَةَ بِاللهِ يَكْفِكَ مَا أَهَمَّكَ، وَيُعِنْكَ عَلَى مَا يُنْزِلُ بِكَ، إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ.

Letter 35: To 'Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas after Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr had been killed.

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى عبدالله بن العباس، بعد مقتل محمّد بن أبي بكر بمصر

Now then, Egypt has been conquered and Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, may Allah have mercy on him, has been martyred. We seek his reward from Allah. He was a son who was a well-wisher, a hard worker, a sharp sword and a bastion of defence. I had roused the people to join him and ordered them to reach him to help before this incident. I called to them secretly as well as openly repeatedly. Some of them came half-heartedly, some put up false excuses and some sat away leaving me. I ask Allah the Sublime, to give me early relief from them, for by Allah, had I not been yearning to meet the enemy for martyrdom and not prepared myself for death, I would not have liked to be with these people for a single day nor ever to face the enemy with them.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ مِصْرَ قَدِ افْتُتِحَتْ، وَمُحَمَّدُ بْنُ أَبِي بَكْرٍ - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - قَدِ اسْتُشْهِدَ، فَعِنْدَ اللهِ نَحْتَسِبُهُ، وَلَداً نَاصِحاً، وَعَامِلاً كَادِحاً، وَسَيْفاً قَاطِعاً، وَرُكْناً دَافِعاً. وَقَدْ كُنْتُ حَثَثْتُ النَّاسَ عَلَى لَحَاقِهِ، وَأَمَرْتُهُمْ بِغِيَاثِهِ قَبْلَ الْوَقْعَةِ، وَدَعَوْتُهُمْ سِرّاً وَجَهْراً، وَعَوْداً وَبَدْءاً، فَمِنْهُمُ الاْتِي كَارِهاً، وَمِنْهُمُ الْمُعْتَلُّ كَاذِباً، وَمِنْهُمُ الْقَاعِدُ خَاذِلاً. أَسْأَلُ اللهَ تَعَالى أَنْ يَجْعَلَ لِي مِنْهُمْ فَرَجاً عَاجِلاً، فَوَاللهِ لَوْ لاَ طَمَعِي عِنْدَ لِقَائِي عَدُوِّي فِي الشَّهَادَةِ، وَتَوْطِينِي نَفْسِي عَلَى الْمَنِيَّةِ، لاَحْبَبْتُ أَلاَّ أَبْقَى مَعَ هؤُلاَءِ يَوْماً وَاحِداً، وَلاَ أَلْتَقِيَ بِهِمْ أَبَداً.

Letter 36: To his brother 'Aqil ibn Abi Talib

To his brother 'Aqil ibn Abi Talib, [1] in reply to his letter which contained a reference to the army Amir al-mu'minin had sent to some enemy.

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

في ذكر جيش أنفذه إلى بعض الاعداء، وهو جواب كتاب كتبه إليه أخوه عقيل بن أبي طالب

I had sent towards him a large army of Muslims. When he came to know of it he fled away and retreated repenting. They met him on the way when the sun was about to set. They grappled for a while like nothing. It was about an hour and then he rescued himself half-dead as he had almost been taken by the neck and only the last breath had remained in him. In this way, he escaped in a panic.

فَسَرَّحْتُ إِلَيْهِ جَيْشاً كَثِيفاً مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، فَلَمَّا بَلَغَهُ ذلِكَ شَمَّرَ هَارِباً، وَنَكَصَ نَادِماً، فَلَحِقُوهُ بِبَعْضِ الطَّرِيقِ، وَقَدْ طَفَّلَتِ الشَّمْسُ لِلاْيَابِ، فَاقْتَتَلُوا شَيْئاً كَلاَ وَلاَ، فَمَا كَانَ إِلاَّ كَمَوْقِفِ سَاعَة حَتَّى نَجَا جَرِيضاً بَعْدَمَا أُخِذَ مِنْهُ بِالْمُخَنَّقِ، وَلَمْ يَبْقَ مِنْهُ غَيْرُ الرَّمَقِ، فَلَاْياً بِلَاْيٍ مَا نَجَا .

Leave the Quraysh in their rushing into misguidance, their galloping in disunity and their leaping over destruction. They have joined together to fight me as they had joined to fight the Messenger of Allah (S) before me. I wish the Quraysh will get the reward of their treatment of me. For they disregarded my kinship and deprived me of the power due to me from the son of my mother (i.e. the Holy Prophet).

فَدَعْ عَنْكَ قُرَيشاً وَتَرْكَاضَهُمْ فِي الضَّلاَلِ، وَتَجْوَالَهُمْ فِي الشِّقَاقِ، وَجِمَاحَهُمْ فِي التِّيهِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ قَدْ أَجْمَعُوا عَلَى حَرْبِي كَإِجمَاعِهِمْ عَلَى حَرْبِ رَسُولِ اللهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) قَبْلِي، فَجَزَتْ قُرَيْشاً عَنِّي الْجَوَازِي! فَقَدْ قَطَعُوا رَحِمِي، وَسَلَبُونِي سُلْطَانَ ابْنِ أُمِّي.

As for your enquiry about my opinion on fighting, I am in favour of fighting those who regard fighting as lawful until I die. The abundance of men around me does not increase me in strength nor does their dispersal from me cause any loneliness. Surely, do not consider the son of your father as being weak or afraid, even though all people have forsaken him, or bowing down submissively before injustice or handing over his reins into the hand of the puller, or allowing his back to be used by the rider to sit upon. But he is as the man of Banu Salim has said:

If you enquire how I am, then listen that I am enduring and strong against the vicissitudes of time.

I do not allow myself to be grieved lest the foe feels joyful and the friend feels sorry.

وَأَمَّا مَا سَأَلْتَ عَنْهُ مِنْ رَأْيِي فِي الْقِتَالِ، فَإِنَّ رَأْيِي قِتَالُ الْمُحِلِّينَ حَتَّى أَلْقَى اللهَ، لاَ يَزِيدُنِي كَثْرَةُ النَّاسِ حَوْلِي عِزَّةً، وَلاَ تَفَرُّقُهُمْ عَنِّي وَحْشَةً، وَلاَ تَحْسَبَنَّ ابْنَ أَبِيكَ ـ وَلَوْ أَسْلَمَهُ النَّاسُ ـ مُتَضَرِّعاً مُتَخَشِّعاً، وَلاَ مُقِرّاً لِلضَّيْمِ وَاهِناً، وَلاَ سَلِسَ الزِّمَامِ لِلْقَائِدِ، وَلاَ وَطِيءَ الظَّهْرِ لِلرَّاكِبِ الْمُقْتَعِدِ، وَلكِنَّهُ كَمَا قَالَ أَخُو بَنِي سُلَيم:

فَإِنْ تَسْأَلِينِي كَيْفَ أَنْتَ فَإِنَّنِي * صَبُورٌ عَلَى رَيْبِ الزَّمَانِ صَلِيبُ

يَعِزُّ عَلَيَّ أَنْ تُرَى بِي كَآبَةٌ * فَيَشْمَتَ عَادٍ أَوْ يُسَاءَ حَبِيبُ

1. When after arbitration Mu'awiyah started a campaign of killing and devastation, he sent a force of four thousand under ad-Dahhak ibn Qays al-Fihri to attack Amir al-mu'minin's cities. When Amir al-mu'minin came to know of his activities he roused the people of Kufah to put up a defence, but they began to offer lame excuses. At last Hujr ibn 'Adi al-Kindi rose with a force of four thousand men and, chasing the enemy, overtook him at Tadmur. The two parties had only a few grapplings when darkness came in and ad-Dahhak fled away under its cover. This was the time when 'Aqil ibn Abi Talib had come to Mecca for 'umrah. When he came to know that after attacking al-Hirah, ad -Dahhak had escaped alive and that the people of Kufah were afraid of war and all their activities had come to a stop, he sent a letter to Amir al-mu'minin through 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn 'Ubayd al-Azdi offering his help. In reply to that Amir al-mu'minin wrote this letter wherein He complains of the behaviour of the people of Kufah and mentions the flight of ad-Dahhak.

Letter 37: To Muawiyah

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى معاوية

Glory be to Allah! How staunchly you cling to innovated passions and painful bewilderment along with ignoring the facts and rejecting strong reasons which are liked by Allah and serve as pleas for the people. As regards your prolonging the question of 'Uthman's 1 murder the position is that you helped 'Uthman when it was really your own help while you forsook him when he was in need of help; and that is an end to the matter.

فَسُبْحَانَ اللهِ! مَا أَشَدَّ لُزُومَكَ لِلأَهْوَاءِ الْمُبْتَدَعَةِ، وَالْحَيْرَةِ الْمُتَّبَعَةِ، مَعَ تَضْيِيعِ الْحَقَائِقِ وَاطِّرَاحِ الْوَثَائِقِ، الَّتِي هِيَ لله

طِلْبَةٌ، وَعَلَى عِبَادِهِ حُجَّةٌ. فَأَمَّا إِكْثَارُكَ الْحِجَاجَ فِي عُثْمانَ وَقَتَلَتِهِ، فَإِنَّكَ إِنَّمَا نَصَرْتَ عُثْمانَ حَيْثُ كَانَ النَّصْرُ لَكَ، وَخَذَلْتَهُ حَيْثُ كَانَ النَّصْرُ لَهُ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

1. There is no question of denying that Mu'awiyah claimed to help 'Uthman after he had been killed, although when he was surrounded and clamoured for his help by writing letter after letter Mu'awiyah never budged an inch. However, just to make a show he had sent a contingent towards Medina under Yazid ibn Asad al-Qasri, but had ordered it to remain in waiting in the valley of Dhu Khushub near Medina. Eventually, 'Uthman was murdered and he went back with his contingent.
No doubt Mu'awiyah wished 'Uthman to be killed so that he should create confusion in the name of his blood and through these disturbances clear the way for allegiance to himself (as Caliph). That is why he neither helped him when he was surrounded nor thought it necessary to trace the murderers of 'Uthman after securing power.

Letter 38: To the people of Egypt when he appointed (Malik) al-Ashtar as their Governor

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى أهل مصر، لما ولّى عليهم الاشتر رحمه الله

From the slave of Allah, 'Ali, Amir al-mu'minin to the people who became wrathful for the sake of Allah when He was disobeyed on His earth and His rights were ignored and oppression had spread its coverings over the virtuous as well as the vicious, on the local as well as the foreigner. Consequently, no good was acted upon nor any evil was avoided.

مِنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ عَلِيّ أَمِيرِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ، إِلَى الْقَومِ الَّذِينَ غَضِبُوا لله حِينَ عُصِيَ فِي أَرْضِهِ، وَذُهِبَ بِحَقِّهِ، فَضَرَبَ الْجَوْرُ سُرَادِقَهُ عَلَى الْبَرِّ وَالْفَاجِرِ، وَالْمُقِيمِ وَالظَّاعِنِ، فَلاَ مَعْرُوفٌ يُسْتَرَاحُ إِلَيْهِ، وَلاَ مُنْكَرٌ يُتَنَاهَى عَنْهُ.

Now, I have sent to you a man from among the servants of Allah who allows himself no sleep in days of danger, nor does he shrink from the enemy at critical moments. He is severer on the wicked than a blazing fire. He is Malik ibn al-Harith, our brother from (the tribe of) Madhhij.

Therefore, listen to him and obey his orders that accord with right, because he is a sword among the swords of Allah, whose edge is not dull and which does not miss its victim. If he orders you to advance, advance, and if he orders you to stay, stay, because he surely neither advances or attacks nor puts anyone backward or forward save with my command. I have preferred him for you rather than for myself

because of his being your well-wisher and (because of) the severity of his harshness over your enemies.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ بَعَثْتُ إِلَيْكُمْ عَبْداً مِنْ عِبَادِاللهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ، لاَيَنَامُ أَيَّامَ الخَوْفِ، وَلاَ يَنْكُلُ عَنِ الاَعْدَاءِ سَاعَاتِ الرَّوْعِ، أَشَدَّ عَلَى الْفُجَّارِ مِنْ حَرَيقِ النَّارِ، وَهُوَ مَالِكُ بْنُ الْحَارِثِ أَخُو مَذْحِجٍ، فَاسْمَعُوا لَهُ أَطِيعُوا أَمْرَهُ فِيمَا طَابَقَ الْحَقَّ، فَإِنَّهُ سَيْفٌ مِنْ سُيُوفِ اللهِ، لاَ كَلِيلُ الظُّبَةِ، وَلاَ نَابِي الضَّرِيبَةِ، فَإِنْ أَمَرَكُمْ أَنْ تَنْفِرُوا فانْفِرُوا، وَإِنْ أَمَرَكُمْ أَنْ تُقِيمُوا فَأَقِيمُوا، فَإِنَّهُ لاَ يُقْدِمُ وَلاَ يُحْجِمُ، وَلاَ يُؤَخِّرُ وَلاَ يُقَدِّمُ إِلاَّ عَنْ أَمْرِي، وَقَدْ آثَرْتُكُمْ بِهِ عَلَى نَفْسِي لِنَصِيحَتِهِ لَكُمْ، وَشِدَّةِ شَكِيمَتِهِ عَلَى عَدُوِّكُمْ.

Letter 39: To 'Amr ibn al-'As

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى عمروبن العاص

You have surely made your religion subservient to the worldly seekings of a man whose misguidance is not a concealed affair and whose veil has been torn away. He mars an honourable man with his company and befools those who keep his society. You are following in his footsteps and seeking his favours like the dog that follows the lion looking at his paws and waiting for whatever remnants of his prey fall down to him. In this way, you have ruined your world as well as the next life, although if you had stuck to the right, you would have got what you were after. If Allah grants me power over you and Ibn Abi Sufyan (Mu'awiyah), I shall award you both recompense of what you have done, but if you escape and survive then hereafter there is only evil for you both; and that is an end to the matter.

فَإِنَّكَ جَعَلْتَ دِينَكَ تَبْعاً لِدُنْيَا امْرِىء ظَاهِر غَيُّهُ، مَهْتُوك سِتْرُهُ، يَشِينُ الْكَرِيمَ بِمَجْلِسِهِ، وَيُسَفِّهُ الْحَلِيمَ بِخِلْطَتِهِ، فَاتَّبَعْتَ أَثَرَهُ، وَطَلَبْتَ فَضْلَهُ، اتِّبَاعَ الْكَلْبِ لِلضِّرْغَامِ، يَلُوذُ إِلَى مَخَالِبِهِ، وَيَنْتَظِرُ مَا يُلْقَى إِلَيْهِ مِنْ فَضْلِ فَرِيسَتِهِ، فَأَذْهَبْتَ دُنْيَاكَ وَآخِرَتَكَ! وَلَوْ بِالْحَقِّ أَخَذْتَ أَدْرَكْتَ مَا طَلَبْتَ، فَإِنْ يُمَكِّنِ اللهُ مِنْكَ وَمِن ابْنِ أَبِي سُفْيَانَ أَجْزِكُمَا بِمَا قَدَّمْتُما، وَإِنْ تُعْجِزَا وَتَبْقَيَا فَمَا أَمَامَكُمَا شَرٌّ لَكُمَا، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

Letter 40: To one of his officers

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى بعض عماله

Now, I have come to know such a thing about you that if you have done so then you have displeased your Lord, disobeyed your Imam and betrayed your trust.

I have come to know that you have razed the ground and taken away whatever was under your feet and devoured what ever was in your hands. Send me your account and know that the accounting to Allah will be severer than that to the people; and that is an end to the matter.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي عَنْكَ أَمْرٌ، إِنْ كُنْتَ فَعَلْتَهُ فَقَدْ أَسْخَطْتَ رَبَّكَ، وَعَصَيْتَ إِمَامَكَ، وَأَخْزَيْتَ أَمَانَتَكَ. بَلَغَنِي أَنَّكَ جَرَّدْتَ الأَرْضَ فأَخَذْتَ مَا تَحْتَ قَدَمَيْكَ، وَأَكَلْتَ مَا تَحْتَ يَدَيْكَ، فَارْفَعْ إِلَيَّ حِسَابَكَ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ حِسَابَ اللهِ أَعْظَمُ مِنْ حِسَابِ النَّاسِ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

Letter 41: To one of his officers

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى بعض عماله

Now, I had made you a partner in my trust, and made you my chief man. And for me no other person from my kinsmen was more trustworthy than you in the matter of sympathizing with me, assisting and respecting my trusts. But when you saw that time had attacked your cousin, the enemy had waged war, the trust of the people was being humiliated, and the whole community was trackless and disunited, you turned your back against your cousin and forsook him when others forsook him, you abandoned him when others abandoned him, and you betrayed him when others betrayed him. Thus, you showed no sympathy to your cousin, nor discharged the trust.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي كُنْتُ أَشْرَكْتُكَ فِي أَمَانَتِي، وَجَعَلْتُكَ شِعَارِي وَبِطَانَتِي، وَلَمْ يَكُنْ مِنْ أَهْلِي رَجُلٌ أَوْثَقَ مِنْكَ فِي نَفْسِي، لِمُوَاسَاتِي وَمُوَازَرَتِي وَأَدَاءِ الأَمَانَةِ إِلَيَّ. فَلَمَّا رَأَيْتَ الزَّمَانَ عَلَى ابْنِ عَمِّكَ قَدْ كَلِبَ، وَالْعَدُوَّ قَدْ حَرِبَ، وَأَمَانَةَ النَّاسِ قَدْ خَزِيَتْ، وَهذِهِ الأُمَّةَ قَدْ فَتَنَتْ وَشَغَرَتْ، قَلَبْتَ لِابْنِ عَمِّكَ ظَهْرَ الْمِجَنِّ، فَفَارَقْتَهُ مَعَ الْمُفَارِقِينَ، وَخَذَلْتَهُ مَعَ الْخَاذِلِينَ، وَخُنْتَهُ مَعَ الْخَائِنِينَ، فَلاَ ابْنَ عَمِّكَ آسَيْتَ، وَلاَ الأَمَانَةَ أَدَّيْتَ.

It seems as if you do not want (to please) Allah by your jihad, and as if you do not stand upon a clear sign from your Lord, and as if you have been playing tricks with this ummah (Muslim community) to earn (the pleasure of) this world and watching for the moment of their neglectfulness to usurp their share of the wealth. As soon as it was possible for you to misappropriate the ummah's trust, you hastened to turn around and attack (them), and made a swift leap to snatch away whatever you could from their property meant for their widows and their orphans as a wolf snatches a wounded and helpless goat. Then, you happily loaded it off to the Hijaz without feeling guilty for having appropriated it. Allah's woe be to your ill–wishers; it was as though you were sending to your family what you had inherited from your father and mother.

وَكَأَنَّكَ لَمْ تَكُنِ اللهَ تُرِيدُ بِجِهَادِكَ، وَكَأَنَّكَ لَمْ تَكُنْ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكَ، وَكَأَنَّكَ إِنَّمَا كُنْتَ تَكِيدُ هذِهِ الأُمَّةَ عَنْ دُنْيَاهُمْ، وَتَنْوِي غِرَّتَهُمْ عَنْ فَيْئِهِمْ! فَلَمَّا أَمْكَنَتْكَ الشِّدَّةُ فِي خِيَانَةِ الأُمَّةِ، أَسْرَعْتَ الْكَرَّةَ، وَعَاجَلْتَ الْوَثْبَةَ، وَاخْتَطَفْتَ مَا قَدَرْتَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمُ الْمَصُونَةِ لِارَامِلِهِمْ وَأَيْتَامِهِمُ، اخْتِطَافَ الذِّئْبِ الأَزَلِّ دَامِيَةَ الْمِعْزَى الْكَسِيرَةَ، فَحَمَلْتَهُ إِلَى الْحِجَازِ رَحِيبَ الصَّدْرِ بِحَمْلِهِ، غَيْرَ مُتَأَثِّمٍ مِنْ أَخْذِهِ، كَأَنَّكَ ـ لاَ أَبَا لِغَيْرِكَ ـ حَدَرْتَ إِلَى أَهْلِكَ تُرَاثَكَ مِنْ أَبِيكَ وَأُمِّكَ،.

Glory be to Allah! Do you not believe in the Day of Judgement, or do you not fear the exaction of account? O you who were counted by us among the men possessed of mind, how can you enjoy food and drink when you know that you are eating the unlawful and drinking the unlawful. You are purchasing slavemaids and wedding women with the money of the orphans, the poor, the believers and the participants in jihad to whom Allah had dedicated this money and through whom He had strengthened these cities. Fear Allah and return to these people their properties. If you do not do so and Allah grants me power over you I shall excuse myself before Allah about you and strike you with my sword with which I did not strike anyone but that he went to hell.

فَسُبْحَانَ اللهِ! أَمَا تُؤْمِنُ بِالْمَعَادِ؟ أَوَ مَا تَخَافُ نِقَاشَ الْحِسَابِ! أَيُّهَا الْمَعْدُودُ ـ كَانَ ـ عِنْدَنَا مِنْ ذَوِي الأَلْبَابِ، كَيْفَ تُسِيغُ شَرَاباً وَطَعَاماً، وَأَنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَأْكُلُ حَرَاماً، وَتَشْرَبُ حَرَاماً، وَتَبْتَاعُ الإِمَاءَ وَتَنْكِحُ النِّسَاءَ مِنْ مَالِ الْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُجَاهِدِينَ، الَّذِينَ أَفَاءَ اللهُ عَلَيْهِمْ هذِهِ الأَمْوَالَ، وَأَحْرَزَ بِهِمْ هذِهِ الْبِلاَدَ؟! فَاتَّقِ اللهَ، وَارْدُدْ إِلَى هؤُلاَءِ الْقَوْمِ أَمْوَالَهُمْ، فَإِنَّكَ إِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ ثُمَّ أَمْكَنَنِي اللهُ مِنْكَ لاَعْذِرَنَّ إِلَى اللهِ فِيكَ، وَلاَضْرِبَنَّكَ بِسَيْفِي الَّذِي مَا ضَرَبْتُ بِهِ أَحَداً إِلاَّ دَخَلَ النَّارَ!

By Allah, even if Hasan and Husayn had done what you did there would have been no leniency with me for them and they could not have won their way with me till I had recovered from them the right and destroyed the wrong produced by their unjust action. I swear by Allah, the Lord of all beings, that I would

not be pleased to regard their money which you have appropriated as lawful for me and to leave it to my successors by way of inheritance. Mind yourself and consider for a while as though you had reached the end of life and had been buried under the earth. Then your actions will be presented before you in the place where the oppressor cries "Alas" while he who wasted his life yearns for return (to the world),

but time was none to escape. **(Qur'an, 38:3)**

وَ وَاللهِ لَوْ أَنَّ الْحَسَنَ وَالْحُسَيْنَ فعَلاَ مِثْلَ الَّذِي فَعَلْتَ، مَا كَانَتْ لَهُمَا عِنْدِي هَوَادَةٌ، وَلاَ ظَفِرَا مِنِّي بِإِرَادَة، حَتَّى آخُذَ الْحَقَّ مِنْهُمَا، وَأُزِيحَ الْبَاطِلَ عَنْ مَظْلَمَتِهِمَا. وَأُقْسِمُ بِاللهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ مَا يَسُرُّنِي أَنَّ مَا أَخَذْتَهُ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَلاَلٌ لِي، أَتْرُكُهُ مِيرَاثاً لِمَنْ بَعْدِي، فَضَحِّ رُوَيْداً، فَكَأَنَّكَ قَدْ بَلَغْتَ الْمَدَى، وَدُفِنْتَ تَحْتَ الثَّرَى، وَعُرِضَتْ عَلَيْكَ أَعْمَالُكَ بِالْمَحَلِّ الَّذِي يُنَادِي الظَّالِمُ فِيهِ بِالْحَسْرَةِ، وَيَتَمَنَّى الْمُضَيِّعُ الرَّجْعَةَ،(وَلاَتَ حِينَ مَنَاص)! وَالسَّلاَمُ.

Letter 42: To `Umar ihn Abi Salamah al-Makhzumi

To `Umar ihn Abi Salamah al-Makhzumi (*foster son of the Holy Prophet from Umm al-mu'minin, Umm Salamah*) *who was Amir al-mu'minin's Governor of Bahrain, hut whom he removed and replaced by an-Nu'man ibn Ajlan az-Zuraqi.*

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى عمر بن أبي سلمة المخزومي

وكان عامله على البحرين، فعزله، واستعمل النعمان بن عجلان الزّرقي مكانه:

Now, I have posted an-Nu'man ibn `Ajlan az-Zuraqi at Bahrain and have released you from that position without any blame or or reproach on you, because you managed the governorship well and discharged the obligations. Therefore, proceed to me while you are neither suspected nor rebuked, neither blamed nor guilty. I have just intended to proceed towards the recalcitrant of Syria and desired that you should be with me because you are among those on whom I rely in fighting the enemy and erecting the pillars of religion, if Allah wills.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي قَدْ وَلَّيْتُ النُعْمَانَ بْنَ عَجْلاَنَ الزُّرَقِيَّ عَلَى الْبَحْرَيْنِ، وَنَزَعْتُ يَدَكَ، بِلاَ ذَمٍّ لَكَ، وَلاَ تَثْرِيب عَلَيْكَ، فَلَقَدْ أَحْسَنْتَ الْوِلاَيَةَ، وَأَدَّيْتَ الاْمَانَةَ، فَأَقْبِلْ غَيْرَ ظَنِين، وَلاَ مَلُوم، وَلاَ مُتَّهَم، وَلاَ مَأْثُوم، فَقَدْ أَرَدْتُ الْمَسِيرَ إِلَى ظَلَمَةِ أَهْلِ الشَّامِ، وَأَحْبَبْتُ أَنْ تَشْهَدَ مَعِي، فَإِنَّكَ مِمَّنْ أَسْتَظْهِرُ بِهِ عَلَى جِهَادِ الْعَدُوِّ، وَإِقَامَةِ عَمُودِ الدِّينِ، إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ.

Letter 43: To Masqalah ibn Hubayrah ash-Shaybani, the Governor of Ardashir Khurrah (Iran)

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى مصقلة بن هُبَيرة الشيباني

وهو عامله على أردشير خُرّة

I have come to know concerning you a matter which if you have done it you have displeased your Allah and disobeyed your Imam. You are distributing among the Arabs (Bedouins) of your kin who tend towards you the property of the Muslims which they collected by dint of their spears and horses and on which their blood was shed. By Allah Who germinated the seed and created living beings, if this is true you will be humbled in my view and you will become light in weight. Therefore, do not treat lightly the obligations of your Lord and do not reform your world by ruining your religion, since then you will be among losers by the way of (your) actions.

بَلَغَنِي عَنْكَ أَمْرٌ إِنْ كُنْتَ فَعَلْتَهُ فَقَدْ أَسْخَطْتَ إِلهَكَ، وَأَغْضَبْتَ إِمَامَكَ: أَنَّكَ تَقْسِمُ فَيْءَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ الَّذِي حَازَتْهُ رِمَاحُهُمْ وَخُيُولُهُمْ، وَأُرِيقَتْ عَلَيْهِ دِمَاؤُهُمْ، فِيمَنِ اعْتَامَكَ مِنْ أَعْرَابِ قَوْمِكَ، فَوَالَّذِي فَلَقَ الْحَبَّةَ، وَبَرَأَ النَّسَمَةَ، لَئِنْ كَانَ ذلِكَ حَقّاً لَتَجِدَنَّ بِكَ عَلَيَّ هَوَاناً، وَلَتَخِفَّنَّ عِنْدِي مِيزَاناً، فَلاَ تَسْتَهِنْ بِحَقِّ رَبِّكَ، وَلاَ تُصلِحْ دُنْيَاكَ بِمَحْقِ دِينِكَ، فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الاْخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالاً.

Know that the right of those Muslims who are around you and those who are around me in this property is equal. For that reason they come to me and take from it.

أَلاَ وَإِنَّ حَقَّ مَنْ قِبَلَكَ وَقِبَلَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فِي قِسْمَةِ هذَا الْفَيْءِ سَوَاءٌ، يَرِدُونَ عِنْدِي عَلَيْهِ،يَصْدُرُونَ عَنْهُ، والسَّلاَمُ.

Letter 44: To Ziyad ibn Abih

To Ziyad ibn Abih when Amir al-mu'minin had come to know that Mn`awiyah had written to Ziyad to deceive him and to attach him to himself in kinship.

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى زياد بن أبيه

وقد بلغه أن معاوية كتب إليه يريد خديعته باستلحاقه

I have learnt that Mu`awiyah has written to you to deceive your wit and blunt your sharpness. You should be on guard against him because he is the Satan who approaches a believer from the front and from the back, from the right and from the left, to catch him suddenly in the hour of his carelessness and overcome his intelligence.

وَقَدْ عَرَفْتُ أَنَّ مُعَاوِيَةَ كَتَبَ إِلَيْكَ يَسْتَزِلُّ لُبَّكَ، وَيَسْتَفِلُّ غَرْبَكَ، فاحْذَرْهُ، فَإِنَّمَا هُوَ الشَّيْطَانُ يَأْتِي الْمَرْءَ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ، وَعَنْ يَمِينِهِ وَعَنْ شِمَالِهِ، لِيَقْتَحِمَ غَفْلَتَهُ، وَيَسْتَلِبَ غِرَّتَهُ.

In the days of `Umar ibn al-Khattab, Abu Sufyan [1] happened to utter a thoughtless point which was an evil suggestion of Satan, from which neither kinship is established nor entitlement to succession occurs. He who relies on it is like the uninvited guest to a drink-party or like the dangling cup (tied to a saddle).

وَقَدْ كَانَ مِنْ أَبِي سُفْيَانَ فِي زَمَنِ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ فَلْتَةٌ مِنْ حَدِيثِ النَّفْسِ، وَنَزْغَةٌ مِنْ نَزَغَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ، لاَ يَثْبُتُ بِهَا نَسَبٌ، وَلاَ يُسْتَحَقُّ بِهَا إِرْثٌ، وَالْمُتَعَلِّقُ بِهَا كَالْوَاغِلِ الْمُدَفَّعِ، وَالنَّوْطِ الْمُذَبْذَبِ.

[When Ziyad read this letter he said, "By Allah he has testified to it." This point remained in his mind till Mu`awiyah claimed him (as his brother by his father)].

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says Amir al-mu'minin's word "al-waghil" means the man who joins the drinking

group so as to drink with them, but he is not one of them. He is therefore constantly turned out and pushed off. As for the words "an-nawtu'l-mudhabdhab", it is a wooden cup or a bowl or the like attached to the saddle of the rider so that it dangles when the rider drives the beast or quickens its pace.

فلمّا قرأ زياد الكتاب قال: شهد بها وربّ الكعبة، ولم يزل في نفسه حتى ادّعاه معاويةُ.

قال الرضي: قوله (عليه السلام): "كَالْوَاغِلِ الْمُدَفَّعِ" الواغلُ: هوالذي يهجم على الشّرْب ليشرب معهم وَليس منهم، فلا يزال مُدفّعاً محاجزاً. و"النّوْط المُذَبْذَب": هو ما يناط برحل الراكب من قعب أو قدح أو ما أشبه ذلك، فهو أبداً يتقلقل إذا حث ظهره واستعجل سيره.

1. Caliph `Umar sent Ziyad to Yemen for some encounter. When he returned after finishing the job he addressed a gathering which included Amir al-mu `minin, `Umar, `Amr ibn al-`As and Abu Sufyan. Impressed with the speech `Amr ibn al-`As said:
"What a good man! Had he been from the Quraysh he would have led the whole of Arabia with his stick." Whereupon Abu Sufyan said, "He is from the Quraysh as I know who is his father." `Amr ibn al-`As enquired, "Who was his father?" Abu Sufyan said, "It is I." History also conclusively holds that Ziyad's mother Sumayyah, who was the slave-maid of al-Harith ibn Kaldah and was married to a slave named `Ubayd, used to lead an immoral life in a quarter of at-Ta'if known as Haratu 'l-Baghaya, and immoral men used to visit her. Once Abu Sufyan also got to her through Abu Maryam as-Saluli. As a result Ziyad was born. When `Amr ibn al-`As heard this from Abu Sufyan, he asked why he had not declared it. Abu Sufyan pointed to `Umar and said that he was afraid of him, otherwise he would have declared him his own son. Although he would not have dared to do this, when Mu`awiyah acquired power he started correspondence with him because Mu`awiyah was in need of such persons who were intelligent and cunning and expert in machinations. In any case, when Amir al-mu 'minin got information about this correspondence he wrote this letter to Ziyad wherein he warned him against Mu`awiyah so that he should not fall in the trap. But he did fall in his trap and joined Mu`awiyah and the latter declared him his brother by attaching him in his kin, although the Prophet had declared.
The child goes to the (lawful) husband while the adulterer gets stones.

Letter 45: To `Uthman ibn Hunayf al-Ansari

To `Uthman ibn Hunayf al-Ansari who was Amir al-mu' minin's Governor of Basrah, when he came to know that the people of that place had invited `Uthman to a banquet and he had attended.

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى عثمان بن حنيف الانصاري

وهو عامله على البصرة، وقد بلغه أنه دعي إلى وليمة قوم من أهلها، فمضى إليهم

O Ibn Hunayf, I have come to know that a young man of Basrah invited you to a feast and you leapt towards it. Foods of different colours were being chosen for you and big bowls were being given to you. I never thought that you would accept the feast of a people who turn out the beggars and invite the rich. Look at the morsels you take, leave out that about which you are in doubt and take that about which you are sure that it has been secured lawfully.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، يَابْنَ حُنَيْف، فَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي أَنَّ رَجُلاً مِنْ فِتْيَةِ أَهْلِ الْبَصْرَةِ دَعَاكَ إِلى مَأْدُبَة، فَأَسْرَعْتَ إِلَيْهَا، تُسْتَطَابُ لَكَ الأَلْوَانُ، وَتُنْقَلُ إِلَيْكَ الْجِفَانُ، وَمَا ظَنَنْتُ أَنَّكَ تُجِيبُ إِلى طَعَامِ قَوْم، عَائِلُهُمْ مَجْفُوٌّ وَغَنِيُّهُمْ مَدْعُوٌّ. فَانْظُرْ إِلَى مَا تَقْضَمُهُ مِنْ هذَ الْمَقْضَمِ، فَمَا اشْتَبَهَ عَلَيْكَ عِلْمُهُ فَالْفِظْهُ، وَمَا أَيْقَنْتَ بِطِيبِ وُجُوهِهِ فَنَلْ مِنْهُ.

Remember that every follower has a leader whom he follows and from the effulgence of whose knowledge he takes light. Realize that your Imam has contented himself with two shabby pieces of cloth out of the (comforts of the) world and two loaves for his meal. Certainly, you cannot do so but at least support me in piety, exertion, chastity and uprightness, because, by Allah, I have not treasured any gold out of your world nor amassed plentiful wealth nor collected any clothes other than the two shabby sheets.

أَلاَ وَإِنَّ لِكُلِّ مَأْمُوم إِمَاماً، يَقْتَدِي بِهِ، وَيَسْتَضِيءُ بِنُورِ عِلْمِهِ. أَلاَ وَإِنَّ إِمَامَكُمْ قَدِ اكْتَفَى مِنْ دُنْيَاهُ بِطِمْرَيْهِ، وَمِنْ طُعْمِهِ بِقُرْصَيْهِ. أَلاَ وَإِنَّكُمْ لاَ تَقْدِرُونَ عَلَى ذلِكَ، وَلكِنْ أَعِينُوني بِوَرَع وَاجْتِهَاد، وَعِفَّة وَسَدَاد فَوَاللهِ مَا كَنَزْتُ مِنْ دُنْيَاكُمْ تِبْراً، وَلاَ ادَّخَرْتُ مِنْ غَنَائِمِهَا وَفْراً، وَلاَ أَعْدَدْتُ لِبَالِي ثَوْبِي طِمْراً.

Of course, all that we had in our possession under this sky was Fadak, but a group of people felt greedy for it and the other party withheld themselves from it. Allah is, after all, the best arbiter. What shall I do: Fadak, [1] or no Fadak, while tomorrow this body is to go into the grave in whose darkness its traces will be destroyed and (even) news of it will disappear? It is a pit that, even if its width is widened or the hands of the digger make it broad and open, the stones and clods of clay will narrow it and the falling earth will close its aperture. I try to keep myself engaged in piety so that on the day of great fear it will be peaceful and steady in slippery places.

بَلَى! كَانَتْ فِي أَيْدِينَا فَدَكٌ مِنْ كلّ مَا أَظَلَّتْهُ السَّمَاءُ، فَشَحَّتْ عَلَيْهَا نُفُوسُ قَوْم، وَسَخَتْ عَنْهَا نُفُوسُ آخَرِينَ، وَنِعْمَ الْحَكَمُ اللهُ. وَمَا أَصْنَعُ بِفَدَك وَغَيْرِ فَدَك، وَالنَّفْسُ مَظَانُّهَا فِي غَد جَدَثٌ، تَنْقَطِعُ فِي ظُلْمَتِهِ آثَارُهَا، وَتَغِيبُ أَخْبَارُهَا، وَحُفْرَةٌ لَوْ زِيدَ فِي فُسْحَتِهَا، وَأَوْسَعَتْ يَدَا حَافِرِهَا، لاَضْغَطَهَا الْحَجَرُ وَالْمَدَرُ، وَسَدَّ فُرَجَهَا التُّرَابُ الْمُتَرَاكِمُ، وَإِنَّمَا هِيَ نَفْسِي أَرُوضُهَا بِالتَّقْوَى لِتَأْتِيَ آمِنَةً يَوْمَ الْخَوْفِ الأَكْبَرِ، وَتَثْبُتَ عَلَى جَوَانِبِ الْمَزْلَقِ.

If I wished I could have taken the way leading towards (worldly pleasures like) pure honey, fine wheat

and silk clothes but it cannot be that my passions lead me and greed take me to choosing good meals while in the Hijaz or in Yamamah there may be people who have no hope of getting bread or who do not have a full meal. Shall I lie with a satiated belly while around me there may be hungry bellies and thirsty livers? Or shall I be as the poet has said:

It is enough for you to have a disease that you lie with your belly full while around you people may be badly yearning for dried leather.

وَلَوْ شِئْتُ لاَهْتَدَيْتُ الطَّرِيقَ، إِلَى مُصَفَّى هذَا الْعَسَلِ، وَلُبَابِ هذَا الْقَمْحِ، وَنَسَائِجِ هذَا الْقَزِّ، وَلكِنْ هَيْهَاتَ أَنْ يَغْلِبَنِي هَوَايَ، وَيَقُودَنِي جَشَعِي إِلَى تَخَيُّرِ الاْطْعِمَةِ ـ وَلَعَلَّ بِالْحِجَازِ أَوِ بِالْيَمَامَةِ مَنْ لاَطَمَعَ لَهُ فِي الْقُرْصِ، وَلاَ عَهْدَ لَهُ بِالشِّبَعِ ـ أَوْ أَبِيتَ مِبْطَاناً وَحَوْلِي بُطُونٌ غَرْثَى وَأَكْبَادٌ حَرَّى، أَوْ أَكُونَ كَمَا قَالَ الْقَائِلُ:

وَحَسْبُكَ دَاءً أَنْ تَبِيتَ بِبِطْنَة * وَحَوْلَكَ أَكْبَادٌ تَحِنُّ إِلَى الْقِدِّ

Shall I be content with being called `Amir al-mu 'minin' (The Commander of the Believers), although I do not share with the people the hardships of the world? Or shall I be an example for them in the distresses of life? I have not been created to keep myself busy in eating good foods like the tied animal whose only worry is his fodder or like a loose animal whose activity is to swallow. It fills its belly with its feed and forgets the purpose behind it. Shall I be left uncontrolled to pasture freely, or draw the rope of misguidance or roam aimlessly in the paths of bewilderment?

أَأَقْنَعُ مِنْ نَفْسِي بِأَنْ يُقَالَ: أَمِيرُالْمُؤْمِنِينَ، وَلاَ أُشَارِكُهُمْ فِي مَكَارِهِ الدَّهْرِ، أَوْ أَكُونَ أُسْوَةً لَهُمْ فِي جُشُوبَةِ الْعَيْشِ! فَمَا خُلِقْتُ لِيَشْغَلَنِي أَكْلُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ، كَالْبَهِيمَةِ الْمَرْبُوطَةِ هَمُّهَا عَلَفُهَا، أَوِ الْمُرْسَلَةِ شُغُلُهَا تَقَمُّمُهَا، تَكْتَرِشُ مِنْ أَعْلاَفِهَا، وَتَلْهُو عَمَّا يُرَادُ بِهَا، أَوْ أُتْرَكَ سُدًى، أَوْ أُهْمَلَ عَابِثاً، أَوْ أَجُرَّ حَبْلَ الضَّلاَلَةِ، أَوْ أَعْتَسِفَ طَرِيقَ الْمَتَاهَةِ!

I see as if one of you would say that if this is what the son of Abi Talib eats then weakness must have made him unfit to fight his foes and encounter the brave. Remember that the tree of the forest is the best for timber, while green twigs have soft bark, and the wild bushes are very strong for burning and slow in dying off. My relation with the Messenger of Allah is that of one branch with another, or of the forearm with the upper arm. By Allah, if the Arabs join together to fight me I will not run away from them and if I get the opportunity I will hasten to catch them by their necks. I shall surely strive to relieve the earth of this man of perverse mind and uncouth body, till the bits of earth are removed from the grain.

وَكَأَنِّي بِقَائِلِكُمْ يَقُولُ: إِذَا كَانَ هذَا قُوتُ ابْنِ أَبِي طَالِب، فَقَدْ قَعَدَ بِهِ الضَّعْفُ عَنْ قِتَالِ الاْقْرَانِ وَمُنَازَلَةِ الشُّجْعَانِ. أَلاَ وَإِنَّ الشَّجَرَةَ الْبَرِّيَّةَ أَصْلَبُ عُوداً، وَالرَّوَائِعَ الْخَضِرَةَ أَرَقُّ جُلُوداً، وَالنَّابِتَاتِ الْعِذْيَةَ أَقْوَى وَقُوداً، وَأَبْطَأُ خُمُوداً، وَأَنَا مِنْ رَسُولِ اللهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) كَالصِّنْوِ مِنَ الصِّنْوِ، وَالذِّرَاعِ مِنَ الْعَضُدِ. وَاللهِ لَوْ تَظَاهَرَتِ الْعَرَبُ عَلَى قِتَالِي لَمَا وَلَّيْتُ عَنْهَا، وَلَوْ أَمْكَنَتِ الْفُرَصُ مِنْ رِقَابِهَا لَسَارَعْتُ إِلَيْهَا، سَأَجْهَدُ فِي أَنْ أُطَهِّرَ الاْرضَ مِنْ هذَا الشَّخْصِ

الْمَعْكُوسِ، وَالْجِسْمِ الْمَرْكُوسِ، حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ الْمَدَرَةُ مِنْ بَيْنِ حَبِّ الْحَصِيدِ

A part of the same which is the end of the letter

و من هذا الكتاب ، و هو آخره:

Get away from me, O world. Your rein is on your own shoulders as I have released myself from your claws, removed myself of your snares and avoided walking into your slippery places. Where are those whom you have deceived by your jokes? Where are those communities whom you have enticed with your embellishments? They are all confined to graves and hidden in burial places.

By Allah, if you had been a visible personality aud a body capable of feeling, I would have awarded you the penalties fixed by Allah because of the people whom you received through desires and the communities whom you threw into destruction and the rulers whom you consigned to ruin and drove to places of distress after which there is neither going nor returning. Indeed whoever stepped on your slippery place slipped, whoever rode your waves was drowned, and whoever evaded your snares received inward support. He who keeps himself safe from you does not worry even though his affairs may be straitened and the world to him is like a day which is near expiring.

إِلَيْكَ عَنِّي يَا دُنْيَا، فَحَبْلُكِ عَلَى غَارِبِكِ، قَدِ انْسَلَلْتُ مِنْ مَخَالِبِكِ، وَأَفْلَتُّ مِنْ حَبَائِلِكِ، وَاجْتَنَبْتُ الذَّهَابَ فِي مَدَاحِضِكِ. أَيْنَ الْقُرُونُ الَّذِينَ غَرَرْتِهِمْ بِمَدَاعِبِكِ؟! أَيْنَ الاْمَمُ الَّذِينَ فَتَنْتِهِمْ بِزَخَارِفِكِ؟! هَاهُمْ رَهَائِنُ الْقُبُورِ، وَمَضَامِينُ اللُّحُودِ. وَاللهِ لَوْ كُنْتِ شَخْصاً مَرْئِيّاً، وَقَالَباً حِسِّيّاً، لاَقَمْتُ عَلَيْكِ حُدُودَ اللهِ فِي عِبَادٍ غَرَرْتِهِمْ بِالاْمَانِي، وَأُمَمٍ أَلْقَيْتِهِمْ فِي الْمَهَاوِي، وَمُلُوكٍ أَسْلَمْتِهِمْ إِلَى التَّلَفِ، وَأَوْرَدْتِهِمْ مَوَارِدَ الْبَلاَءِ، إِذْ لاَ وِرْدَ وَلاَ صَدَرَ! هَيْهَاتَ! مَنْ وَطِىءَ دَحْضَكِ زَلِقَ، وَمَنْ رَكِبَ لُجَجَكِ غَرِقَ، وَمَنِ ازْوَرَّ عَنْ حَبَائِلِكِ وُفِّقَ، وَالسَّالِمُ مِنْكِ لاَيُبَالِي إِنْ ضَاقَ بِهِ مُنَاخُهُ وَالدُّنْيَا عِنْدَهُ كَيَوْمٍ حَانَ انْسِلاَخُهُ.

Get away from me, for, by Allah, I do not bow before you so that you may humiliate me, nor do I let loose the reins for you so that you may drive me away. I swear by Allah an oath wherein I, except for the will of Allah, shall so train my self that it will feel joyful if it gets one loaf for eating, and be content with only salt to season it. I shall let my eyes empty themselves of tears like the stream whose water has flown away. Should `Ali eat whatever he has and fall asleep like the cattle who fill their stomachs from the pasture land and lie down, or as the goats (who) graze, eat the green grass and go into their pen! His eyes may die if he, after long years, follows loose cattle and pasturing animals.

اعْزُبِي عَنِّي! فَوَاللهِ لاَ أَذِلُّ لَكِ فَتَسْتَذِلِّينِي، وَلاَ أَسْلَسُ لَكِ فَتَقُودِينِي. وَايْمُ اللهِ ـ يَمِيناً أَسْتَثْنِي فِيهَا بِمَشِيئَةِ اللهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ ـ لاَرُوضَنَّ نَفْسِي رِيَاضَةً تَهِشُّ مَعَهَا إِلَى الْقُرْصِ إِذَا قَدَرتْ عَلَيْهِ مَطْعُوماً، وَتَقْنَعُ بِالْمِلْحِ مَأْدُوماً; وَلاَدَعَنَّ مُقْلَتِي كَعَيْنِ مَاءٍ، نَضَبَ مَعِينُهَا مُسْتَفْرِغَةً دُمُوعَهَا. أَتَمْتَلِىءُ السَّائِمَةُ مِنْ رِعْيِهَا فَتَبْرُكَ؟ وَتَشْبَعُ الرَّبِيضَةُ مِنْ عُشْبِهَا فَتَرْبِضَ؟ وَيَأْكُلُ عَلِيٌّ مِنْ زَادِهِ فَيَهْجَعَ؟ قَرَّتْ إِذاً عَيْنُهُ إِذَا اقْتَدَى بَعْدَ السِّنِينَ الْمُتَطَاوِلَةِ بِالْبَهِيمَةِ الْهَامِلَةِ، وَالسَّائِمَةِ الْمَرْعِيَّةِ!

Blessed is he who discharges his obligations towards Allah and endures his hardships, allows himself no sleep in the night but when sleep overpowers him lies down on the ground using his hand as a pillow, along with those who keep their eyes wakeful in fear of the Day of Judgement, whose bodies are ever awav from beds, whose lips are humming in remembrance of Allah and whose sins have been erased through their prolonged beseechings for forgiveness.

They are the party of Allah; be it known, verily the party of Allah alone shall be the successful ones **(Qur'an, 58:22).**

Therefore, O, Ibn Hunayf, fear Allah and be content with your own loaves so that you may escape Hell.

طُوبَى لِنَفْس أَدَّتْ إِلَى رَبِّهَا فَرْضَهَا، وَعَرَكَتْ بِجَنْبِهَا بُؤْسَهَا، وَهَجَرَتْ فِي اللَّيْلِ غُمْضَهَا، حَتَّى إِذَا غَلَبَ الْكَرَى عَلَيْهَا افْتَرَشَتْ أَرْضَهَا، وَتَوَسَّدَتْ كَفَّهَا، فِي مَعْشَر أَسْهَرَ عُيُونَهُمْ خَوْفُ مَعَادِهِمْ، تَجَافَتْ عَنْ مَضَاجِعِهِمْ جُنُوبُهُمْ، وَهَمْهَمَتْ بِذِكْرِ رَبِّهِم شِفَاهُهُمْ، وَتَقَشَّعَتْ بِطُولِ اسْتِغْفَارِهِم ذُنُوبُهُمْ. (أُولئِكَ حِزْبُ الله، أَلاَ إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ)

فَاتَّقِ اللهَ يَابْنَ حُنَيْف، وَلْتَكْفُفْ أَقْرَاصُكَ، لِيَكُونَ مِنْ النَّارِ خَلاَصُكَ.

1. Fadak was a green fertile village near Medina in the Hijaz and it also had a fortress called ash-Shumrukh. (Mu `jam al-buldan, vol.4, p.238; Mu`jam masta`jam, al-Bakri, vol.3, p.l015; ar-Rawd al-mi`tar, al-Himyari, p.437; Wafa' al-wafa, vol.4, p. 1280). Fadak belonged to the Jews and in the year 7 A. H. its ownership went from them to the Prophet under the terms of a settlement for peace. The reason for this settlement was that when after the fall of Khaybar the Jews realized the real power of the Muslims, their martial aspirations were lowered, and noting that the Prophet had spared some Jews on their seeking protection, they also sent a message of peace to the Prophet and expressed their wish that Fadak might be taken from them and their area should not be made a battlefield. Consequently, the Prophet accepted their request and allowed them an amnesty, and this land became his personal property wherein no one else had any interest, nor could there be any such interest; because the Muslims have a share only in those properties which they might have acquired as booty after jihad, while the property acquired without jihad is called fay' and the Prophet alone is entitled to it. No other person has a share in it. Thus, Allah says:
And whatever hath Allah bestowed on His Apostle from them, ye pricked not against it any horse or a camel, but Allah granteth authority unto His apostles against whomsoever He willeth: And Allah over all things is All-powerful. (Qur'an, 59:6)
No one has ever disputed the fact that Fadak was secured without battle. It was therefore the Prophet's personal property to which no one else had any title. The Historians write:

Fadak was personal to the Prophet as the Muslims did not use their horses or camels for it. (at-Tarikh, at-Tabari, vol.1, pp.1582-1583, 1589; al-Kamil, Ibn al-Athir, vol.2, pp.224-225;as-Sirah, Ibn Hisham, vol.3, p.368; at-Tarikh, Ibn Khaldum, vol.2, part 2, p.40; Tarikh al-khamis, ad-Diyar'bakri, vol.2, p.58; as-Sirah al-Halabiyyah, vol.3, p.50)
The historian and geographical scholar Ahmad ibn Yahya al-Baladhuri (d. 279/892) writes:

Fadak was the personal property of the Prophet as the Muslims had not used their horses or camels for it. (Futuh al-buldan, vol.1, p.33)
`Umar ibn al-Khattab had himself regarded Fadak as the unshared property of the Holy Prophet when he declared:
The property of Banu an-Nadir was among that which Allah has bestowed on His Messenger; against them neither horses nor camels were pricked but they belonged to the Messenger of Allah especially. (as-Sahih, al-Bukhari, vol.4, p.46; vol.7, p.82; vol.9, pp.121-122; as-Sahih, Muslim, vol.5, p.151; as-Sunan, Abu Dawud, vol.3, pp. 139-141; as-Sunan, an-Nasa'i,

vol.7, p.132; al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.1, pp.25.48.60,208: as-Sunan al-kubra, al-Bayhayqi, vol.6, pp.296-299)

It is also proved in the accepted way that the Prophet had in his lifetime given this land (Fadak) to Fatimah as a gift. It is narrated through al-Bazzar, Abu Ya`la, Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Marduwayh and others from Abu Sa'id al-Khudri and through Ibn Marduwayh from `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas that when the verse:

"And give to the near of kin his due. . ." (Qur'an, 17:26) was revealed, the Holy Prophet called Fatimah' and gifted Fadak to her. (ad-Durr al-manthur, as-Suyuti, vol.4, p.177; Majma` az-zawa'id, al-Haythami, vol.7, p.46; Kanz al-'ummal, al-Muttaqi, vol.3, p.439; Ruh al-ma`ani, al-Alusi, vol.15, p.62)

When Abu Bakr assumed power then in view of some benefits of State he turned out Fatimah from Fadak and took it from her possession. Thus, the historians write:

Certainly, Abu Bakr snatched Fadak from Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.16, p. 219; Wafa' al-wafa, as-Samhudi, vol.3, p.1OOO; as-Sawa`iq al-muhriqah, Ibn Hajar, p.32)

Fatimah raised a voice against it. Protesting to Abu Bakr, she said, "You have taken over possession of Fadak although the Prophet had gifted it to me during his lifetime." On this Abu Bakr asked her to produce witness of the gift. Consequently, Amir al-mu'minin and Umm Ayman gave evidence in her favour. (Umm Ayman was the freed bond maid and the dry nurse of the Holy Prophet. She was the mother of Usamah ibn Zayd ibn al-Harithah. The Holy Prophet used to say "Umm Ayman is my mother after my mother. [al-Mustadrak, vol.4, p.63; at-Tabari, vol.3, p. 3460; al-Isti`ab. vol.4, p. 1793; Usd al-ghabah, vol.5, p.567] The Holy Prophet bore witness that she is among the people of Paradise. [Ibn Sa`d, vol.8, p.192; al-Isabah, vol.4, p.432]). But this evidence was held inadmissible by Abu Bakr and Fatimah's claim was rejected as being based on false statement. About this al-Baladhuri writes:

Fatimah said to Abu Bakr, "The Messenger of Allah had apportioned Fadak to me. Therefore, give it to me." Then he asked her for another witness than Umm Ayman, saying, "O' daughter of the Prophet, you know that evidence is not admissible except by two men or one man and two women."

After these facts there remains no possibility of denying that Fadak was the personal property of the Prophet and that he had completed its gifting to her by handing over possession in his lifetime. But Abu Bakr took over its possession and dislodged her from it. In this connection, he rejected the evidence of `Ali and Umm Ayman on the ground that the requirement of evidence was not completed by the evidence of one man and one woman. Besides them, Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn gave evidence in support of Fatimah, but their evidence was rejected too on the ground that the evidence of the offspring and minors was not acceptable in favour of their parents. Then Rabah, the slave of the Holy Prophet was also produced as a witness in support of the claim of Fatimah but he was rejected too. (Futuh al-buldan, al-Baladhuri, vol. 1, p.35: at-Tarikh, al-Ya`qubi, vol.3, p.195; Muruj adh-dhahab, al-Mas`udi, vol.3, p.237; al-Awa'il, Abu Hilal al-`Askari, p.209; Wafa' al-wafa, vol.3, pp.999, 1000-1001; Mu`jam al-buldan, Yaqut al-Hamawi, vol.4, p.239; Sharh, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.16, pp.216, 219 - 220,274; al-Muhalla, Ibn Hazm, vol.6, p.507; as-Sirah al-Halabiyyah, vol.3, p.361 ; at-Tafsir, al-Fakhr ar-Razi, vol.29, p.284).

At this stage the question arises that when Fatimah's possession over Fadak is admitted as Amir al-mu 'minin has also clarified in this letter by saying, "We had Fadak in our possession," what was the sense in asking Fatimah to produce evidence in support of her claim, because the onus of proof does not lie on the person in possession. The onus of proof lies on the person filing a counter claim because possession itself constitutes a proof.

As such it was on Abu Bakr to produce a proof of the lawfulness of his taking over the land, and in the case of his being unable to do so Fatimah's possession would mean a proof for her lawful ownership. As such it would be wrong to ask her to produce some more proof or evidence.

It is strange that when other claims of this nature came before Abu Bakr he allowed them in favour of the claimant merely on the basis of the claim, and the claimant is neither asked to furnish proof of his claim nor to produce witnesses. In this connection, the traditionalists write:

It is related from Jabir ibn `Abdillah al-Ansari that he said that the Messenger of Allah had said that when the booty from Bahrain arrived he would allow him such and such out of it, but the booty did not arrive till the Prophet's death. When it arrived in the days of Abu Bakr he went to him and Abu Bakr made the announcement that whoever had a claim against the Messenger of Allah or to whomever he had made a promise should come for his claim. So I went to him and told him that the Prophet had promised to give me such and such property out of the booty from Bahrain whereupon he gave me all

that. (as-Sahih, al-Bukhari, vol.3, pp.119,209,236; vol.4, p.110; vol.5, p.218; as- Sahih, Muslim, vol.7, pp.75-76; al-Jami' as-sahih, at-Tirmidhi, vol.5, p.129; al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.3, pp.307-308; at-Tabaqat al-kabir, Ibn Sa'd, vol.2, part 2, pp.88-89).

In the annotations of this tradition, Shihabu'd-Din Ahmad ibn `Ali (Ibn Hajar) al-`Asqalani ash-Shafi`i (773/1372 - 852/1449) and Badru'd- Din Mabmud ibn Ahmad al-`Ayni al-Hanafi (762/1361 - 855/1451) have written:

This tradition leads to the conclusion that the evidence of one just companion can also be admitted as full evidence even though it may be in his own favour, because Abu Bakr did not ask jabir to produce any witness in proof of his claim. (Fath al-bari fi sharh sahih al-Bukhari, vol.5, p.380; `Umdatu'l-qari fi sharh sahih al-Bukhari, vol.12, p.121)

If it was lawful to allow property to Jabir on the basis of good impression without calling for witness or evidence then what stopped allowing Fatimah's claim on the basis of similar good impression. If good impression could exist in the case of Jabir to such an effect that he would not benefit by speaking a lie, then why should there not be the good belief about Fatimah that she would not attribute a false saying to the Prophet just for a piece of land. Firstly, her admitted truthfulness and honesty was enough for holding her truthful in her claim and the evidence of `Ali and Umm Ayman in her favour was also available besides other evidences. It has been said that the claim could not be decided in favour of Fatimah on the basis of these two witnesses because the holy Qur'an lays down the principle of evidence that:

. . .then call to witness two witnesses from among your men and if there not be two men, then (take) a man and two women, (Qur'an, 2:282)

If this principle is universal and general then it should be taken into regard on every occasion, but on some occasions it is found not to have been followed; for example, when an Arab had a dispute with the Prophet about a camel, Khuzaymah ibn Thabit al-Ansari gave evidence in favour of the Prophet and this one evidence was deemed to be equal to two, because there was no doubt in the honesty and truthfulness of the individual in whose favour the evidence was led. It was for this reason that the Holy Prophet granted him the title of Dhu'sh-Shahadatayn (i.e., one whose evidence is equivalent to the evidence of two witnesses). (al-Bukhari, vol.4, p.24; vol.6, p.146; Abu Dawud, vol.3, p.308; an-Nasa'i, vol.7, p.302; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.5, pp.188, 189,216; al-Isti`ab, vol.2, p.448; Usd al-ghabah, vol.2, p.114; al-Isabah,vol.1, pp.425 -426; al-Musannaf, as-San`ani, vol.8, pp.366 - 368).

Consequently, neither was the generality of the verse about evidence affected by this action nor was it deemed to be against the cannons of evidence. So, if here in view of the Prophet's truthfulness one evidence in his favour was deemed to be equal to two, then could not the evidence of `Ali and Umm Ayman be regarded enough for Fatimah in view of her moral greatness and truthfulness? Besides, this verse does not show that there can be no other way of establishing a claim other than these two ways. In this connection, al-Qadi Nuru'llah al-Mar'ashi at-Tustari (956/1549 - 1019/ 1610) has written in Ihqaq al-haqq, chapter on al-Mata`in:

The view of the objector that by Umm Ayman's evidence the requirement of evidence remains incomplete is wrong, on the grounds that from certain traditions it is seen that it is lawful to give a decision on the basis of one witness and it does not necessarily mean that the injunction of the Qur'an has been violated, because this verse means that a decision can be given on the strength of the evidence of two men or one man and two women, and that their evidence is enough. From this it does not appear that if there are some other grounds besides evidence of witnesses that are unacceptable, and that verdict cannot be given on its basis, unless it is argued that this is the only sense of the verse. But since every sense is not final argument, this sense can be brushed aside, particularly because the tradition clearly points to a contrary sense, and ignoring the sense does not necessarily mean violation of the verse. Secondly, the verse allows a choice between the evidence of two men or of one man and two women. If by virtue of the tradition a third choice is added namely that a verdict can be passed by means of other evidence as well, then how does it necessitate that the Qur'anic verse should stand violated?

In any case, from this reply it is clear that a claimant is not obliged to produce the evidence of two men or one man and two women in support of the claim because if there is one witness and the claimant swears on oath, then he can be taken to have legitimacy in his claim and a decision can be given in his favour. In this connection, it has been narrated by more than twelve companions of the Holy Prophet that:

The Messenger of Allah used to decide cases on the strength of one witness and the taking of oath.

It has been explained by some companions (of the Prophet) and some scholars ofjurisprudence that this decision is

specially related to rights, property and transactions and this decesion was practised by the three Caliphs, Abu Bakr, `Umar and `Uthman. (Muslim, vol.5, p.128; Abu Dawud, vol.3, pp.308–309; at–Tirmidhi, vol.3, pp.627–629; Ibn Majah, vol.2, p.793; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.1, pp.248,315,323, vol.3, p.305; vol.5, p.285; Malik ibn Anas, al–Muwatta', vol.2, pp.721–725; al–Bayhaqi, as–Sunan al–kubra, vol.10, pp.167 – 176;as–Sunan, ad–Dar'qutni, vol.4, pp.212 – 215; Majma` az–zawa'id, vol.4, p.202; Kanz al–'ummal, vol.7, p.13)

When decisions were passed on the strength of one witness and swearing, then even if in Abu Bakr's view the requirement of evidence was incomplete, he should have asked her to swear and given the judgement in her favour. But here the very object was to tarnish the truthfulness of Fatimah so that in future the question of her testimony should not arise.

However, when Fatimah's claim was rejected in this manner and Fadak was not accepted as the Prophet's gift to her, she claimed it on the basis of inheritance saying:

"If you do not agree that the Prophet had gifted it to me, you cannot at least deny that Fadak and the revenues of Khaybar as well as the lands around Medina were the Prophet's personal properties, and I am his only successor." But she was deprived of her inheritance on the basis of a tradition related by Abu Bakr himself that the Holy Prophet said: “We prophets have no successors and whatever we leave behind constitutes charity." (al–Bukhari, vol.4, p. 96; vol.5, pp.25 – 26,115,117; vol.8, p.185; Muslim, vol.5, pp.153–l55; at–Tirmidhi, vol.4, pp.157–158; Abu Dawud, vol.3, pp.l42–143; an–Nasa'i, vol.7, p.l32; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.1, pp.4,6,9,lO; al–Bayhaqi, vol.6, p.300; Ibn Sa'd, vol.2, part2, pp.86–87; at–Tabari, vol.1, p.1825; Tarikh al–khamis, vol.2, pp.173–174).

Besides Abu Bakr no one else had knowledge of this saying which was shown to be a tradition of the Prophet nor had anyone from among the companions heard it. Thus, Jalalu'd–Din `Abd ar–Rahman ibn Abi Bakr as–Suyuti ash–Shafi`i (849/1445–911/1505) and Shihabu'd–Din Ahmad ibn Muhammad (Ibn Hajar) al–Haytami ash–Shafi'i (909/1504–974/ 1567) have written:

After the death of the Prophet there was a difference of view about the inheritance and no one had any information in this matter. Then, Abu Bakr said that he had heard the Messenger of Allah saying that: "We prophets leave no successors and whatever we leave behind constitutes charity". (Tarikh al–khulafa', p.73; as Sawa'iq al–muhriqah, p. 19)

The mind refuses to believe that the Prophet should not tell those individuals who could be deemed his successors that they would not inherit, and inform a third party who had not the remotest kinship that there would be no successor to him. Then this story was made public only when the case for Fadak had been filed in his court and he himself constituted the contesting party. In such circumstances how can his presenting in his own support a tradition which no one else had heard be deemed permissible. If it is argued that this tradition should be relied upon in view of the greatness of position of Ahu Bakr, then why cannot Fatimah's claim to the gift be relied upon because of her honesty and truthfulness, more so when the evidence of Amir al–mu'minin and Umm Ayman as well as others was also in her favour. If necessity was felt to call more evidence in her case, then evidence can also be called for about this tradition, particularly, since this tradition hits against the general instructions of the Qur'an on succession. How can a tradition which is weak in the manner of its relating and altered and is questioned on the basis of facts be deemed to particularize a generality of the Qur'anic injunction on succession, because the question of the inheritance of the prophets is clearly mentioned in the Qur'an. Thus, Allah says:

And Solomon inherited David . . . (Qur'an, 27:16)

At another place it is stated through the words of Prophet Zakariyya:

So grant me from yourself an heir, who shall inherit me and inherit from the family of Jacob. . . (Qur'an, 19:5–6)

In these verses succession refers to succession in estate and to take it in its figurative meaning of succession in prophetic knowledge would not only be obtuse but also against facts, because knowledge and prophethood are not objects of succession, nor do they possess the quality of transmission through inheritance, for in that case all the progeny of the prophets would have been prophets. There is no sense in making a distinction that the progeny of some prophets may inherit prophethood while others should remain deprived of it. It is strange that the theory of transmission of prophethood through inheritance is propagated by those who have always laid the objection against the Shi'ahs that they regard the Imamate and the caliphate as an object of inheritance and confined to one family only. Will not prophethood become an object of inheritance by taking succession in this verse to mean succession to the prophethood?

If in Abu Bakr's view by virtue of this tradition there could be no successor of the Prophet then where was this tradition when a document had been written admitting Fatimah's claim for succession? Thus, Nuru'd– Din `Ali ibn Ibrahim al–Halabi

ash-Shafi'i (975/1567 - 1044/1635) quoting from Shamsu'd-Din Yusuf (Sibt ibn al-Jawzi) al-Hanafi (581/1185 - 654/ 1256) narrated:

Abu Bakr was on the pulpit when Fatimah came to him and said, "O' Abu Bakr, the Qur'an should allow your daughter to inherit you but I am not to inherit my father!" Abu Bakr started weeping and alighted from the pulpit. Then he wrote for her about Fadak. At that time `Umar arrived and enquired what it was. Abu Bakr replied, "It is a document I have written for Fatimah about her inheritance from her father." `Umar said, "What will you spend on the Muslims while the Arabs are waging war against you, as you see?" Then, `Umar took the document and tore it. (as-Sirah al-Halabiyyah, vol.3, pp. 361-362)

Every sensible person who remarks this behaviour can easily reach the conclusion that this tradition is concocted and wrong, and was fabricated only to secure possession over Fadak and other inheritances. Consequently, Fatimah refused to accept it and expressed her anger in this way that she made a will about Abu Bakr and `Umar that the two should not join in her funeral prayer. `A'ishah narrated:

Fatimah (p.b.u.h.), the daughter of the Holy Prophet (S) sent for Abu Bakr (after he became Caliph after the death of the Holy Prophet) claiming from him her inheritance left by the Messenger of Allah from what Allah had bestowed (especially) upon him at Medina and Fadak and what was left from one-fifth (khums) of the income (annually received) from Khaybar. . ., Abu Bakr refused to hand over anything from it to Fatimah. Then, Fatimah became angry with Abu Bakr and forsook him and did not talk to him until the end of her life...When she died, her husband, `Ali ibn Abi Talib buried her at night. He did not inform Abu Bakr about her death and offered the funeral prayer over her himself. . . (al-Bukhari, vol.5, p.177; vol.8; p.185; Muslim, vol.5, pp.153-155; al-Bayhari, vol.4, p.29; vol.6, pp. 300-301; Ibn Sa'd, vol.2, part 2, p.86; Ahmad ibn Hanbal ,vol.1,p.9; at-Tabari, vol.1, p.1825; Ibn Kathir, at-Tarikh, vol.5, pp.285-286; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.6, p.46 and Wafa' al-wafa', vol.3, p.995)

In this connection, Umm Ja'far, the daughter of Muhammad ibn Ja`far, narrated about the request of Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) to Asma' bint `Umays near her death that:

When I die, I want you and `Ali to wash me, and do not allow anyone to go in to me (in my house).

When she died `A'ishah came to enter, Asma' told her, "Do not enter." `A'ishah complained to Abu Bakr (her father) saying,"This Khath`amiyyah (a woman from the tribe of Kath'am, i.e. Asma') intervenes between us and the daughter of the Messenger of Allah . . ." Then, Abu Bakr came and stood at the door and said, "O' Asma', what makes you prevent the wives of the Prophet from entering in to the daughter of the Messenger of Allah?" Asma' replied, "She had herself ordered me not to allow anyone to enter into her . . ." Abu Bakr said, "Do what she has ordered you." (Hilyah al-awliya', vol.2, p.43; as-Sunan al-kubra, vol.3, p.396; vol.4, p.334; Ansab al-ashraf, vol.1, p.405; al-Isti`ab, vol.4, pp.1897-1898; Usd al-ghabah, vol.5, p.524; al-Isabah, vol.4, pp.378-379)

Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) had also made a request to Amir al-mu'minin `Ali that she must be buried at night and that no one should come to her, that Abu Bakr and `Umar should not be notified about her death and burial, and that Abu Bakr should not be allowed to say the prayer over her body.

When she died, `Ali washed and buried her in the quietness of the night, not notifying Abu Bakr and `Umar. So, these two were not aware of her burial.

Muhammad ibn `Umar al-Waqidi (130/747 - 207/823) said:

It has been proved to us that `Ali (p.b.u.h.) performed her funeral prayer and buried her by night, accompanied by al-`Abbas (ibn `Abd al-Muttalib) and (his son) al-Fadl, and did not notify anyone.

it was for this reason that the burial place of Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) was hidden and unknown, and no one is sure about it. (al-Mustadrak, vol.3, pp.162-163; al-Musannaf, vol.4, p.141; Ansab al-ashraf, vol.1, pp.402, 405. al-Isti`ab, vol.4, p.1898; Usd al-ghabah, vol.5, pp. 524-525: al-Isabah, vol.4, pp.379-380; at-Tabari, vol.3, pp.2435-2436; Ibn Sa`d, vol.8, pp.19-20; Wafa' al-wafa, vol.3, pp.901-902,904,905; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.16, pp.279-281) To attribute this displeasure of Fatimah to sentiments and thereby to lower its importance does not evince a correct sentiment, because if this displeasure had been the result of sentiments then Amir al-mu'minin would have stopped her from this misplaced displeasure, but no history shows that Amir al-mu'minin took this displeasure to be misplaced. Besides, how could her displeasure be the result of personal feelings or sentiments since her pleasure or displeasure always accord with Allah's will. The Prophet's following saying is a proof of this:

O' Fatimah, surely Allah is enraged in your rage and is pleased in your pleasure. (al-Mustadrak, vol.3, p.153; Usd al-ghabah, vol.5, p.522; al-Isabah, vol.4, p.366; Tahdhib at-tahdhib, vol.12, p.441; al-Khasa'is al-kubra, vol.2, p.265; Kanz al-`ummal, vol.13, p.96; vol.16, p.280; Majma` az-zawa'id, vol.9, p.203)

A short history of Fadak after the death of Fatimah

The motive which causes us to pursue the history of Fadak and to extract the continuation of events after it for a period of three centuries from the texts of historical books is to clarify three questions:-

a. The rule of annulment of inheritance from prophets made by the Holy Prophet, in other words, that the property of the Holy Prophet is a part of the public treasury and belongs to all Muslims. This was claimed by the first caliph Abu Bakr, and was rejected by his successors, both by next the two caliphs (Umar and Uthman) and by the Umayyads and the `Abbassids. We must consider that the lawfulness and rightfulness of their caliphate depended upon the correctness and lawfulness of the caliphate of the first Caliph and his actions.

b. Amir al-mu'minin (`Ali p.b.u.h.) and the descendants of Fatimah never had any hesitation regarding the rightfulness and justifiability of their claim. They insisted and confirmed that Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) had always been right and that Abu Bakr's claim had always been rejected, and they did not yield to the false claim.

c. Whenever one of the Caliphs made a decision to put into effect Allah's command, in regard to Fadak, to observe justice and equity, and to restore the right to the entitled one in conformity with Islamic rules, he used to return back the Fadak to the descendants of Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) and to hand it over to them.

1. `Umar ibn al-Khattab was the most harsh person in keeping Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) from Fadak and her inheritance as he himself confessed:

When the Messenger of Allah died I came along with Abu Bakr to `Ali ibn Abi Talib and said, "What do you say about what has been left by the Messenger of Allah? "He replied, "We have the most rights with the Holy Prophet." I (`Umar) said, "Even those properties of Khaybar?" He said, "Yes, even those of Khaybar." I said, "Even those of Fadak?" He replied, "Yes, even those of Fadak." Then, I said, "By Allah, we say no, even if you cut our necks with saws." (Majma` az-zawa'id, vol.9, pp.39-40)

As it has been mentioned before, `Umar then took the document of Fadak and tore it up. But when `Umar became Caliph (13/634 - 23/644) he gave back the Fadak to inheritors of the Holy Prophet. Yaqut al-Hamawi (574/1178 - 626/1229), the famous historian and geographer, following the event of Fadak said:

...Then, when `Umar ibn al-Khattab became caliph and gained victories and the Muslims had secured abundant wealth (i.e. the public treasury satisfied the Caliphate's needs) he made his judgement contrary to that of his predecessor, and that was to give it (Fadak) back to the Prophet's heirs. At that time `Ali ibn Abi Talib and `Abbas ibn `Abd al-Muttalib disputed Fadak. `Ali said that Holy Prophet (S) had bestowed it on Fatimah during his lifetime. `Abbas denied this and used to say, "This was in the possession of the Holy Prophet (S) and I am sharing with his heirs." They were disputing this* among each other and asked `Umar to settle the case. He refused to judge between them and said, "Both of you are more conscious and aware to your problem; but I only give it to you..." (Mu`jam al-buldan, vol.4, pp.238-239: Wafa' al-wafa, vol.3, p.999; Tahdhib aL-lughah, vol.1O, p.124; Lisan al-`Arab,vol.10, p.473; Taj al-`arus, vol.7, p.166)

The reason that `Umar and Abu Bakr were trying to seize Fadak was an economic and political reason, not merely a religious one as the previous episode shows, for when the economic and political condition of the caliphate improved, and there was no need of the income obtained from Fadak, `Umar's judgement changed also.

The last part of this historic event has been inserted afterwards to demonstrate the matter of inheritance by the brother of the deceased or the paternal uncle of the deceased when he has no sons. This problem is a matter of dispute between Islamic sects. The judicial and jurisprudencial discussion is separate from our goal. We are only discussing the matter historically.

`Abbas had no claim in this case because he had not shown that he had a share in this property nor did his descendants consider it to be among their own assests even when they had became caliphs and were reigning. They owned this estate either in their position as caliphs, or they used to return it to the descendants of Fatimah when they had decided to be just governors.2. When `Uthman ibn Affan became caliph after the death of `Umar (23/644 - 35/656) he granted Fadak to Marwan ibn al-Hakam, his cousin (as-Sunan al-kubra, vol.6, p.3O1; Wafa' al-wafa, vol.3, p. 1000; Ibn Abi'l- Hadid, vol.1, p.198), and this was one of the causes of vindictive feelings among the Muslims towards `Uthman (al-Ma `arif, Ibn

Qutaybah, p. 195; al-`Iqd al-farid, vol.4, pp.283, 435; at-Tarikh, Abu'l-Fida', vol.1, p.168; at-Tarikh, Ibn al-Wardi, vol.1, p.204) which ended in the revolt against him and his murder. "While previously Fatimah used to claim it. sometimes as her inheritance and sometimes as a gift (from her father), she was driven away from it (Fadak)" as Ibn Abi'l-Hadid said. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah). In this way Fadak fell into the possession of Marwan. He used to sell its crops and products for at least ten thousand Dinars per year, and if in some years its income decreased this drop was not very pronounced. This was its usual profit until the time of the caliphate of `Umar ibn `Abd al- `Aziz (in 100/718). (Ibn Sa`d. vol.5, pp.286, 287; Subh al-a`sha, vol.4, p.291)

3. When Mu`awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan became caliph (41/661 - 60/ 680) he became a partner with Marwan and others in Fadak. He alloted one third to Marwan and one third to `Amr ibn `Uthman ibn `Affan and one third to his son Yazid. This was after the death of al-Hasan ibn `Ali (p.b. u.h.). "To make angry the progeny of the Holy Prophet" al-Ya`qubi states: (at-Tarikh, vol.2, p.199)

It was in the possession of the three above mentioned persons until Marwan became caliph (64/684 - 65/685) and he completely took over possession of it. Then he donated it to his two sons, `Abd al-Malik and `Abd al-'Aziz. Then `Abd al-`Aziz donated his share to his son (`Umar ibn `Abd al.`Aziz).

4. When `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz became caliph (99/717 - 101/ 720) he delivered a lecture and mentioned that: "Verily, Fadak was among the things that Allah had bestowed on His Messenger, and no horse, nor camel was pricked against it..." and mentioned the case of Fadak during the past caliphates until He said: "Then Marwan gave it (Fadak) to my father and to `Abd al-Malik. It became mine and al-Walid's and Sulayman's (two sons of `Abd al-Malik). When al-Walid became caliph (86/705 - 96/715)I asked him for his share and He gave it to me. I asked also for Sulayman's share and he gave it to me. Then I gathered the three parts and I possess no property more preferable to me than this. Be witness that I returned it to its original state." He wrote this to his governor of Medina (Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad ibn `Amr ibn Hazm) and ordered him to carry out what he had declared in the speech he delivered. Then Fadak came into the possession of the children of Fatimah. "This was the first removal of oppression by returning it (Fadak) to the children of `Ali." (al-Awa'il, Abu Hilal al-`Askari, p.209). They possessed it during the reign of this caliph.

5. When Yazid ibn `Abd al-Malik became caliph (101/720 - 105/ 724) he seized Fadak and they (the children of `Ali) were dispossessed. It fell into the possession of the Banu Marwan as it had been previously. They passed it from hand to hand until their caliphate expired and passed away to the Banu al-Abbas.

6. When Abu'l-`Abbas Abdullah as-Saffah became the first caliph of the `Abbasid dynasty (132/749-136/754) he gave back Fadak to the children of Fatimah and submitted it to`Abdullah ibn al-Hasan ibn al-Hasan ibn `Ali ibn Abi Talib.

7. When Abu Ja`far `Abdullah al-Mansur ad-Dawanaqi (136/754 - 158/775) became caliph, he seized Fadak from the children of al-Hasan.

8. When Muhammad al-Mahdi ibn al-Mansur became caliph (158/775 - 169/785) he returned Fadak to the children of Fatimah.

9. Then Musa al-Hadi ibn al-Mahdi (169/785 - 170/786) and his brother Harun ar-Rashid (170/786 - 193/809) seized it from the descendants of Fatimah and it was in the possession of Banu al-`Abbas until the time that al-Ma'mun became caliph (198/813 - 218/833).

10. al-Ma'mun al-`Abbasi gave it back to the descendants of Fatimah (210/826). It is narrated through al-Mahdi ibn Sabiq that:

Al-Ma'mun one day sat to hear the complaints of the people and to judge in cases. The first utter of complaint which he received caused him to weep when he looked at it. He asked where the attorney of Fatimah daughter of the Holy Prophet was? An old man stood up and came forth, arguing with him about Fadak and al-Ma'mun also argued with him until he overcame al-Ma'mun. (al-Awa'il, p.209)

Al-Ma'mun summoned the Islamic jurisprudents (al-Fuqaha') and interrogated them about the claim of the Banu Fatimah. They narrated to al-Ma'mun that the Holy Prophet gifted Fadak to Fatimah and that after the death of the Holy Prophet, Fatimah demanded Abu Bakr to return Fadak to her. He asked her to bring witnesses to her claim regarding this gift. She brought `Ali, al-Hasan, al-Husayn and Umm Ayman as her witnesses. They witnessed the case in her favour. Abu Bakr rejected their witness. Then al-Ma'mun asked the Islamic jurisprudents: "What is your view about Umm Ayman?" They replied, "She is a woman to whom the Holy Prophet bore witness that she is an inhabitant of Paradise." al-Ma'mun disputed

at length with them and forced them to accept the argument by proofs till they confessed that `Ali, al-Hasan, al-Husayn and Umm Ayman had witnessed only the truth. When they unanimously accepted this matter, he restored Fadak to the descendants of Fatimah. (at-Tarikh, al-Ya`qubi, vol.3, pp. 195 - 196)

Then al-Ma'mun ordered that the estate (of Fadak) should be registered among the property (of the descendants of Fatimah) and it was registered and al-Ma'mun signed it.

Then he wrote a letter to his governor in Medina named Qutham ibn Ja`far as follows:

"Know that Amir al-mu'minin, in exercise of the authority vested upon him by the divine religion as the Caliph, successor and the kinsman of the Holy Prophet has considered himself more deserving to follow the precedent of the Holy Prophet (sunnatu'n-nabi) and to carry out his commands. And (the chief is more entitled) to restore to the rightful persons any endowment gifted by the Holy Prophet or thing which the Holy Prophet had gifted to someone. The success and safeguard of Amir al-mu'minin is by Allah and he is particularly anxious to act in a way which will win the pleasure of the Almighty Allah for him.

"Verily, the Holy Prophet had gifted the estate of Fadak to his daughter Fatimah (p.b.u.h.). He had transferred its ownership to her. It is a clear and established fact. None of the kindred of the Holy Prophet have any difference of view. Fatimah always claimed that which was more deserving (to be justified) than the person (Abu Bakr) whose word was accepted. Amir al-mu'minin considers it right and proper to restore Fadak to the heirs of Fatimah. He would hereby win nearness to Almighty Allah by establishing His justice and right. It would win the appreciation of the Holy Prophet by carrying into effect his commandments. Amir al-mu'minin has commanded that this restoration of Fadak should duly be registered. The commands should he transmitted to all the officials.

"Then, if, as it was, a custom to proclaim on every hajj gathering (every year), following the death of the Holy Prophet, that anyone to whom the Holy Prophet had promised (the donation) of a gift or a present, should come forward, his statement will be accepted and the promise will be fulfilled. Certainly, Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) had a superior right to have her statements accepted in the matter of the gifting of Fadak by the Holy Prophet (may Allah bless him and his descendants) to her.

"Verily, Amir al-mu'minin has commanded his slave Mubarak at-Tabari to restore Fadak to the descendants of Fatimah the daughter of the holy Prophet with all its borders, its rights and all slaves attached thereto. cereal crops and other things.

"The same has been restored to Muhammad ibn Yahya ibn al-Hasan ibn Zayd ibn `Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn `Ali ibn Abi Talib and Muhammad ibn `Abdullah ibn al-Hasan ibn `Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn `Ali ibn Abi Talib.

"Amir al-mu'minin has appointed the two of them as the agents representing the owners of the lands - the heirs of Fatimah. Know then this is the view of Amir al-mu'minin and that Allah has inspired him to obey the order of Allah and to win His pleasure and the pleasure of the Holy Prophet. Let also your subordinates know this. Behave towards Muhammad ibn Yahya and Muhammad ibn `Abdillah in the same manner as you used to behave towards Mubarak at-Tabari. Help them both to everything which has to do with its flourishing and prosperity and its improvement in abundance of cereals by Allah's will; and that is an end to the matter."

This is written this Wednesday, two nights past Dhu'l-qi'dah, the year 210 (15/2/826).

11. During the period of al-Ma'mun's caliphate Fadak was in the possession of Fatimah's descendants, and this continued during the caliphate of al-Mu'tasim (218/833 - 227/842) and al-Wathiq (227/842 - 232/ 847).

12. When Ja`far al-Mutawakkil became caliph (232/847 - 247/ 861), the one among them who was marked as an archenemy of the progeny of the Holy Prophet both of those alive and of those dead, gave the order to recapture Fadak from the descendants of Fatimah. (He seized it and granted it to Harmalah al-Hajjam or the Cupper), and after the death of al-Hajjam he granted it to al-Bazyar or the Falconer, a native of Tabaristan. (Kashf al-ghumnah, vol.2, pp.121 - 122; al-Bihar, [lst ed.], vol.8., p.108; Safinah al-bihar, vol.2, p.351). Abu Hilal al-`Askari- mentioned that his name was `Abdullah ibn `Umar al-Bazyar and added: "And there were in it (Fadak) eleven date-palm trees which the Holy Prophet had planted by his own hands. The descendants of Abu Talib used to gather these dates. When pilgrims (al-Hujjaj), entered Medina they donated the dates to them. Through this they received a considerable ruturn. This news reached al-Mu- tawakkil. He ordered `Abdullah ibn `Umar to cut up the fruits and to squeeze the juice from them. `Abdullah ibn `Umar sent a man named Bishr ibn Umayyah ath-Thaqafi who squeezed the fruits. It was reported that he made it into wine. It had not reached Basrah (on its way to the Caliph) before it decayed and al-Mutawakkil was killed." (al-Awa'il, p.209).

13. When al-Mutawakkil was killed and al-Muntasir (his son) succeeded him (247/861 - 248/862) he gave the order to

restore Fadak to the descendants of al-Hasan and al-Husayn and delivered the donations of Abu Talib to them and this was in 248/862.
(Ref. for Nos.3-13-Futuh al-buldan, vol.1, pp.33-38; Mu`jam al-buldan, vol.4, pp.238-240; at-Tarikh, al-Ya`qubi, vol.2, p.199; vol.3, pp.48, 195-196; al-Kamil, Ibn al-Athir, vol.2, pp. 224-225; vol.3, pp. 457,497; vol.5, p.63; vol.7, p.116; al-`Iqd al-farid, vol.4, PP:216,283, 435; Wafa' alwafa, vol.3, pp.999-1000; at-Tabaqat al-kabir, vol.5, pp. 286-287; Tarikh al-Khulafa', pp.231-232, 356; Muruj adh-dhahab, vol.4, p.82; Sirah `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz, Ibn al-Jawzi, p.1l0;Subh al-a`sha vol.4, p.291; Jamharah rasa'il al-`Arab, vol.2, pp.331-332; vol. 3, pp. 509-510; `Alam an-nisa', vol.3, pp.1211 -1212; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.16, pp.277- 278: al-Awa'il, p.209; Kashf al-ghummah, vol.2, pp.120-122; al-Bihar, vol.8, pp.107-108).
14. It seemed that Fadak was recaptured from the descendants of Fatimah after the death of al-Muntasir (248/862), because Abu'l-Hasan, `Ali ibn `Isa al-Irbili (d. 692/1293) mentioned, "al-Mu`tadid (279/892 - 289/902) returned Fadak to the descendants of Fatimah. Then he mentioned that al-Muqtafi (289/902 - 295/908) seized it from them. It is said also that al-Muqtadir (295/908 - 320/932) returned it to them (the descendants of Fatimah)." (Kashf al-ghummah, vol.2, p.122; al-Bihar, vol.8, p.108: Safinah, vol.2, p.351).
15. And after this long period of recapturing and restoration, Fadak was returned to the possession of the usurpers and their heirs as it seems, no further mention was made in history and the curtain fell.
Is it (then that) the judgement of (the times of pagan) ignorance they desire? And who (else) can be better than Allah to judge for a people of assured faith. (Qur'an, 5:50)

Letter 46: To one of his Officers

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى بعض عمّاله

Now, you are surely one of those whose help I take in establishing religion and with whose help I break the haughtiness of the sinful and guard critical boundaries. You should seek Allah's help in whatever causes you anxiety. Add a little harshness to the mixture of leniency and remain lenient where leniency is more appropriate. Adopt harshness when you cannot do without harshness. Bend your wings (in humbleness) before the subjects.

Meet them with your face broad and keep yourself lenient (in behaviour) with them. Treat them equally in looking at them with half eyes or full eyes, in signalling and in greeting so that the great should not expect transgression on your part and the weak should not lose hope in your justice; and that is an end to the matter.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّكَ مِمَّنْ أَسْتَظْهِرُ بِهِ عَلَى إِقَامَةِ الدّين، وَأَقْمَعُ بِهِ نَحْوَةَ الاْثِيمِ، وَأَسُدُّ بِهِ لَهَاةَ الثَّغْرِ الْمَخُوف. فَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللهِ عَلَى مَا أَهَمَّكَ، وَاخْلِطِ الشِّدَّةَ بِضِغْث مِنَ اللِّين، وَارْفُقْ مَا كَانَ الرِّفْقُ أَرْفَقَ، وَاعْتَزِمْ بِالشِّدَّةِ حِينَ لاَ تُغْنِي عَنْكَ إِلاَّ

الشِّدَّةُ، وَاخْفِضْ لِلرَّعِيَّةِ جَنَاحَكَ، وَابْسِطْ لَهُمْ وَجْهَكَ وَأَلِنْ لَهُمْ جَانِبَكَ، وَآسِ بَيْنَهُمْ فِي اللَّحْظَةِ وَالنَّظْرَةِ، وَالاْشَارَةِ وَالتَّحِيَّةِ، حَتَّى لاَ يَطْمَعَ الْعُظَمَاءُ فِي حَيْفِكَ، وَلاَ يَيْأَسَ الضُّعَفَاءُ مِنْ عَدْلِكَ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

Letter 47: Will To Imam Hasan (a) and Imam Husayn (a) after he was wounded by Abd al-Rahman b. Muljam whilst offered the morning prayers in the mosque of Kufa.

ومن وصية له

(للحسن والحسين (عليهم السلام

لما ضربه ابن ملجم لعنه الله

I advise you (both) to fear Allah and that you should not hanker after the (pleasures of this) world even though it may run after you. Do not be sorry for anything of this world that you have been denied. Speak the truth and act (in expectation) for reward. Be an enemy of the oppressor and helper of the oppressed.

I advise you (both) and all my children and members of my family and everyone whom my writing reaches, to fear Allah, to keep your affairs in order, and to maintain good relations among yourselves for I have heard your grand-father (the Holy Prophet – p.b.u.h.a.h.p.) saying, "Improvement of mutual differences is better than general prayers and fastings."

أُوصِيكُمَا بِتَقْوَى اللهِ، وَأَنْ لاَ تَبْغِيَا الدُّنْيَا وَإِنْ بَغَتْكُمَا، وَلاَ تَأْسَفَا عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِنْهَا زُوِيَ عَنْكُمَا، وَقُولاَ بِالْحَقِّ، وَاعْمَلاَ لِلاْجْرِ، وَكُونَا لِلظَّالِمِ خَصْماً، وَلِلْمَظْلُومِ عَوْناً. أُوصِيكُمَا، وَجَمِيعَ وَلَدِي وَأَهْلِي وَمَنْ بَلَغَهُ كِتَابِي، بِتَقْوَى اللهِ، وَنَظْمِ أَمْرِكُمْ، وَصَلاَحِ ذَاتِ بَيْنِكُمْ، فَإِنِّي سَمِعْتُ جَدَّكُمَا ـ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ ـ يَقُولُ: "صَلاَحُ ذَاتِ الْبَيْنِ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ عَامَّةِ الصَّلاَةِ الصِّيَامِ".

(Fear) Allah (and) keep Allah in view in the matter of orphaus. So do not allow them to starve and they should not be ruined in your presence.

(Fear) Allah (and) keep Allah in view in the matter of your neighbours, because they were the subject of the Prophet's advice. He went on advising in their favour till we thought he would allow them a share in inheritance.

اللهَ اللهَ فِي الأَيْتَامِ، فَلاَ تُغِبُّوا أَفْوَاهَهُمْ، وَلاَ يَضِيعُوا بِحَضْرَتِكُمْ. وَاللهَ اللهَ فِي جِيرَانِكُمْ، فَإِنَّهُمْ وَصِيَّةُ نَبِيِّكُمْ، مَا زَالَ يُوصِي بِهِمْ حَتَّى ظَنَنَّا أَنَّهُ سَيُوَرِّثُهُمْ

(Fear) Allah (and) keep Allah in view in the matter of the Qur'an. No one should excel you in acting upon it. (Fear) Allah (and) keep Allah in view in the matter of prayer, because it is the pillar of your religion.

(Fear) Allah (and) keep Allah in view in the matter of your Lord's House (Ka'bah). Do not forsake it so long as you live, because if it is abandoned you will not be spared.

(Fear) Allah (and) keep Allah in view in the matter of jihad with the help of your property, lives and tongues in the way of Allah.

وَاللهَ اللهَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ، لاَ يَسْبِقُكُمْ بِالْعَمَلِ بِهِ غَيْرُكُمْ. وَاللهَ اللهَ فِي الصَّلاَةِ، فَإِنَّهَا عَمُودُ دِينِكُمْ. وَاللهَ اللهَ فِي بَيْتِ رَبِّكُمْ، لاَ تُخْلُوهُ مَا بَقِيتُمْ، فَإِنَّهُ إِنْ تُرِكَ لَمْ تُنَاظَرُوا. وَاللهَ اللهَ فِي الْجِهَادِ بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَأَلْسِنَتِكُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ.

You should keep to a respect for kinship and spending for others. Avoid turning away from one another and severing mutual relations. Do not give up bidding for good and forbidding from evil lest the mischievous gain positions over you, and then if you will pray, the prayers will not be granted.

وَعَلَيْكُمْ بِالتَّوَاصُلِ وَالتَّبَاذُلِ، وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَالتَّدَابُرَ وَالتَّقَاطُعَ. لاَ تَتْرُكُوا الأَمْرَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّهْيَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ فَيُوَلَّى عَلَيْكُمْ أَشْرَارُكُمْ، ثُمَّ تَدْعُونَ فَلاَ يُسْتَجَابُ لَكُمْ.

Then he said: O sons of `Abd al-Muttalib, certainly I do not wish to see you plunging harshly into the blood of Muslims shouting "Amir al-mu'minin has been killed." Beware, do not kill on account of me except my killer.

Wait till I die by his (Ibn Muljam's) existing stroke. Then strike him one stroke for his stroke and do not dismember the limbs of the man, for I have heard the Messenger of Allah (S) saying, "Avoid cutting limbs even though it may be a rabid dog."

ثمّ قال: يَا بَنِي عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ، لاَ أُلْفِيَنَّكُمْ تَخُوضُونَ دِمَاءَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ خَوْضاً، تَقُولُونَ: قُتِلَ أَمِيرُالْمُؤْمِنِينَ. أَلاَ لاَ تَقْتُلُنَّ بِي إِلاَّ قَاتِلِي. انْظُرُوا إِذَا أَنَا مِتُّ مِنْ ضَرْبَتِهِ هذِهِ، فَاضْرِبُوهُ ضَرْبَةً بِضَرْبَةٍ، وَلاَ يُمَثَّلُ بِالرَّجُلِ، فَإِنِّي سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) يَقُولُ : "إِيَّاكُمْ وَالْمُثْلَةَ وَلَوْ بِالْكَلْبِ الْعَقُورِ".

Letter 48: To Mu'awiyah

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى معاوية

Surely, revolt and falsehood abase a man in his religious as well as worldly matters and manifest his shortcomings before his critic. You know that you cannot catch what is destined to remain away from you. Many people had aims other than right (ones) and began to swear by Allah (that they will attain their goal) but He falsified them. Therefore, fear the Day when happy is he who made his end happy (by good actions) while repentant is he who allowed Satan to lead him and did not resist him. You called us to a settlement through the Qur'an although you were not a man of the Qur'an, and we responded to the Qur'an through its judgement, and not to you; and that is an end to the matter.

وَإِنَّ الْبَغْيَ وَالزُّورَ يُوبِقَانِ الْمَرْءَ فِي دِينِهِ وَدُنْيَاهُ، وَيُبْدِيَانِ خَلَلَهُ عِنْدَ مَنْ يَعِيبُهُ، وَقَدْ عَلِمْتُ أَنَّكَ غَيْرُ مُدْرِكٍ مَا قُضِيَ فَوَاتُهُ، وَقَدْ رَامَ أَقْوَامٌ أَمْراً بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ، فَتَأَوَّلوا عَلَى اللهِ فَأَكْذَبَهُمْ، فَاحْذَرْ يَوْماً يُغْتَبطُ فِيهِ مَنْ أَحْمَدَ عَاقِبَةَ عَمَلِهِ، وَيَنْدَمُ مَنْ أَمْكَنَ الشَّيْطَانَ مِنْ قِيَادِهِ فَلَمْ يُجَاذِبْهُ. وَقَدْ دَعَوْتَنَا إِلَى حُكْمِ الْقُرْآنِ وَلَسْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِهِ، وَلَسْنَا إِيَّاكَ أَجَبْنَا، وَلَكِنَّا أَجَبْنَا الْقُرْآنَ إلى حُكْمِهِ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

Letter 49: To Mu`awiyah

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إليه

So now, this world turns away from the next one. He who is devoted to it achieves nothing from it except that it increases his greed and coveting for it. He who is devoted to it is not satisfied with what he gets from it because of what he has not got. Eventually, there is separation from what has been amassed, and a breaking of what has been strengthened. If you take a lesson from the past you can be safe in the future; and that is an end to the matter.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا مَشْغَلَةٌ عَنْ غَيْرِهَا، وَلَمْ يُصِبْ صَاحِبُهَا مِنْهَا شَيْئاً إِلاَّ فَتَحَتْ لَهُ حِرْصاً عَلَيْهَا، وَلَهَجاً بِهَا، وَلَنْ يَسْتَغْنِيَ صَاحِبُهَا بِمَا نَالَ فِيهَا عَمَّا لَمْ يَبْلُغْهُ مِنْهَا، وَمِنْ وَرَاءِ ذلِكَ فِرَاقُ مَا جَمَعَ، وَنَقْضُ مَا أَبْرَمَ! لَوِ اعْتَبَرْتَ بِمَا مَضَى حَفِظْتَ مَا بَقِيَ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

Letter 50: To the officers of his army

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى أمرائه على الجيوش

From the servant of Allah, `Ali, Amir al-mu'minin to the Officer-in-charge of garrisons:

مِنْ عَبْدِاللهِ عَلِيّ أَمِيرِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِلَى أَصْحَابِ الْمَسَالِحِ

Now, it is obligatory on an officer that the distinction he achieves, or the wealth with which he has been exclusively endowed,should not make him change his behaviour towards those under him, and that the riches Allah has bestowed on him should increase him in nearness to his people and kindness over his brethren.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ حَقّاً عَلَى الْوَالِي أَلاَّ يُغَيِّرَهُ عَلَى رَعِيَّتِهِ فَضْلٌ نَالَهُ، وَلاَ طَوْلٌ خُصَّ بِهِ، وَأَنْ يَزِيدَهُ مَا قَسَمَ اللهُ لَهُ مِنْ نِعَمِهِ دُنُوّاً مِنْ عِبَادِهِ، وَعَطْفاً عَلَى إِخْوَانِهِ.

Beware, that it is obligatory for you on me that I should not keep anything secret from you except during war, nor should I decide any matter without consulting you except the commands of religion, nor should I ignore the fulfilment of any of your rights nor desist till I discharge it fully, and that for me all of you should be equal in rights. When I have done all this, it becomes obligatory on you to thank Allah for this bounty and to obey me, and you should not hold back when called, nor shirk good acts, and you should face harships for the sake of right.

If you do not remain steadfast in this, there will be no one more humiliated in my view than the one among you who has deviated, and then I will increase the punishment for him, wherein no one will get any concession from me. Take this (pledge) from your (subordinate) officers and accord to them such behaviour from your side by which Allah may improve your matters; and that is an end to the matter.

أَلاَ وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي أَلاَّ أَحْتَجِزَ دُونَكُمْ سِرّاً إِلاَّ فِي حَرْب، وَلاَ أَطْوِيَ دُونَكُمْ أَمْراً إِلاَّ فِي حُكْم، وَلاَ أُؤَخِّرَ لَكُمْ حَقّاً عَنْ مَحَلِّهِ، وَلاَ أَقِفَ بِهِ دُونَ مَقْطَعِهِ، وَأَنْ تُكُونُوا عِندِي فِي الْحَقّ سَوَاءً، فَإِذَا فَعَلْتُ ذلِكَ وَجَبَتْ لله عَلَيْكُمُ النِّعْمَةُ، وَلِي عَلَيْكُمُ الطَّاعَةُ، وَأَلاَّ تَنْكُصُوا عَنْ دَعْوَة، وَلاَ تُفَرِّطُوا فِي صَلاَح، وَأَنْ تَخُوضوا الْغَمَرَاتِ إِلَى الْحَقّ، فَإِنْ أَنْتُمْ لَمْ تَسْتَقِيمُوا لِي عَلَى ذلِكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ أَحَدٌ أَهْوَنَ عَلَيَّ مِمَّنْ اعْوَجَّ مِنْكُمْ، ثُمَّ أُعْظِمُ لَهُ الْعُقُوبَةَ، وَلاَ يَجِدُ عِنْدِي فِيها رُخْصَةً، فَخُذُوا هذَا مِنْ أُمَرَائِكُمْ، وَأَعْطُوهُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ مَا يُصْلِحُ اللهُ بِهِ أَمْرَكُمْ. وَ السَّلامُ.

Letter 51: To his collectors of (land) tax

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى عماله على الخراج

From the servant of Allah `Ali, Amir al–mu'minin to the tax collectors:

مِنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ عَلِيّ أَمِيرِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِلَى أَصْحَابِ الْخَرَاجِ:

So now, he who does not fear where he is going, does not send forward for himself that which could protect him. You should know that the obligations laid on you are few, while their reward is much. Even if there had been no fear of punishment for revolt and disobedience, which Allah has prohibited, the reward in keeping aloof from it would be enough (incentive) to abstain from going after it. Behave yourselves justly with the people and act with endurance with regard to their needs, because you are the treasurers of the people, representatives of the community and the ambassadors of the Imams.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ مَنْ لَمْ يَحْذَرْ مَا هُوَ صَائِرٌ إِلَيْهِ لَمْ يُقَدِّمْ لِنَفْسِهِ مَا يُحْرِزُهَا. وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ مَا كُلِّفْتُمْ يَسِيرٌ، وَأَنَّ ثَوَابَهُ كَثِيرٌ، وَلَوْ لَمْ يَكُنْ فِيمَا نَهَى اللهُ عَنْهُ مِنَ الْبَغْيِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ عِقَابٌ يُخَافُ لَكَانَ فِي ثَوَابِ اجْتِنَابِهِ مَا لاَ عُذْرَ فِي تَرْكِ طَلَبِهِ. فَأَنْصِفُوا النَّاسَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ، وَاصْبِرُوا لِحَوَائِجِهِمْ، فَإِنَّكُمْ خُزَّانُ الرَّعِيَّةِ، وَوُكَلاَءُ الاُمَّةِ، وَسُفَرَاءُ الاَئِمَّةِ.

Do not deprive anyone of his needs and do not prevent him from (securing) his requirements.For the collection of tax (kharaj) from the people do not sell their winter or summer clothes, nor cattle with which they work, nor slaves. Do not whip anyone for the sake of one Dirham. Do not touch the property of any person whether he be one who prays (a Muslim) or a protected unbeliever, unless you find a horse or weapons used for attack against Muslims, because it is not proper for the Muslims to leave these things in the hands of the enemies of Islam to enable them to have power over Islam.

وَلاَ تَحْسِمُوا أَحَداً عَنْ حَاجَتِهِ، وَلاَتَحْبِسُوهُ عَنْ طَلِبَتِهِ، وَلاَ تَبِيعُنَّ لِلنَّاسِ فِي الْخَرَاجِ كِسْوَةَ شِتَاء وَلاَ صَيْف، وَلاَ دَابَّةً يَعْتَمِلُونَ عَلَيْهَا، وَلاَ عَبداً، وَلاَ تَضْرِبُنَّ أَحَداً سَوْطاً لِمَكَانِ دِرْهَم، وَلاَ تَمَسُّنَّ مَالَ أَحَد مِنَ النَّاسِ، مُصَلّ وَلاَ مُعَاهَد، إِلاَّ أَنْ تَجِدُوا فرَساً أَوْ سِلاَحاً يُعْدى بِهِ عَلَى أَهْلِ الاْسْلاَمِ، فَإِنَّهُ لاَ يَنْبَغِي لِلْمُسْلِمِ أَنْ يَدَعَ ذلِكَ فِي أَيْدِي أَعْدَاءِ الاْسْلاَمِ، فَيَكُونَ شَوْكَةً عَلَيْهِ.

Do not deny good counsel to yourself, good behaviour to the army, succour to the subjects and strength to the religion of Allah. Strive in the way of Allah as is obligatory on you, because Allah the Glorified, desires us and you to be thankful to Him as best as we can and that we should help Him to the best of our power. And there is no power save with Allah, the All-high, the All- glorious.

وَلاَ تَدَّخِرُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ نَصِيحَةً، وَلاَ الْجُنْدَ حُسْنَ سِيرَة، وَلاَ الرَّعِيَّةَ مَعُونَةً، وَلاَ دِينَ اللهِ قُوَّةً، وَأَبْلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ مَا اسْتَوْجَبَ عَلَيْكُمْ، فَإِنَّ اللهَ سُبْحَانَهُ قَدِ اصْطَنَعَ عِنْدَنَا وَعِنْدَكُمْ أَنْ نَشْكُرَهُ بِجُهْدِنَا، وَأَنْ نَنْصُرَهُ بِمَا بَلَغَتْ قُوَّتُنَا، وَلاَ قُوَّةَ إِلاَّ بِاللهِ.

Letter 52: To the Governors of various places concerning prayers

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى أمراء البلاد في معنى الصلاة

Now, say the zuhr (noon) prayers with the people when the shade of the wall of the goats' pen is equal to the wall. Say the `asr (afternoon) prayers with them when the sun is still shining in a portion of the day enough for covering the distance of two farsakhs (about six miles). Say the maghrib (sunset) prayers when he who is fasting ends the fast and the pilgrim rushes (from `Arafat) to Mina. Say the `isha' (night) prayers with them when twilight disappears and upto one third of the night. Say the (early) morning prayers with them when a man can recognize the face of his companion. Say the prayers with the people as the weakest of them would do and do not be a source of trouble to them.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَصَلُّوا بَالنَّاسِ الظُّهْرَ حَتَّى تَفِيءَ الشَّمْسُ مِنْ مَرْبِضِ الْعَنْزِ. وَصَلُّوا بِهِمُ الْعَصْرَ وَالشَّمْسُ بَيْضَاءُ حَيَّةٌ فِي عُضْوٍ مِنَ النَّهَارِ حِينَ يُسَارُ فِيهَا فَرْسَخَانِ. وَصَلُّوا بِهِمُ الْمَغْرِبَ حِينَ يُفْطِرُ الصَّائِمُ، وَيَدْفَعُ الْحَاجُّ . وَصَلُّوا بِهِمُ الْعِشَاءَ حِينَ يَتَوَارَى الشَّفَقُ إِلَى ثُلُثِ اللَّيْلِ. وَصَلُّوا بِهِمُ الْغَدَاةَ والرَّجُلُ يَعْرِفُ وَجْهَ صَاحِبِهِ. وَصَلُّوا بِهِمْ صَلاَةَ

أَضْعَفِهِمْ، وَلاَ تَكُونُوا فَتَّانِين.

Letter 53: An order to Malik al-Ashtar

Written[1] *for* (*Malik*) *al-Ashtar an-Nakha'i, when the position of Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr had become precarious, and Amir al-mu'minin had appointed al- Ashtar as the Governor of Egypt and the surrounding areas; it is the longest document and contains the greatest number of beautiful sayings.*

ومن عهد له(عليه السلام

كتبه للاشتر النَّخَعي رحمه الله

لمّا ولاه على مصر وأعمالها حين اضطرب أمر محمّد بن أبي بكر رحمه الله، وهو أطول عهد كتبه وأجمعه للمحاسن

In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

بِسمِ اللهِ الرَّحمنِ الرَّحيم

This is what Allah's servant `Ali, Amir al-mu'minin, has ordered Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar in his instrument (of appointment) for him when he made him Governor of Egypt for the collection of its revenues, fighting against its enemies, seeking the good of its people and making its cities prosperous.

هذَا مَا أَمَرَ بِهِ عَبْدُ اللهِ عَلِيٌّ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، مَالِكَ بْنَ الْحَارِثِ الاْشْتَرَ فِي عَهْدِهِ إِلَيْهِ، حِينَ وَلاَّهُ مِصْرَ: جِبْوَةَ خَرَاجِهَا، وَجِهَادَ عَدُوِّهَا، وَاسْتِصْلاَحَ أَهْلِهَا، وَعِمَارَةَ بِلاَدِهَا.

He has ordered him to fear Allah, to prefer obedience to Him, and to follow what He has commanded in His Book (Qur'an) out of His obligatory and elective commands, without following which one cannot achieve virtue, nor (can one) be evil save by opposing them and ignoring them, and to help Allah the Glorified, with his heart, hand and tongue, because Allah whose name is Sublime takes the responsibility for helping him who helps Him, and for protecting him who gives Him support. He also orders him to break his heart off from passions, and to restrain it at the time of their increase, because the heart leads towards evil unless Allah has mercy.

أَمَرَهُ بِتَقْوَى اللهِ، وَإِيثَارِ طَاعَتِهِ، وَاتِّبَاعِ مَا أَمَرَ بِهِ فِي كِتَابِهِ: مِنْ فَرَائِضِهِ وَسُنَنِهِ، الَّتِي لاَ يَسْعَدُ أَحَدٌ إِلاَّ بِاتِّبَاعِهَا، وَلاَ يَشْقَى إِلاَّ مَعَ جُحُودِهَا وَإِضَاعَتِهَا، وَأَنْ يَنْصُرَ اللهَ سُبْحَانَهُ بِيَدِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَلِسَانِهِ، فَإِنَّهُ، جَلَّ اسْمُهُ، قَدْ تَكَفَّلَ بِنَصْرِ مَنْ نَصَرَهُ، وَإِعْزَازِ مَنْ أَعَزَّهُ. وَأَمَرَهُ أَنْ يَكْسِرَ نَفْسَهُ عِنْدَ الشَّهَوَاتِ، وَيَزَعَهَا عِنْدَ الْجَمَحَاتِ، فَإِنَّ النَّفْسَ أَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ، إِلاَّ مَا رَحِمَ اللهُ.

The qualifications of a governor and his responsibilities

Then, know, O Malik, that I have sent you to an area where there have been governments before you, both just as well as oppressive. People will now watch your dealings as you used to watch the dealings of the rulers before you, and they (people) will criticise you as you criticised them (rulers). Surely, the virtuous are known by the reputation that Allah circulates for them through the tongues of His creatures. Therefore, the best collection with you should be the collection of good deeds. So, control your passions and check your heart from doing what is not lawful for you, because checking the heart means detaining it just half way between what it likes and dislikes.

ثُمَّ اعْلَمْ يَا مَالِكُ، أَنِّي قدْ وَجَّهْتُكَ إِلَى بِلاَد قَدْ جَرَتْ عَلَيْهَا دُوَلٌ قَبْلَكَ، مِنْ عَدْل وَجَوْر، وَأَنَّ النَّاسَ يَنْظُرُونَ مِنْ أُمُورِكَ فِي مِثْلِ مَا كُنْتَ تَنْظُرُ فِيهِ مِنْ أُمُورِ الْوُلاَةِ قَبْلَكَ، وَيَقُولُونَ فِيكَ مَا كُنْتَ تَقُولُ فِيهِمْ،إِنَّمَا يُسْتَدَلُّ عَلَى الصَّالِحِينَ بِمَا يُجْرِي اللهُ لَهُمْ عَلَى أَلْسُنِ عِبَادِهِ. فَلْيَكُنْ أَحَبَّ الذَّخَائِرِ إِلَيْكَ ذَخِيرَةُ الْعَمَلِ الصَّالِحِ، فَامْلِكْ هَوَاكَ، وَشُحَّ بِنَفْسِكَ عَمَّا لاَ يَحِلُّ لَكَ، فَإِنَّ الشُّحَّ بِالنَّفْسِ الاِنْصَافُ مِنْهَا فِيمَا أَحْبَبْتَ وَكَرِهْتَ.

Habituate your heart to mercy for the subjects and to affection and kindness for them. Do not stand over them like greedy beasts who feel it is enough to devour them, since they are of two kinds, either your brother in religion or one like you in creation. They will commit slips and encounter mistakes. They may act wrongly, wilfully or by neglect. So, extend to them your forgiveness and pardon, in the same way as you would like Allah to extend His forgiveness and pardon to you, because you are over them and your responsible Commander (Imam) is over you while Allah is over him who has appointed you. He (Allah) has sought you to manage their affairs and has tried you through them.

وَأَشْعِرْ قَلْبَكَ الرَّحْمَةَ لِلرَّعِيَّةِ، وَالْمَحَبَّةَ لَهُمْ، وَاللُّطْفَ بِهِمْ، وَلاَ تَكُونَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبُعاً ضَارِياً تَغْتَنِمُ أَكْلَهُمْ، فَإِنَّهُمْ صِنْفَانِ: إِمَّا أَخٌ لَكَ فِي الدِّينِ، وَإِمّا نَظِيرٌ لَكَ فِي الْخَلْقِ، يَفْرُطُ مِنْهُمُ الزَّلَلُ، وَتَعْرِضُ لَهُمُ الْعِلَلُ،يُؤْتَى عَلَى أَيْدِيهِمْ فِي الْعَمْدِ وَالْخَطَاَ، فَأَعْطِهِمْ مِنْ عَفْوِكَ وَصَفْحِكَ مِثْلِ الَّذِي تُحِبُّ أَنْ يُعْطِيَكَ اللهُ مِنْ عَفْوِهِ وَصَفْحِهِ، فَإِنَّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ، وَ وَالِي الاَمْرِ عَلَيْكَ فَوْقَكَ، وَاللهُ فَوْقَ مَنْ وَلاَّكَ! وَقَدِ اسْتَكْفَاكَ أَمْرَهُمْ، وَابْتَلاَكَ بِهِمْ.

Do not set yourself to fight Allah because you have no power before His power and you cannot do without His pardon and mercy. Do not repent of forgiving or be merciful in punishing. Do not act hastily during anger if you can find way out of it. Do not say: "I have been given authority, I should be obeyed when I order," because it engenders confusion in the heart, weakens the religion and takes one near

ruin. If the authority in which you are placed produces pride or vanity in you then look at the greatness of the realm of Allah over you and His might the like of which might you do not even possess over yourself. This will curb your haughtiness, cure you of your high temper and bring back to you your wisdom which had gone away from you.

وَلاَ تَنْصِبَنَّ نَفْسَكَ لِحَرْبِ اللهِ، فَإِنَّهُ لاَيَدَيْ لَكَ بِنِقْمَتِهِ، وَلاَ غِنَى بِكَ عَنْ عَفْوِهِ وَرَحْمَتِهِ. وَلاَ تَنْدَمَنَّ عَلَى عَفْوٍ، وَلاَ تَبْجَحَنَّ بِعُقُوبَةٍ، وَلاَ تُسْرِعَنَّ إِلَى بَادِرَةٍ وَجَدْتَ مِنْهَا مَنْدُوحَةً، وَلاَ تَقُولَنَّ: إِنِّي مُؤَمَّرٌ آمُرُ فَأُطَاعُ، فَإِنَّ ذلِكَ إِدْغَالٌ فِي الْقَلْبِ، وَمَنْهَكَةٌ لِلدِّينِ، وَتَقَرُّبٌ مِنَ الْغِيَرِ. وَإِذَا أَحْدَثَ لَكَ مَا أَنْتَ فِيهِ مِنْ سُلْطَانِكَ أُبَّهَةً أَوْ مَخِيلَةً، فَانْظُرْ إِلَى عِظَمِ مُلْكِ اللهِ فَوْقَكَ، وَقُدْرَتِهِ مِنْكَ عَلَى مَا لاَ تَقْدِرُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ، فَإِنَّ ذلِكَ يُطَامِنُ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ طِمَاحِكَ، وَيَكُفُّ عَنْكَ مِنْ غَرْبِكَ،وَيَفِيءُ إِلَيْكَ بِمَا عَزَبَ عَنْكَ مِنْ عَقْلِكَ!

Beware of comparing yourself to Allah in His greatness or likening yourself to Him in His power, for Allah humiliates every claimant of power and disgraces every one who is haughty.

إِيَّاكَ وَمُسَامَاةَ اللهِ فِي عَظَمَتِهِ، وَالتَّشَبُّهَ بِهِ فِي جَبَرُوتِهِ، فَإِنَّ اللهَ يُذِلُّ كُلَّ جَبَّار، وَيُهِينُ كُلَّ مُخْتَال.

Do justice for Allah and do justice towards the people, as against yourself, your near ones and those of your subjects for whom you have a liking because if you do not do so you will be oppressive, and when a person oppresses the creatures of Allah then, instead of His creatures, Allah becomes his opponent, and when Allah is the opponent of a person He tramples his plea; and he will remain in the position of being at war with Allah until he gives it up and repents. Nothing is more inducive of the reversal of Allah's bounty or for the hastening of His retribution than continuance in oppression, because Allah hears the prayer of the oppressed and is on the look out for the oppressors.

أَنْصِفِ اللهَ وَأَنْصِفِ النَّاسَ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ، وَمِنْ خَاصَّةِ أَهْلِكَ، وَمَنْ لَكَ فِيهِ هَوىً مِنْ رَعِيَّتِكَ، فَإِنَّكَ إِلاَّ تَفْعَلْ تَظْلِمْ، وَمَنْ ظَلَمَ عِبَادَ اللهِ كَانَ اللهُ خَصْمَهُ دُونَ عِبَادِهِ، وَمَنْ خَاصَمَهُ اللهُ أَدْحَضَ حُجَّتَهُ، وَكَانَ لله حَرْباً حَتَّى يَنْزِعَ وَيَتُوبَ.

وَلَيْسَ شَيْءٌ أَدْعَى إِلَى تَغْيِيرِ نِعْمَةِ اللهِ وَتَعْجِيلِ نِقْمَتِهِ مِنْ إِقَامَةٍ عَلَى ظُلْم، فَإِنَّ اللهَ سَمِيعٌ دَعْوَةَ الْمَظْلُومِينَ، وَهُوَ لِلظَّالِمِينَ بِالْمِرْصَادِ.

Ruling should be in favour of the people as a whole

The way most coveted by you should be that which is the most equitable for the right, the most universal by way of justice, and the most comprehensive with regard to the agreement among those under you, because the disagreement of the common people sweeps away the arguments of the chiefs while the disagreement of the chiefs can be disregarded when compared with the agreement of the common

people.

No one among those under you is more burdensome to the ruler in times of ease, less helpful in distress, more disliking of equitable treatment, more importunate in asking favours, less thankful when given (anything), less appreciative of reasons at the time of refusal, and weaker in endurance at the time of the discomforts of life than the chiefs. It is the common people of the community who are the pillars of the religion, the power of the Muslims and the defence against the enemies. Your leanings should therefore be towards them and your inclination with them.

كُنْ أَحَبَّ الأمُورِ إِلَيْكَ أَوْسَطُهَا فِي الْحَقِّ، وَأَعَمُّهَا فِي الْعَدْلِ، وَأَجْمَعُهَا لِرِضَى الرَّعِيَّةِ، فَإِنَّ سُخْطَ الْعَامَّةِ يُجْحِفُ بِرِضَى الْخَاصَّةِ، وَإِنَّ سُخْطَ الْخَاصَّةِ يُغْتَفَرُ مَعَ رِضَى الْعَامَّةِ. وَلَيْسَ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الرَّعِيَّةِ، أَثْقَلَ عَلَى الْوَالِي مَؤُونَةً فِي الرَّخَاءِ، وَأَقَلَّ مَعُونَةً لَهُ فِي الْبَلاَءِ، وَأَكْرَهَ لِلإنْصَافِ، وَأَسْأَلَ بِالإلْحَافِ، وَأَقَلَّ شُكْراً عِنْدَ الاعْطَاءِ، وَأَبْطَأَ عُذْراً عِنْدَ الْمَنْعِ، وَأَضْعَفَ صَبْراً عِنْدَ مُلِمَّاتِ الدَّهْرِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْخَاصَّةِ، وَإِنَّمَا عَمُودُ الدِّينِ، وَجِمَاعُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَالْعُدَّةُ لِلاعْدَاءِ، الْعَامَّةُ مِنَ الاُمَّةِ، فَلْيَكُنْ صِغْوُكَ لَهُمْ، وَمَيْلُكَ مَعَهُمْ.

The one among the people under you who is furthest from you and the worst of them in your view should be he who is the most inquisitive of the shortcomings of the people, because people do have shortcomings and the ruler is the most appropriate person to cover them. Do not disclose whatever of it is hidden from you because your obligation is to correct what is manifest to you, while Allah will deal with whatever is hidden from you. Therefore, cover shortcomings so far as you can; Allah would cover those of your shortcomings which you would like to remain under cover from your subjects. Unfasten every knot of hatred in the people and cut away from yourself the cause of every enmity. Feign ignorance from what is not clear to you. Do not hasten to second a backbiter, because a backbiter is a cheat although he looks like those who wish well.

وَلْيَكُنْ أَبْعَدَ رَعِيَّتِكَ مِنْكَ، وَأَشْنَأَهُمْ عِنْدَكَ، أَطْلَبُهُمْ لِمَعَائِبِ النَّاسِ، فإنَّ في النَّاسِ عُيُوباً، الْوَالِي أَحَقُّ مَنْ سَتَرَهَا، فَلاَ تَكْشِفَنَّ عَمَّا غَابَ عَنْكَ مِنْهَا، فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ تَطْهِيرُ مَا ظَهَرَ لَكَ، وَاللهُ يَحْكُمُ عَلَى مَا غَابَ عَنْكَ، فَاسْتُرِ الْعَوْرَةَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتَ يَسْتُرِ اللهُ مِنْكَ ما تُحِبُّ سَتْرَهُ مِنْ رَعِيَّتِكَ. أَطْلِقْ عَنِ النَّاسِ عُقْدَةَ كُلِّ حِقْد، وَاقْطَعْ عَنْكَ سَبَبَ كُلِّ وِتْر، وَتَغَابَ عَنْ كلِّ مَا لاَ يَضِحُ لَكَ، وَلاَ تَعْجَلَنَّ إِلَى تَصْدِيقِ سَاع، فَإِنَّ السَّاعِيَ غَاشٌ، وَإِنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِالنَّاصِحِينَ.

About counsellors

Do not include among those you consult a miser who would keep you back from being generous and caution you against destitution, nor a coward who would make you feel too weak for your affairs, nor a greedy person who would make beautiful to you the collection of wealth by evil ways. This is because miserliness, cowardice and greed are different qualities that an unfavourable opinion of Allah brings together.

وَلاَ تُدْخِلَنَّ فِي مَشُورَتِكَ بَخِيلاً يَعْدِلُ بِكَ عَنِ الْفَضْلِ، وَيَعِدُكَ الْفَقْرَ، وَلاَ جَبَاناً يُضعِّفُكَ عَنِ الاُمُورِ، وَلاَ حَرِيصاً يُزَيِّنُ لَكَ الشَّرَهَ بِالْجَوْرِ، فَإِنَّ الْبُخْلَ وَالْجُبْنَ وَالْحِرْصَ غَرَائِزُ شَتَّى يَجْمَعُهَا سُوءُ الظَّنِّ بِاللهِ.

The worst minister for you is he who has been a minister for mischievous persons before you, and who joined them in sins. Therefore, he should not be your chief man, because they are abettors of sinners and brothers of the oppressors. You can find good substitutes for them who will be like them in their views and influence, while not being like them in sins and vices. They have never assisted an oppressor in his oppression or a sinner in his sin. They will give you the least trouble and the best support. They will be most considerate towards you and the least inclined towards others. Therefore, make them your chief companions in privacy as well as in public.

شَرُّ وُزَرَائِكَ مَنْ كَانَ لِلاَشْرَارِ قَبْلَكَ وَزِيراً، وَمَنْ شَرِكَهُمْ فِي الاْثَامِ، فَلاَ يَكُونَنَّ لَكَ بِطَانَةً، فَإِنَّهُمْ أَعْوَانُ الاَئِمَةِ، وَإِخْوَانُ الظَّلَمَةِ، وَأَنْتَ وَاجِدٌ مِنْهُمْ خَيْرَ الْخَلَفِ مِمَّنْ لَهُ مِثْلُ آرَائِهِمْ وَنَفَاذِهِمْ، وَلَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ مِثْلُ آصَارِهِمْ وَأَوْزَارِهِمْ وَ آثَامِهِمْ، مِمَّنْ لَمْ يُعَاوِنْ ظَالِماً عَلَى ظُلْمِهِ، وَلاَ آثِماً عَلَى إِثْمِهِ، أُولئِكَ أَخَفُّ عَلَيْكَ مَؤُونَةً، وَأَحْسَنُ لَكَ مَعُونَةً، وَأَحْنَى عَلَيْكَ عَطْفاً، وَأَقَلُّ لِغَيْرِكَ إِلْفاً، فَاتَّخِذْ أُولئِكَ خَاصَّةً لِخَلَوَاتِكَ وَحَفَلاَتِكَ،

Then, more preferable among them for you should be those who openly speak better truths before you and who support you least in those of your actions which Allah does not approve in His friends, even though they may be according to your wishes. Associate yourself with God-fearing and truthful people; then educate them, so that they should not praise you or please you by reason of an action you did not perform, because an excess of praise produces pride and drives you near haughtiness.

ثُمَّ لْيَكُنْ آثَرُهُمْ عِنْدَكَ أَقْوَلَهُمْ بِمُرِّ الْحَقِّ لَكَ، وأَقَلَّهُمْ مُسَاعَدَةً فِيما يَكُونُ مِنْكَ مِمَّا كَرِهَ اللهُ لاِوْلِيَائِهِ، وَاقِعاً ذلِكَ مِنْ هَوَاكَ حَيْثُ وَقَعَ. وَالْصَقْ بِأَهْلِ الْوَرَعِ وَالصِّدْقِ، ثُمَّ رُضْهُمْ عَلَى أَلاَّ يُطْرُوكَ وَلاَ يُبَجِّحُوكَ بِبَاطِلٍ لَمْ تَفْعَلْهُ، فَإِنَّ كَثْرَةَ الاْطْرَاءِ تُحْدِثُ الزَّهْوَ، وَتُدْنِي مِنَ الْعِزَّةِ.

The virtuous and the vicious should not be in equal position before you because this means dissuasion of the virtuous from virtue and persuasion of the vicious to vice. Keep everyone in the position which is his. You should know that the most conducive thing for the good impression of the ruler on his subjects is that he should extend good behaviour towards them, lighten their hardships, and avoid putting them to unbearable troubles.

You should therefore, in this way follow a course by which you will leave a good impression with your subjects, because such good ideas will relieve you of great worries. Certainly, the one most entitled to have a favourable impression of you is he whom whom you have treated well, and the one most entilted to have a bad opinion of you is he whom you have treated badly.

وَلاَ يَكُونَنَّ الْـمُحْسِنُ وَالْمُسِيءُ عِنْدَكَ بِمَنْزِلَة سَوَاء، فَإِنَّ فِي ذلِكَ تَزْهِيداً لاِهْلِ الاْحْسَانِ فِي الاْحْسَانِ،تَدْرِيباً لاِهْلِ

الأسَاءَةِ عَلَى الاسَاءَةِ، وَأَلْزِمْ كُلاًّ مِنْهُمْ مَا أَلْزَمَ نَفْسَهُ. وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ شَيْءٌ بِأَدْعَى إِلَى حُسْنِ ظَنِّ وَال بِرَعِيَّتِهِ مِنْ إِحْسَانِهِ إِلَيْهِمْ، وَتَخْفِيفِهِ الْمَؤُونَاتِ عَلَيْهِمْ، وَتَرْكِ اسْتِكْرَاهِهِ إِيَّاهُمْ عَلَى مَا لَيْسَ لَهُ قِبَلَهُمْ، فَلْيَكُنْ مِنْكَ فِي ذلِكَ أَمْرٌ يَجْتَمِعُ لَكَ بِهِ حُسْنُ الظَّنِّ بِرَعِيَّتِكَ، فَإِنَّ حُسْنَ الظَّنِّ يَقْطَعُ عَنْكَ نَصَباً طَوِيلاً، وَإِنَّ أَحَقَّ مَنْ حَسُنَ ظَنُّكَ بِهِ لَمَنْ حَسُنَ بَلاَؤُكَ عِنْدَهُ، وَإِنَّ أَحَقَّ مَنْ سَاءَ ظَنُّكَ بِهِ لَمَنْ سَاءَ بَلاَؤُكَ عِنْدَهُ.

Do not discontinue the good practices which the earlier people of this community had acted upon, by virtue of which there was general unity and through which the subjects prospered. Do not innovate any line of action which injures these earlier practices because (in that case) the reward for those who had established those practices will continue, but the burden for discontinuing them will be on you. Keep on increasing your conversations with the scholars and discussions with the wise to stabilize the prosperity of the areas under you, and to continue with that in which your predecessors had established.

وَلاَ تَنْقُضْ سُنَّةً صَالِحَةً عَمِلَ بِهَا صُدُورُ هذِهِ الأُمَّةِ، وَاجْتَمَعَتْ بِهَا الأُلْفَةُ، وَصَلَحَتْ عَلَيْهَا الرَّعِيَّةُ،لاَ تُحْدِثَنَّ سُنَّةً تَضُرُّ بِشَيءٍ مِنْ مَاضِي تِلْكَ السُّنَنِ، فَيَكُونَ الأَجْرُ بِمَنْ سَنَّهَا، وَالْوِزْرُ عَلَيْكَ بِمَا نَقَضْتَ مِنْهَا. وَأَكْثِرْ مُدَارَسَةَ الْعُلَمَاءِ، وَمُنَاقَثَةَ الْحُكَمَاءِ، فِي تَثْبِيتِ مَا صَلَحَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرُ بِلاَدِكَ، وَإِقَامَةِ مَا اسْتَقَامَ بِهِ النَّاسُ قَبْلَكَ.

The different classes of people

Know that the people consist of classes who prosper only with the help of one another, and they are not independent of one another. Among them are the army of Allah, then the secretarial workers of the common people and the chiefs, then the dispensers of justice, then those engaged in law and order, then the payers of head tax (jizyah) and land tax (kharaj) from the protected unbelievers and the common Muslims, then there are the traders and the men of industry and then the lowest class of the needy and the destitute. Allah has fixed the share of every one of them and laid down His precepts about the limits of each in His Book (Qur'an) and the sunnah of His Prophet by way of of a settlement which is preserved with us.

وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الرَّعِيَّةَ طَبَقَاتٌ لاَ يَصْلُحُ بَعْضُهَا إِلاَّ بِبَعْض، وَلاَ غِنَى بِبَعْضِهَا عَنْ بَعْض: فَمِنْهَا جُنُودُ اللهِ،مِنْهَا كُتَّابُ الْعَامَّةِ وَالْخَاصَّةِ، وَمِنْهَا قُضَاةُ الْعَدْلِ، وَمِنهَا عُمَّالُ الانْصَافِ وَالرِّفْقِ، وَمِنْهَا أَهْلُ الْجِزْيَةِ وَالْخَرَاجِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الذِّمَّةِ وَمُسْلِمَةِ النَّاسِ، وَمِنْهَا التُّجَّارُ وَأَهْلُ الصِّنَاعَاتِ، وَمِنهَا الطَّبَقَةُ السُّفْلَى مِنْ ذَوِي الْحَاجَةِ وَالْمَسْكَنَةِ، وَكُلٌّ قَدْ سَمَّى اللهُ سَهْمَهُ، وَوَضَعَ عَلَى حَدِّهِ وَفَرِيضَتِهِ فِي كِتَابِهِ أَوْ سُنَّةِ نَبِيِّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله)عَهْداً مِنْهُ عِنْدَنَا مَحْفُوظاً.

Now the army is, by the will of Allah, the fortress of the subjects, the ornament of the ruler, the strength of the religion and the means of peace. The subjects cannot exist without them while the army can be maintained only by the funds fixed by Allah in the revenues, through which they acquire the strength to fight the enemies, on which they depend for their prosperity, and with which they meet their needs. These two classes cannot exist without the third class namely the judges, the executives and the

secretaries who pass judgements about contracts, collect revenues and are depended upon in special and general matters.

فَالْجُنُودُ، بِإِذْنِ اللهِ، حُصُونُ الرَّعِيَّةِ، وَزَيْنُ الْوُلاَةِ، وعِزُّ الدِّينِ، وَسُبُلُ الاْمْنِ، وَلَيْسَ تَقُومُ الرَّعِيَّةُ إِلاَّ بِهِمْ. ثُمَّ لاَ قِوَامَ لِلْجُنُودِ إِلاَّ بِمَا يُخْرِجُ اللهُ لَهُمْ مِنَ الْخَرَاجِ الَّذِي يَقْوَوْنَ بِهِ فِي جِهَادِ عَدُوِهِمْ، وَيَعْتَمِدُونَ عَلَيْهِ فِيما أَصْلَحَهُمْ، وَيَكُونُ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حَاجَتِهِمْ. ثُمَّ لاَ قِوَامَ لِهذَيْنِ الصِّنْفَيْنِ إِلاَّ بِالصِّنْفِ الثَّالِثِ مِنَ الْقُضَاةِ وَالْعُمَّالِ وَالْكُتَّابِ، لِمَا يُحْكِمُونَ مِنَ الْمَعَاقِدِ، وَيَجْمَعُونَ مِنْ الْمَنَافِعِ، وَيُؤْتَمَنُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ خَوَاصِّ الاْمُورِ وَعَوَامِّهَا.

And these classes cannot exist except with the traders and men of industry, who provide necessities for them, establish markets and make it possible for others not to do all this with their own hands. Then is the lowest class of the needy and the destitute support of and help for whom is an obligation, and everyone of them has (a share in) livelihood in the name of Allah. Everyone of them has a right on the ruler according to what is needed for his prosperity. The ruler cannot acquit himself of the obligations laid on him by Allah in this matter except by striving and seeking help from Allah and by training himself to adhere to the right and by enduring on that account all that is light or hard.

وَلاَ قِوَامَ لَهُمْ جَمِيعاً إِلاَّ بِالتُّجَّارِ وَذَوِي الصِّنَاعَاتِ، فِيَما يَجْتَمِعُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ مَرَافِقِهِمْ، وَيُقِيمُونَهُ مِنْ أَسْوَاقِهِمْ، وَيَكْفُونَهُمْ مِنَ التَّرَفُّقِ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ مما لاَ يَبْلُغُهُ رِفْقُ غَيْرِهِمْ. ثُمَّ الطَّبَقَةُ السُّفْلَى مِنْ أَهْلِ الْحَاجَةِ وَالْمَسْكَنَةِ الَّذِينَ يَحِقُّ رِفْدُهُمْ وَمَعُونَتُهُمْ. وَفِي اللهِ لِكُلّ سَعَةٌ، وَلِكُلّ عَلَى الْوَالِي حَقٌ بِقَدْرِ مَا يُصْلِحُهُ. وَلَيْسَ يَخْرُجُ الْوَالِي مِنْ حَقِيقَةِ مَا أَلْزَمَهُ اللهُ مِنْ ذلِكَ إِلاَّ بِالاْهْتِمامِ وَالاسْتِعَانَةِ بِاللهِ، وَتَوْطِينِ نَفْسِهِ عَلَى لُزُومِ الْحَقّ، وَالصَّبْرِ عَلَيْهِ فِيَما خَفَّ عَلَيْهِ أَوْ ثَقُلَ.

1. The Army

Put in command of your forces the man who in your view is the best well – wisher of Allah, His Prophet and your Imam. The chastest of them in heart and the highest of them in endurance is he who is slow in getting enraged, accepts excuses, is kind to the weak and is strict with the strong; violence should not raise his temper and weakness should not keep him sitting.

فَوَلِّ مِنْ جُنُودِكَ أَنْصَحَهُمْ فِي نَفْسِكَ لله وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَلإِمَامِكَ، وَأَنْقَاهُمْ جَيْباً، وَأَفْضَلَهُمْ حِلْماً مِمَّنْ يُبْطِىءُ عَنِ الْغَضَبِ، وَيَسْتَرِيحُ إِلَى الْعُذْرِ، وَيَرْأَفُ بِالضُّعَفَاءِ، وَيَنْبُو عَلَى الاْقْوِيَاءِ، وَمِمَّنْ لاَ يُثِيرُهُ الْعُنْفُ، وَلاَ يَقْعُدُ بِهِ الضَّعْفُ.

Also associate with considerate people from high families, virtuous houses and decent traditions, then people of courage, valour, generosity and benevolence, because they are repositories of honour and springs of virtues. Strive for their matters as the parents strive for their child. Do not regard anything that you do to strengthen them as big nor consider anything that you have agreed to do for them as little (so as to give it up), even though it may be small, because this will make them your well–wishers and create a good impression of you. Do not neglect to attend to their small matters, confining yourself to their

important matters, because your small favours will also be of benefit to them while the important ones are such that they cannot ignore them.

ثُمَّ الْصَقْ بَذَوِي الْمُرُوءَاتِ وَالاحْسَابِ، وَأَهْلِ الْبُيُوتَاتِ الصَّالِحَةِ، وَالسَّوَابِقِ الْحَسَنَةِ، ثُمَّ أَهْلِ النَّجْدَةِ وَالشَّجَاعَةِ، وَالسَّخَاءِ وَالسَّمَاحَةِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ جِمَاعٌ مِنَ الْكَرَمِ، وَشُعَبٌ مِنَ الْعُرْفِ. ثُمَّ تَفَقَّدْ مِنْ أُمُورِهِمْ مَا يَتَفَقَّدُهُ الْوَالِدَانِ مِنْ وَلَدِهِمَا، وَلاَ يَتَفَاقَمَنَّ فِي نَفْسِكَ شَيْءٌ قَوَّيْتَهُمْ بِهِ، وَلاَ تَحْقِرَنَّ لُطْفاً تَعَاهَدْتَهُمْ بِهِ وَإِنْ قَلَّ، فَإِنَّهُ دَاعِيَةٌ لَهُمْ إِلَى بَذْلِ النَّصِيحَةِ لَكَ، وَحُسْنِ الظَّنِّ بِكَ. وَلاَ تَدَعْ تَفَقُّدَ لَطِيفِ أُمُورِهِمُ اتِّكَالاً عَلَى جَسِيمِهَا، فَإِنَّ لِلْيَسِيرِ مِنْ لُطْفِكَ مَوْضِعاً يَنْتَفِعُونَ بِهِ، وَلِلْجَسِيمِ مَوْقِعاً لاَ يَسْتَغْنُونَ عَنْهُ.

That commander of the army should have such a position before you that he renders help to them equitably and spends from his money on them and on those of their families who remain behind so that all their worries converge on the one worry for fighting the enemy. Your kindness to them will turn their hearts to you. The most pleasant thing for the rulers is the establishment of justice in their areas and the manifestation of the love of their subjects, but the subjects' love manifests itself only when their hearts are clean. Their good wishes prove correct only when they surround their commanders (to protect them). Do not regard their positions to be a burden over them and do not keep watching for the end of their tenure. Therefore, be broad-minded in regard to their desires, continue praising them and recounting the good deeds of those who have shown such deeds, because the mention of good actions shakes the brave and rouses the weak, if Allah so wills.

وَلْيَكُنْ آثَرُ رُؤُوسِ جُنْدِكَ عِنْدَكَ مَنْ وَاسَاهُمْ فِي مَعُونَتِهِ، وَأَفْضَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ جِدَتِهِ بِمَا يَسَعُهُمْ يَسَعُ مَنْ وَرَاءَهُمْ مِنْ خُلُوفِ أَهْلِيهِمْ حَتَّى يَكُونَ هَمُّهُمْ هَمّاً وَاحِداً فِي جِهَادِ الْعَدُوِّ، فَإِنَّ عَطْفَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ يَعْطِفُ قُلُوبَهُمْ عَلَيْكَ. وَإِنَّ أَفْضَلَ قُرَّةِ عَيْنِ الْوُلاَةِ اسْتِقَامَةُ الْعَدْلِ فِي الْبِلاَدِ، وَظُهُورُ مَوَدَّةِ الرَّعِيَّةِ، وَإِنَّهُ لاَ تَظْهَرُ مَوَدَّتُهُمْ إِلاَّ بِسَلاَمَةِ صُدُورِهِمْ، وَلاَ تَصِحُّ نَصِيحَتُهُمْ إِلاَّ بِحِيطَتِهِمْ عَلَى وُلاَةِ أُمُورِهِمْ، وَقِلَّةِ اسْتِثْقَالِ دُوَلِهِمْ، وَتَرْكِ اسْتِبْطَاءِ انْقِطَاعِ مُدَّتِهِمْ. فَافْسَحْ فِي آمَالِهِمْ، وَوَاصِلْ فِي حُسْنِ الثَّنَاءِ عَلَيْهِمْ، وَتَعْدِيدِ مَا أَبْلَى ذَوُوالْبَلاَءِ مِنْهُمْ، فَإِنَّ كَثْرَةَ الذِّكْرِ لِحُسْنِ أَفْعَالِهِمْ تَهُزُّ الشُّجَاعَ، وَتُحَرِّضُ النَّاكِلَ، إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ.

Appreciate the performance of every one of them, do not attribute the performance of one to the other, and do not minimize the reward below the level of the performance. The high position of a man should not lead you to regard his small deeds as big, nor should the low position of a man make you regard his big deeds as small.

ثُمَّ اعْرِفْ لِكُلِّ امْرِىء مِنْهُمْ مَا أَبْلَى، وَلاَ تَضُمَّنَّ بَلاَءَ امْرِىء إِلَى غَيْرِهِ، وَلاَ تُقَصِّرَنَّ بِهِ دُونَ غَايَةِ بَلاَئِهِ، وَلاَ يَدْعُوَنَّكَ شَرَفُ امْرِىء إِلَى أَنْ تُعْظِمَ مِنْ بَلاَئِهِ مَا كَانَ صَغِيراً، وَلاَضَعَةُ امْرِىء إِلَى أَنْ تَسْتَصْغِرَ مِنْ بَلاَئِهِ مَاكَانَ عَظِيماً.

Refer to Allah and His Prophet the affairs which wory you and matters which appear confusing to you, because, addressing the people whom Allah the Sublime, wishes to guide, He said:

***O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Prophet and those vested with authority from among you: and then if you quarrel about anything refer it to Allah and the Prophet if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day* (*of Judgement*)*. . .* (Qur'an, 4:59)**

Referring to Allah means to act according to what is clear in His Book and referring to the Prophet means to follow his unanimously agreed Sunnah in regard to which there are no differences.

وَارْدُدْ إِلَى الله وَرَسُولِهِ مَا يُضْلِعُكَ مِنَ الْخُطُوبِ، وَيَشْتَبِهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الاْمُورِ، فَقَدْ قَالَ اللهُ سبحانه لِقَوْمٍ أَحَبَّ إِرْشَادَهُمْ: (يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الاْمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللهِ وَالرَّسُولِ)، فَالرَّدُّ إِلَى اللهِ: الاْخْذُ بِمُحْكَمِ كِتَابِهِ، وَالرَّدُّ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ: الاْخْذُ بِسُنَّتِهِ الْجَامِعَةِ غَيْرِ الْمُفَرِّقَةِ.

2. The Chief Judge

For the settlement of disputes among people select him who is the most distinguished of your subjects in your view. The cases (coming before him) should not vex him, disputation should not enrage him, he should not insist on any wrong point, and should not grudge accepting the truth when he perceives it; he should not lean towards greed and should not content himself with a cursory understanding (of a matter) without going thoroughly into it.

He should be most ready to stop (to ponder) on doubtful points, most regardful of arguments, least disgusted at the quarrel of litigants, most patient at probing into matters and most fearless at the time of passing judgement. Praise should not make him vain and elation should not make him lean (to any side). Such people are very few.

ثُمَّ اخْتَرْ لِلْحُكْمِ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَفْضَلَ رَعِيَّتِكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ، مِمَّنْ لاَ تَضِيقُ بِهِ الاْمُورُ، وَلاَ تُمَحِّكُهُ الْخُصُومُ، وَلاَ يَتَمادَى فِي الزَّلَّةِ، وَلاَ يَحْصَرُ مِنَ الْفَيْءِ إِلَى الْحَقِّ إِذَا عَرَفَهُ، وَلاَ تُشْرِفُ نَفْسُهُ عَلَى طَمَعٍ، وَلاَ يَكْتَفِي بِأَدْنَى فَهْمٍ دُونَ أَقْصَاهُ، أَوْقَفَهُمْ فِي الشُّبُهَاتِ، وَآخَذَهُمْ بِالْحُجَجِ، وَأَقَلَّهُمْ تَبَرُّماً بِمُرَاجَعَةِ الْخَصْمِ، وَأَصْبَرَهُمْ عَلَى تَكَشُّفِ الاْمُورِ، وَأَصْرَمَهُمْ عِنْدَ اتِّضَاحِ الْحُكْمِ، مِمَّنْ لاَ يَزْدَهِيهِ إِطْرَاءٌ، وَلاَ يَسْتَمِيلُهُ إِغْرَاءٌ،أُولئِكَ قَلِيلٌ.

Then, very often check his decisions and allow him so much money (as remuneration) that he has no excuse worth hearing (for not being honest) and there remains no occasion for him to go to others for his needs. Give him that rank in your audience for which no one else among your chiefs aspires, so that he remains safe from the harm of those around you. You should have a piercing eye in this matter because this religion has formerly been a prisoner in the hands of vicious persons when action was taken according to passion, and worldly wealth was sought.

ثُمَّ أَكْثِرْ تَعَاهُدَ قَضَائِهِ، وافْسَحْ لَهُ فِي الْبَذْلِ مَا يُزِيلُ عِلَّتَهُ، وَتَقِلُّ مَعَهُ حَاجَتُهُ إِلَى النَّاسِ، وَأَعْطِهِ مِنَ الْمَنْزِلَةِ لَدَيْكَ مَا لاَ يَطْمَعُ فِيهِ غَيْرُهُ مِنْ خَاصَّتِكَ، لِيَأْمَنَ بِذلِكَ اغْتِيَالَ الرِّجَالِ لَهُ عِنْدَكَ. فَانْظُرْ فِي ذلِكَ نَظَراً بَلِيغاً، فَإِنَّ هذَا الدِّينَ قَدْ كَانَ

أَسِيراً فِي أَيْدِي الاْشْرَارِ، يُعْمَلُ فِيهِ بِالْهَوَى، وَتُطْلَبُ بِهِ الدُّنْيَا.

3. Executive Officers

Thereafter, look into the affairs of your executives. Give them appointment after tests and do not appoint them according to partiality or favouritism, because these two things constitute sources of injustice and unfairness. Select from among them those who are people of experience and modesty, hailing from virtuous houses, having been previously in Islam, because such persons possess high manners and untarnished honour. They are the least inclined towards greed and always have their eyes on the ends of matters.

ثُمَّ انْظُرْ فِي أُمُورِ عُمَّالِكَ، فَاسْتَعْمِلْهُمُ اخْتِبَاراً، وَلاَ تُوَلِّهِمْ مُحَابَاةً وأَثَرَةً، فَإِنَّهُمَا جِمَاعٌ مِنْ شُعَبِ الْجَوْرِ وَالْخِيَانَةِ. وَتوَخَّ مِنْهُمْ أَهْلَ التَّجْرِبَةِ وَالْحَيَاءِ، مِنْ أَهْلِ الْبُيُوتَاتِ الصَّالِحَةِ، وَالْقَدَمِ فِي الاْسْلاَمِ الْمُتَقَدِّمَةِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ أَكْرَمُ أَخْلاَقاً، وَأَصَحُّ أَعْرَاضاً، وَأَقَلُّ فِي الْمَطَامِعِ إِشْرَافاً، وَأَبْلَغُ فِي عَوَاقِبِ الاْمُورِ نَظَراً.

Give them an abundant livelihood (by way of salary) because this gives them the strength to maintain themselves in order and not to have an eye upon the funds in their custody, and it would be an argument against them if they disobeyed your orders or misappropriated your trust. You should also check their activities and have people who report on them who should be truthful and faithful, because your watching their actions secretly will urge them to preserve trust with and to be kind to the people. Be careful of assistants. If any one of them extends his hands towards misappropriation and the reports of your reporters reaching you confirm it, that should be regarded enough evidence. You should then inflict corporal punishment on him and recover what he has misappropriated. You should put him in a place of disgrace, blacklist him with (the charge of) misappropriation and make him wear the necklace of shame for his offence.

ثُمَّ أَسْبِغْ عَلَيْهِمُ الاْرْزَاقَ، فَإِنَّ ذلِكَ قُوَّةٌ لَهُمْ عَلَى اسْتِصْلاَحِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ، وَغِنىً لَهُمْ عَنْ تَنَاوُلِ مَا تَحْتَ أَيْدِيهِمْ، وَحُجَّةٌ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنْ خَالَفُوا أَمْرَكَ أَوْ ثَلَمُوا أَمَانَتَكَ. ثُمَّ تَفَقَّدْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ، وَابْعَثِ الْعُيُونَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الصِّدْقِ وَالْوَفَاءِ عَلَيْهِمْ، فَإِنَّ تَعَاهُدَكَ فِي السِّرِّ لاِمُورِهِمْ حَدْوَةٌ لَهُمْ عَلَى اسْتِعْمَالِ الاْمَانَةِ، وَالرِّفْقِ بِالرَّعِيَّةِ. وَتَحَفَّظْ مِنَ الاْعْوَانِ، فَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِنْهُمْ بَسَطَ يَدَهُ إِلَى خِيَانَة اجْتَمَعَتْ بِهَا عَلَيْهِ عِنْدَكَ أَخْبَارُ عُيُونِكَ، اكْتَفَيْتَ بِذلِكَ شَاهِداً، فَبَسَطْتَ عَلَيْهِ الْعُقُوبَةَ فِي بَدَنِهِ، وَأَخَذْتَهُ بِمَا أَصَابَ مِنْ عَمَلِهِ، ثُمَّ نَصَبْتَهُ بِمَقَامِ الْمَذَلَّةِ، وَ وَسَمْتَهُ بِالْخِيانَةِ، وَقَلَّدْتَهُ عَارَ التُّهَمَةِ.

4. The Administration of Revenues

Look after the revenue (kharaj or land tax) affairs in such a way that those engaged in it remain prosperous because in their prosperity lies the prosperity of all others. The others cannot prosper without them, because all people are dependent on revenue and its payers. You should also keep an eye on the cultivation of the land more than on the collection of revenue because revenue cannot be had without

cultivation and whoever asks for revenue without cultivation, ruins the area and brings death to the people. His rule will not last only a moment.

وَتفقَّدْ أَمْرَ الْخَرَاجِ بِمَا يُصْلِحُ أَهْلَهُ، فَإِنَّ فِي صلاَحِهِ وَصلاَحِهِمْ صَلاَحاً لِمَنْ سِوَاهُمْ، وَلاَ صَلاَحَ لِمَنْ سِوَاهُمْ إِلاَّ بِهِمْ، لاَنَّ النَّاسَ كُلَّهُمْ عِيَالٌ عَلَى الْخَرَاجِ وَأَهْلِهِ. وَلْيَكُنْ نَظَرُكَ فِي عِمَارَةِ الاَرْضِ أَبْلَغَ مِنْ نَظَرِكَ فِي اسْتِجْلاَبِ الْخَرَاجِ، لاِنَّ ذلِكَ لاَ يُدْرَكُ إِلاَّ بَالْعِمَارَةِ، وَمَنْ طَلَبَ الْخَرَاجَ بِغَيْرِ عِمَارَة أَخْرَبَ الْبِلاَدَ، وَأَهْلَكَ الْعِبَادَ، وَلَمْ يَسْتَقِمْ أَمْرُهُ إِلاَّ قَلِيلاً.

If they complain of the heaviness (of the revenue) or of diseases, or dearth of water, or excess of water or of a change in the condition of the land either due to flood or to drought, you should remit the revenue to the extent that you hope will improve their position. The remission granted by you for the removal of distress from them should not be grudged by you, because it is an investment which they will return to you in the shape of the prosperity of your country and the progress of your domain in addition to earning their praise and happiness for meeting out justice to them.

You can depend upon their strength because of the investment made by you in them through catering to their convenience, and can have confidence in them because of the justice cxtended to them by being kind to them. After that, circumstances may so turn that you may have to ask for their assistance, when they will bear it happily, for prosperity is capable of hearing whatever you load on it. The ruin of the land is caused hy the poverty of the cultivators, while the cultivators become poor when the officers concentrate on the collection (of money), having little hope for continuance (in their posts) and deriving no benefit from objects of warning.

فَإِنْ شَكَوْا ثِقَلاً أَوْ عِلَّةً، أَوِ انْقِطَاعَ شِرْب أَوْ بَالَّة، أَوْ إِحَالَةَ أَرْض اغْتَمَرَهَا غَرَقٌ، أَوْ أَجْحَفَ بِهَا عَطَشٌ، خَفَّفْتَ عَنْهُمْ بِما تَرْجُو أَنْ يصلُحَ بِهِ أَمْرُهُمْ، وَلاَ يَثْقُلَنَّ عَلَيْكَ شَيْءٌ خَفَّفْتَ بِهِ الْمَؤُونَةَ عَنْهُمْ، فَإِنَّهُ ذُخْرٌ يَعُودُونَ بِهِ عَلَيْكَ فِي عِمَارَةِ بِلادِكَ، وَتَزْيِينِ وِلاَيَتِكَ، مَعَ اسْتِجْلاَبِكَ حُسْنَ ثَنَائِهِمْ، وَتَبَجُّحِكَ بِاسْتِفَاضَةِ الْعَدْلِ فِيهِمْ، مُعْتَمِداً فَضْلَ قُوَّتِهِمْ، بِمَا ذَخَرْتَ عِنْدَهُمْ مِنْ إِجْمَامِكَ لَهُمْ، وَالثِّقَةَ مِنْهُمْ بِمَا عَوَّدْتَهُمْ مِنْ عَدْلِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ فِي رِفْقِكَ بِهِمْ، فَرُبَّمَا حَدَثَ مِنَ الاُمُورِ مَا إِذَا عَوَّلْتَ فِيهِ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ بَعْدُ احْتَمَلُوهُ طَيِّبَةً أَنْفُسُهُمْ بِهِ، فَإِنَّ الْعُمْرَانَ مُحْتَمِلٌ مَا حَمَّلْتَهُ، وَإِنَّمَا يُؤْتَى خَرَابُ الاَرْضِ مِنْ إِعْوَازِ أَهْلِهَا،إِنَّمَا يُعْوِزُ أَهْلُهَا لاِشْرَافِ أَنْفُسِ الْوُلاَةِ عَلَى الْجَمْعِ، وَسُوءِ ظَنِّهِمْ بِالْبَقَاءِ، وَقِلَّةِ انْتِفَاعِهِمْ بِالْعِبَرِ.

5. The Clerical Establishment

Then you should take care of your secretarial workers. Put the best of them in charge of your affairs. Entrust those of your letters which contain your policies and secrets to him who possesses the best character, who is not elated by honours, lest he dares speak against you in common audiences. He should also not be negligent in presenting the communications of your officers before you and issuing correct replies to them on your behalf and in matters of your receipts and payments. He should not make any damaging argreement on your behalf and should not fail in repudiating an agreement against you. He should not be ignorant of the extent of his own position in matters because he who is ignorant of his

own position is (even) more ignorant of the position of others.

ثُمَّ انْظُرْ فِي حَالِ كُتَّابِكَ، فَوَلِّ عَلَى أُمُورِكَ خَيْرَهُمْ، وَاخْصُصْ رَسَائِلَكَ الَّتِي تُدْخِلُ فِيهَا مَكَائِدَكَ وَأَسْرَارَكَ بِأَجْمَعِهِمْ لِوُجُودِ صَالِحِ الْأَخْلَاقِ مِمَّنْ لاَ تُبْطِرُهُ الْكَرَامَةُ، فَيَجْتَرِىءَ بِهَا عَلَيْكَ فِي خِلاَف لَكَ بِحَضْرَةِ مَلاَ وَلاَ تُقَصِّرُ بِهِ الْغَفْلَةُ عَنْ إِيرَادِ مُكَاتَبَاتِ عُمَّالِكَ عَلَيْكَ، وَإِصْدَارِ جَوَابَاتِهَا عَلَى الصَّوابِ عَنْكَ، وَفِيمَا يَأْخُذُ لَكَ وَيُعْطِي مِنْكَ، وَلاَ يُضعِفُ عَقْداً اعْتَقَدَهُ لَكَ، وَلاَ يَعْجِزُ عَنْ إِطْلاَقِ مَا عُقِدَ عَلَيْكَ، وَلاَ يَجْهَلُ مَبْلَغَ قَدْرِ نَفسِهِ فِي الْأُمُورِ، فَإِنَّ الْجَاهِلَ بِقَدْرِ نَفْسِهِ يَكُونُ بِقَدْرِ غَيْرِهِ أَجْهَلَ.

Your selection of these people should not be on the basis of your understanding (of them), confidence and your good impression, because people catch the ideas of the officers through affectation and personal service and there is nothing in it which is like well-wishing or trustfulness. You should rather test them by what they did under the virtuous people before you. Take a decision in favour of one who has a good name among the common people and is the most renowned in trustworthiness, because this will be a proof of your regard for Allah and for him on whose behalf you have been appointed to this position (namely your Imam). Establish one chief for every department of work. He should not be incapable of big matters, and a rush of work should not perplex him. Whenever there is a defect in your secretaries which you overlook, then you will be held responsible for it.

ثُمَّ لاَ يَكُنِ اخْتِيَارُكَ إِيَّاهُمْ عَلَى فِرَاسَتِك وَاسْتِنَامَتِكَ وَحُسْنِ الظَّنِّ مِنْكَ، فَإِنَّ الرِّجَالَ يَتَعَرَّفُونَ لِفِرَاسَاتِ الْوُلاَةِ بِتَصَنُّعِهِمْ وَحُسْنِ خِدْمَتِهِمْ، لَيْسَ وَرَاءَ ذلِكَ مِنَ النَّصِيحَةِ وَالْأَمَانَةِ شَيْءٌ، وَلكِنِ اخْتَبِرْهُمْ بِمَا وَلُّوا لِلصَّالِحِينَ قَبْلَكَ، فَاعْمِدْ لِأَحْسَنِهِمْ كَانَ فِي الْعَامَّةِ أَثَراً، وَأَعْرَفِهِمْ بِالْأَمَانَةِ وَجْهاً، فَإِنَّ ذلِكَ دَلِيلٌ عَلَى نَصِيحَتِكَ لله وَلِمَنْ وَلِيتَ أَمْرَهُ.

وَاجْعَلْ لِرَأْسِ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ مِنْ أُمُورِكَ رَأْساً مِنْهُمْ، لاَ يَقْهَرُهُ كَبِيرُهَا، وَلاَ يَتَشَتَّتُ عَلَيْهِ كَثِيرُهَا، وَمَهْمَا كَانَ فِي كُتَّابِكَ مِنْ عَيْب فَتَغَابَيْتَ عَنْه أُلْزِمْتَهُ.

6. Traders and Industrialists

Now take some advice about traders and industrialists. Give them good counsel whether they be settled (shop-keepers) or traders or physical labourers because they are sources of profit and the means of the provision of useful articles. They bring them from distant and far-flung areas throughout the land and sea, plains or mountains, from where people cannot come and to where they do not dare to go, for they are peaceful and there is no fear of revolt from them, and they are quite without fear of treason.

ثُمَّ اسْتَوْصِ بِالتُّجَّارِ وَذَوِي الصِّنَاعَاتِ، وَأَوْصِ بِهِمْ خَيْراً: الْمُقِيمِ مِنْهُمْ، وَالْمُضْطَرِبِ بِمَالِهِ، وَالْمُتَرَفِّقِ بِبَدَنِهِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ مَوَادُّ الْمَنَافِعِ، وَأَسْبَابُ الْمَرَافِقِ، وَجُلاَّبُهَا مِنَ الْمَبَاعِدِ وَالْمَطَارِحِ، فِي بَرِّكَ وَبَحْرِكَ، وَسَهْلِكَ وَجَبَلِكَ، وَحَيْثُ لاَ يَلْتَئِمُ النَّاسُ لِمَوَاضِعِهَا، وَلاَ يَجْتَرِئُونَ عَلَيْهَا، فَإِنَّهُمْ سِلْمٌ لاَ تُخَافُ بَائِقَتُهُ، وَصُلْحٌ لاَ تُخْشَى غَائِلَتُهُ،

Look after their affairs before yourself or wherever they may be in your area. Know, along with this, that most of them are very narrow-minded, and awfully avaricious. They hoard goods for profiteering and fix high prices for goods. This is a source of harm to the people and a blot on the officers in charge. Stop people from hoarding, because the Messenger of Allah (S) has prohibited it. The sale should be smooth, with correct weights and prices, not harmful to either party, the seller or the purchaser; whoever commits hoarding after you prohibit it, give him exemplary but not excessive punishment.

وَتَفَقَّدْ أُمُورَهُمْ بِحَضْرَتِكَ وَفِي حَوَاشِي بِلاَدِكَ. وَاعْلَمْ - مَعَ ذلِكَ - أَنَّ فِي كَثِير مِنْهُمْ ضِيقاً فَاحِشاً، وَشُحّاً قَبِيحاً، وَاحْتِكَاراً لِلْمَنَافِعِ، وَتَحَكُّماً فِي الْبِيَاعَاتِ، وَذلِكَ بَابُ مَضَرَّة لِلْعَامَّةِ، وَعَيْبٌ عَلَى الْوُلاَةِ، فَامْنَعْ مِنَ الاْحْتِكَارِ، فَإِنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ(صلى الله عليه وآله) مَنَعَ مِنْهُ. وَلْيَكُنِ الْبَيْعُ بَيْعاً سَمْحاً: بِمَوَازِينِ عَدْل، وَأَسْعَار لاَ تُجْحِفُ بِالْفَرِيقَيْنِ مِنَ الْبَائِعِ وَالْمُبْتَاعِ، فَمَنْ قَارَفَ حُكْرَةً بَعْدَ نَهْيِكَ إِيَّاهُ فَنَكِّلْ وَعَاقِبْ فِي غَيْرِ إِسْرَاف.

7. The Lowest Class

(Fear) Allah and keep Allah in view in respect of the lowest class, consisting of those who have few means: the poor, the destitute, the penniless and the disabled; because in this class are both the self-contained needy and those who beg. Take care for the sake of Allah of His obligations towards them for which He has made you responsible. Fix for them a share from the public funds and a share from the crops of lands taken over as booty for Islam in every area, because in it the remote ones have the same shares as the near ones. All these people are those whose rights have been placed in your charge. Therefore, a luxurious life should not keep you away from them You cannot be excused for ignoring small matters because you were deciding big problems. Consequently, do not be unmindful of them, nor turn your face from them out of vanity.

ثُمَّ اللهَ اللهَ فِي الطَّبَقَةِ السُّفْلَى مِنَ الَّذِينَ لاَ حِيلَةَ لَهُمْ وَالْمَسَاكِين وَالْـمُحْتَاجِينَ وَأَهْلِ الْبُؤْسَى وَالزَّمْنَى، فَإِنَّ فِي هذِهِ الطَّبَقَةِ قَانِعاً وَمُعْتَرّاً، وَاحْفَظْ لله مَا اسْتَحْفَظَكَ مِنْ حَقِّهِ فِيهِمْ، وَاجْعَلْ لَهُمْ قِسماً مِنْ بَيْتِ مَالِكَ، وَقِسماً مِنْ غَلاَّتِ صَوَافِي الاْسْلاَمِ فِي كُلِّ بَلَد، فَإِنَّ لِلاْقْصَى مِنْهُمْ مِثْلَ الَّذِي لِلاْدْنَى، وَكُلٌّ قَدِ اسْتُرْعِيتَ حَقَّهُ، فَلاَ يَشْغَلَنَّكَ عَنْهُمْ بَطَرٌ، فَإِنَّكَ لاَ تُعْذَرُ بِتَضْيِيعِ التَّافِهَ لِاِحْكَامِكَ الْكَثِيرَ الْمُهِمَّ. فَلاَ تُشْخِصْ هَمَّكَ عَنْهُمْ، وَلاَ تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لَهُمْ

Take care of the affairs of those of them who do not approach you among those who are looked at with contempt and whom people regard as low. Appoint for them some trusted people who are God-fearing and humble. They should infrom you of these people's conditions. Then deal with them with a sense of responsibility to Allah on the day you will meet Him, because of all the subjects these people are the most deserving of equitable treatment, while for others also you should fulfil their rights so as to render account to Allah.

وَتَفَقَّدْ أُمُورَ مَنْ لاَ يَصِلُ إِلَيْكَ مِنْهُمْ مِمَّنْ تَقْتَحِمُهُ الْعُيُونُ، وَتَحْقِرُهُ الرِّجَالُ، فَفَرِّغْ لِاولئِكَ ثِقَتَكَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْخَشْيَةِ وَالتَّوَاضُعِ، فَلْيَرْفَعْ إِلَيْكَ أُمُورَهُمْ، ثُمَّ اعْمَلْ فِيهِمْ بِالاْعْذَارِ إِلَى اللهِ تَعَالَى يَوْمَ تَلْقَاهُ، فَإِنَّ هؤُلاَءِ مِنْ بَيْنِ الرَّعِيَّةِ أَحْوَجُ إِلَى

الانصَافِ مِنْ غَيْرِهِمْ، وَكُلٌّ فَأَعْذِرْ إِلَى اللهِ تَعَالَى فِي تَأْدِيَةِ حَقِّهِ إِلَيهِ.

Take care of the orphans and the aged who have no means (for livelihood) nor are they ready for begging. This is heavy on the officers; in fact, every right is heavy. Allah lightens it for those who seek the next world and so they endure (hardships) upon themselves and trust on the truthfulness of Allah's promise to them. And fix a time for complainants wherein you make yourself free for them, and sit for them in common audience and feel humble therein for the sake of Allah who created you. (On that occasion) you should keep away your army and your assistants such as the guards and the police so that anyone who like to speak may speak to you without fear, because I have heard the Messenger of Allah (S) say in more than one place, "The people among whom the right of the weak is not secured from the strong without fear will never achieve purity." Tolerate their awkwardness and inability to speak. Keep away from you narrowness and haughtiness; Allah would, on this account, spread over you the skirts of His mercy and assign the reward of His obedience for you. Whatever you give, give it joyfully, but when you refuse, do it handsomely and with excuses.

وَتَعَهَّدْ أَهْلَ الْيُتْمِ وَذَوِي الرِّقَّةِ فِي السِّنِّ مِمَّنْ لاَ حِيلَةَ لَهُ، وَلاَ يَنْصِبُ لِلْمَسْأَلَةِ نَفْسَهُ، وَذلِكَ عَلَى الْوُلاَةِ ثَقِيلٌ، وَالْحَقُّ كُلُّهُ ثَقِيلٌ، وَقَدْ يُخَفِّفُهُ اللهُ عَلَى أَقْوَام طَلَبُوا الْعَاقِبَةَ فَصَبَرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ، وَوَثِقُوا بِصِدْقِ مَوْعُودِ اللهِ لَهُمْ. وَاجْعَلْ لِذَوِي الْحَاجَاتِ مِنْكَ قِسْماً تُفَرِّغُ لَهُمْ فِيهِ شَخْصَكَ، وَتَجْلِسُ لَهُمْ مَجْلِساً عَامّاً، فَتَتَواضَعُ فِيهِ لله الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ، وَتُقعِدُ عَنْهُمْ جُنْدَكَ وَأَعْوَانَكَ مِنْ أَحْرَاسِكَ وَشُرَطِكَ، حَتَّى يُكَلِّمَكَ مُتَكَلِّمُهُمْ غَيْرَ مُتَعْتِع، فَإِنِّي سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ(عليه السلام) يَقُولُ فِي غَيْرِ مَوْطِن: "لَنْ تُقَدَّسَ أُمَّةٌ لاَ يُؤْخَذُ لِلضَّعِيفِ فِيهَا حَقُّهُ مِنَ الْقَوِيِّ غَيْرَ مُتَعْتِع". ثُمَّ احْتَمِلِ الْخُرْقَ مِنْهُمْ وَالْعِيَّ، وَنَحِّ عَنْكَ الضِّيقَ وَالأَنَفَ، يَبْسُطِ اللهُ عَلَيْكَ بِذلِكَ أَكْنَافَ رَحْمَتِهِ، وَيُوجِبُ لَكَ ثَوَابَ طَاعَتِهِ، وَأَعْطِ مَا أَعْطَيْتَ هَنِيئاً، وَامْنَعْ فِي إِجْمَال وَإِعْذَار .

Then there are certain matters which you cannot avoid performing yourself. For example, replying to your officers when your secretaries are unable to do so, or disposing of the complaints of the people when your assistants shirk them. Finish every day the work meant for it, because every day has its own work. Keep for yourself the better and greater portion of these periods for the worship of Allah, although all these items are for Allah provided the intention is pure and the subjects prosper thereby.

ثُمَّ أُمُورٌ مِنْ أُمُورِكَ لاَ بُدَّ لَكَ مِنْ مُبَاشَرَتِهَا: مِنْهَا إِجَابَةُ عُمَّالِكَ بِمَا يَعْيَا عَنْهُ كُتَّابُكَ، وَمِنْهَا إِصْدَارُ حَاجَاتِ النَّاسِ عِنْدَ وُرُودِهَا عَلَيْكَ مِمَّا تَحْرَجُ بِهِ صُدُورُ أَعْوَانِكَ. وَأَمْضِ لِكُلِّ يَوْم عَمَلَهُ، فَإِنَّ لِكُلِّ يَوْم مَا فِيهِ، وَاجْعَلْ لِنَفْسِكَ فِيمَا بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ اللهِ تعالى أَفْضَلَ تِلْكَ الْمَوَاقِيتِ، وَأَجْزَلَ تِلْكَ الأَقْسَامِ، وَإِنْ كَانَتْ كُلُّهَا لله إِذَا صَلَحَتْ فِيهَا النِّيَّةُ، وَسَلِمَتْ مِنْهَا الرَّعِيَّةُ.

Communion with Allah

The particular thing by which you should purify your religion for Allah should be the fulfilment of those

obligations which are especially for Him. Therefore, devote to Allah some of your physical activity during the night and the day, and whatever (worship) you perform for seeking nearness to Allah should be complete, without defect or deficiency, whatsoever physical exertion it may involve. When you lead the prayers for the people, then do not scare them away from it (by prolonging it) nor waste it (by making it too short), because among the people there are the sick as well as those who have needs of their own. When the Messenger of Allah (S) sent me to Yemen I enquired how I should offer prayers with them and he replied, "Say the prayers as the weakest of them would say, and be compassionate to the believers."

وَلْيَكُنْ فِي خَاصَّةِ مَا تُخْلِصُ لله بِهِ دِينَكَ: إِقَامَةُ فَرَائِضِهِ الَّتي هِيَ لَهُ خَاصَّةً، فَأَعْطِ اللهَ مِن بَدَنِكَ فِي لَيْلِكَ وَنَهَارِكَ، وَوَفِّ مَا تَقَرَّبْتَ بِهِ إِلَى اللهِ مِنْ ذلِكَ كَامِلاً غَيْرَ مَثْلُوم وَلاَ مَنْقُوص، بَالِغاً مِنْ بَدَنِكَ مَا بَلَغَ.

وَإِذَا قُمْتَ فِي صلاَتِكَ لِلنَّاسِ، فَلاَ تَكُونَنَّ مُنَفِّراً وَلاَ مُضَيِّعاً، فَإِنَّ فِي النَّاسِ مَنْ بِهِ الْعِلَّةُ وَلَهُ الْحَاجَةُ. وَقَدْ سَأَلْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) حِينَ وَجَّهَنِي إِلَى اليَمنِ كَيْفَ أُصَلِّي بِهِمْ؟ فَقَالَ: "صَلِّ بِهِمْ كَصَلاَةِ أَضْعَفِهِمْ، وَكُنْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيماً".

On the behaviour and action of a Ruler

Then, do not keep yourself secluded from the people for a long time, because the seclusion of those in authority from the subjects is a kind of narrow-sightedness and causes ignorance about their affairs. Seclusion from them also prevents them from the knowledge of those things which they do not know and as a result they begin to regard big matters as small and small matters as big, good matters as bad and bad matters as good, while the truth becomes confused with falsehood. After all, a governor is a human being and cannot have knowledge of things which people keep hidden from him.

وَأَمَّا بَعْدَ هذا، فَلاَ تُطَوِّلَنَّ احْتِجَابَكَ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِكَ، فَإِنَّ احْتِجَابَ الْوُلاَةِ عَنِ الرَّعِيَّةِ شُعْبَةٌ مِنَ الضِّيقِ، وَقِلَّةُ عِلْمٍ بِالأُمُورِ، وَالاحْتِجَابُ مِنْهُمْ يَقْطَعُ عَنْهُمْ عِلْمَ مَا احْتَجَبُوا دُونَهُ فَيَصْغُرُ عِندَهُمُ الْكَبِيرُ، وَيَعْظُمُ الصَّغِيرُ، وَيَقْبُحُ الْحَسَنُ، وَيَحْسُنُ الْقَبِيحُ، وَيُشَابُ الْحَقُّ بِالْبَاطِلِ، وَإِنَّمَا الْوَالِي بَشَرٌ لاَ يَعْرِفُ مَا تَوَارَى عَنْهُ النَّاسُ بِهِ مِنَ الأُمُورِ،

There are no marks on the face of truth to differentiate its various expressions from falsehood. Then you can be one of two kinds of men. Either you may be generous in granting rights – and then why this hiding in spite of (your) discharging the obligations and good acts that you perform? Or you are a victim of stinginess; in that case people will soon give up asking you since they will lose hope of generous treatment from you. In spite of that there are many needs of the people towards you which do not involve any hardship on you, such as the complaint against oppression or the request for justice in a matter.

وَلَيْسَتْ عَلَى الْحَقِّ سِمَاتٌ تُعْرَفُ بِهَا ضُرُوبُ الصِّدْقِ مِنَ الْكَذِبِ، وَإِنَّمَا أَنْتَ أَحَدُ رَجُلَيْنِ: إِمَّا امْرُؤٌ سَخَتْ نَفْسُكَ

بِالْبَذْلِ فِي الْحَقِّ، فَفِيمَ احْتِجَابُكَ مِنْ وَاجِبِ حَقٍّ تُعْطِيهِ، أَوْ فِعْلِ كَرِيمٍ تُسْدِيهِ، أَوْ مُبْتَلَىً بِالْمَنعِ، فَمَا أَسْرَعَ كَفَّ النَّاسِ عَنْ مَسْأَلَتِكَ إِذَا أَيِسُوا مِنْ بَذْلِكَ! مَعَ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَ حَاجَاتِ النَّاسِ إِلَيْكَ [مـ] ما لاَ مَؤُونَةَ فِيهِ عَلَيْكَ، مِنْ شَكَاةِ مَظْلِمَة، أَوْ طَلَبِ إِنْصاف فِي مُعَامَلَة.

Further, a governor has favourites and people of easy access to him. They misappropriate things, are high-handed and do not observe justice in matters. You should destroy the root of evil in the people by cutting away the causes of these defects. Do not make any land grants to your hangers on or supporters. They should not expect from you the possession of land which may cause harm to adjoining people over the question of irrigation or common services whose burden the grantees place on others. In this way, the benefit will be rather theirs than yours, and the blame will lie on you in this world and the next.

ثُمَّ إِنَّ لِلْوَالِي خَاصَّةً وبِطَانَةً، فِيهِمُ اسْتِئْثَارٌ وَتَطَاوُلٌ، وَقِلَّةُ إِنْصَاف فِي مُعَامَلَة، فَاحْسِمْ مَادَّةَ أُولئِكَ بِقَطْعِ أَسْبَابِ تِلْكَ الأَحْوَالِ، وَلاَ تُقْطِعَنَّ لاِحَد مِنْ حَاشِيَتِكَ وَحَامَّتِكَ قَطِيعةً، وَلاَ يَطْمَعَنَّ مِنْكَ فِي اعْتِقَادِ عُقْدَة، تَضُرُّ بِمَنْ يَلِيهَا مِنَ النَّاسِ، فِي شِرْب أَوْ عَمَل مُشْتَرَك، يَحْمِلُونَ مَؤُونَتَهُ عَلَى غَيْرِهِمْ، فَيَكُونَ مَهْنَأُ ذلِكَ لَهُمْ دُونَكَ، وَعَيْبُهُ عَلَيْكَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالاْخِرَةِ.

Allow rights to whomsoever it is due, whether near you or far from you. In this matter, you should be enduring and watchful even though it may involve your relations and favourites, and keep in view the reward of that which appears burdensome on you because its reward is handsome.

وَأَلْزِمِ الْحَقَّ مَنْ لَزِمَهُ مِنَ الْقَرِيبِ وَالْبَعِيدِ، وَكُنْ فِي ذلِكَ صَابِراً مُحْتَسِباً، وَاقِعاً ذلِكَ مِنْ قَرَابَتِكَ خَاصَّتِكَ حَيْثُ وَقَعَ، وَابْتَغِ عَاقِبَتَهُ بِمَا يَثْقُلُ عَلَيْكَ مِنْهُ، فَإِنَّ مَغَبَّةَ ذلِكَ مَحْمُودَةٌ.

If the subjects suspect you of high-handedness, explain to them your position openly and remove their suspicion with your explanation, because this would mean exercise for your soul and consideration to the subjects while this explanation will secure your aim of keeping them firm in truth.

وَإِنْ ظَنَّتِ الرَّعِيَّةُ بِكَ حَيْفاً، فَأَصْحِرْ لَهُمْ بِعُذْرِكَ، وَاعْدِلْ عَنكَ ظُنُونَهُمْ بِإِصْحَارِكَ، فَإِنَّ فِي ذلِكَ رِيَاضَةً مِنْكَ لِنَفْسِكَ، وَرِفْقاً بِرَعِيَّتِكَ، وَ إِعْذَاراً تَبْلُغُ فِيه حَاجَتَكَ مِنْ تَقْوِيمِهِمْ عَلَى الْحَقِّ.

Do not reject peace to which your enemy may call you and wherein there is the pleasure of Allah, because peace brings rest to your army and relief from your worries and safety for your country. But after peace there is great apprehension from the enemy because often the enemy offers peace to benefit by your negligence. Therefore, be cautious and do not act by wishfulness in this matter.

وَلاَ تَدْفَعَنَّ صُلْحاً دَعَاكَ إِلَيْهِ عَدُوُّ كَ لله فِيهِ رِضىً، فإِنَّ فِي الصُّلْحِ دَعَةً لِجُنُودِكَ، وَرَاحَةً مِنْ هُمُومِكَ، وأَمْناً لِبِلاَدِكَ،

وَلَكِنِ الْحَذَرَ كُلَّ الْحَذَرِ مِنْ عَدُوِّكِ بَعْدَ صُلْحِهِ، فَإِنَّ الْعَدُوَّ رُبَّمَا قَارَبَ لِيَتَغَفَّلَ، فَخُذْ بِالْحَزْمِ، وَاتَّهِمْ فِي ذلِكَ حُسْنَ الظَّنِّ.

If you conclude an agreement between yourself and your enemy or enter into a pledge with him then fulfil your agreement and discharge your pledge faithfully. Place yourself as a shield against whatever you have pledged because among the obligations of Allah there is nothing on which people are more strongly united despite the difference of their ideas and variation of their views than respect for fulfiling pledges.

Besides Muslims, even unbelievers have abided by agreements because they realized the dangers which would come in the wake of violation (thereof). Therefore, do not deceive your enemy, because no one can offend Allah save the ignorant and the wicked. Allah made His agreement and pledged the sign of security which He has spread over His creatures through His mercy and an asylum in which they stay in His protection and seek the benefit of nearness to Him. Therefore, there should be no deceit, cunning or duplicity in it.

وَإِنْ عَقَدْتَ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ عَدُوّ لَكَ عُقْدَةً، أَوْ أَلْبَسْتَهُ مِنْكَ ذِمَّةً، فَحُطْ عَهْدَكَ بِالْوَفَاءِ، وَارْعَ ذِمَّتَكَ بِالْاَمَانَةِ، وَاجْعَلْ نَفْسَكَ جُنَّةً دُونَ مَا عْطَيْتَ، فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ مِنْ فَرَائِضِ اللهِ عزوجلّ شَيْءٌ أَشدُّ عَلَيْهِ اجْتِماعاً، مَعَ تَفْرِيقِ أَهْوَائِهِمْ، وَتَشْتِيتِ آرَائِهِمْ، مِنَ تَعْظِيمِ الْوَفَاءِ بِالْعُهُودِ، وَقَدْ لَزِمَ ذلِكَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ فِيما بَيْنَهُمْ دُونَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ لِمَا اسْتَوْبَلُوا مِنْ عَوَاقِبِ الْغَدْرِ، فَلاَ تَغْدِرَنَّ بِذِمَّتِكَ، وَلاَ تَخِيسَنَّ بِعَهْدِكَ، وَلاَ تَخْتِلَنَّ عَدُوَّكَ، فَإِنَّهُ لاَ يَجْتَرِىءُ عَلَى اللهِ إِلاَّ جَاهِلٌ شَقِيٌّ. وَقَدْ جَعَلَ اللهُ عَهْدَهُ وَذِمَّتَهُ أَمْناً أَفْضَاهُ بَيْنَ الْعِبَادِ بِرَحْمَتِهِ، وَحَرِيماً يَسْكُنُونَ إِلَى مَنَعَتِهِ،يَسْتَفِيضُونَ إِلَى جِوَارِهِ، فَلاَ إِدْغَالَ وَلاَ مُدَالَسَةَ، وَلاَ خِدَاعَ فِيهِ،

Do not enter into an agreement which may admit of different interpretations and do not change the interpretation of vague words after the conclusion and confirmation (of the agreement). If an agreement of Allah involves you in hardship do not seek its repudiation without justification, because the bearing of hardships through which you expect relief and a handsome result is better than a violation whose consequence you fear, and that you fear that you will be called upon by Allah to account for it and you will not be able to seek forgiveness for it in this world or the next.

وَلاَ تَعْقِدْ عَقْداً تَجُوزُ فِيهِ الْعِلَلُ، وَلاَ تُعَوِّلَنَّ عَلَى لَحْنِ القَوْلِ بَعْدَ التَّأْكِيدِ وَالتَّوْثِقَةِ، وَلاَ يَدْعُوَنَّكَ ضِيقُ أَمْرٍ لَزِمَكَ فِيهِ عَهْدُ اللهِ، إِلَى طَلَبِ انْفِسَاخِهِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ، فَإِنَّ صَبْرَكَ عَلَى ضِيقِ تَرْجُو انْفِرَاجَهُ وَفَضْلَ عَاقِبَتِهِ، خَيْرٌ مِنْ غَدْرٍ تَخَافُ تَبِعَتَهُ، وَأَنْ تُحِيطَ بِكَ مِنَ اللهِ فِيهِ طَلِبَةٌ، لاَتَسْتَقِيلُ فِيهَا دُنْيَاكَ وَلاَ آخِرَتَكَ.

You should avoid shedding blood without justification, because nothing is more inviting of Divine retribution, greater in (evil) consequence, and more effective in the decline of prosperity and cutting short of life than the shedding of blood without justification. On the Day of Judgement Allah the Glorified, would commence giving His judgement among the people with the cases of bloodshed committed by

them.

Therefore, do not strengthen your authority by shedding prohibited blood because this will weaken and lower the authority, moreover destroy it and shift it. You cannot offer any excuse before Allah or before me for wilful killing because there must be the question or revenge in it. If you are involved in it by error and you exceed in the use of your whip or sword or hand in inflicting punishment, as sometimes even a blow by the fist or a smaller stroke causes death, then the haughtiness of your authority should not prevent you from paying the blood price to the successors of the killed person.

إِيَّاكَ وَالدِّمَاءَ وَسَفْكَهَا بِغَيْرِ حِلِّهَا، فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ شَيْءٌ أَدْعَى لِنِقْمَة، وَلاَ أَعْظَمَ لِتَبِعَة، وَلاَ أَحْرَى بِزَوَالِ نِعْمَة، وَانْقِطَاعِ مُدَّة، مِنْ سَفْكِ الدِّمَاءِ بِغَيْرِ حَقِّهَا، وَاللهُ سُبْحَانَهُ مُبْتَدِئٌ بِالْحُكْمِ بَيْنَ الْعِبَادِ، فِيمَا تَسَافَكُوا مِنَ الدِّمَاءِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامةِ، فَلاَ تُقَوِّيَنَّ سُلْطَانَكَ بِسَفْكِ دَم حَرَام، فَإِنَّ ذلِكَ مِمَّا يُضْعِفُهُ وَيُوهِنُهُ، بَلْ يُزِيلُهُ وَيَنْقُلُهُ، وَلاَ عُذْرَ لَكَ عِنْدَ اللهِ وَلاَ عِنْدِي فِي قَتْلِ الْعَمدِ، لاِنَّ فِيهِ قَوَدَ الْبَدَنِ، وَإِنِ ابْتُلِيتَ بِخَطَإٍ وَأَفْرَطَ عَلَيْكَ سَوْطُكَ أَوْ سَيْفُكَ أَوْ يَدُكَ بِعُقُوبَة، فَإِنَّ فِي الْوَكْزَةِ فَمَا فَوْقَهَا مَقْتَلَةً، فَلاَ تَطْمَحَنَّ بِكَ نَخْوَةُ سُلْطَانِكَ عَنْ أَنْ تُؤَدِّيَ إِلَى أَوْلِيَاءِ الْمَقْتُول حَقَّهُمْ.

You should avoid self-admiration, having reliance in what appears good in yourself and love of exaggerated praise because this is one of the most reliable opportunities for Satan to obliterate the good deeds of the virtuous.

وَإِيَّاكَ وَالاْعْجَابَ بِنَفْسِكَ، وَالثِّقَةَ بِمَا يُعْجِبُكَ مِنْهَا، وَحُبَّ الاْطْرَاءِ، فَإِنَّ ذلِكَ مِنْ أَوْثَقِ فُرَصِ الشَّيْطَانِ فِي نَفْسِهِ، لِيَمْحَقَ مَا يَكُونُ مِنْ إِحْسَانِ الْمُحْسِنِينَ.

Avoid showing (the existence of) obligation on your subjects for having done good to them or praising your own actions or making promises and then breaking them, because showing (the existence of) obligation destroys good, self-praise takes away the light of truth, and breaking promises earns the hatred of Allah and of the people. Allah, the Glorified, says:

***Most hateful is it unto Allah that you say what you* (*yourselves*) *do* (*it*) *not*.** (**Qur'an, 61:3**)

وَإِيَّاكَ وَالْمَنَّ عَلَى رَعِيَّتِكَ بِإِحْسَانِكَ، أَوِ التَّزَيُّدَ فِيمَا كَانَ مِنْ فِعْلِكَ، أَوْ أَنْ تَعِدَهُمْ فَتُتْبِعَ مَوْعِدَكَ بِخُلْفِكَ، فَإِنَّ الْمَنَّ يُبْطِلُ الإِحْسَانَ، وَالتَّزَيُّدَ يَذْهَبُ بِنُورِ الْحَقِّ، وَالخُلْفَ يُوجِبُ الْمَقْتَ عِنْدَاللهِ وَالنَّاسِ، قَالَ اللهُ سبحانه: (كَبُرَ مَقْتاً عِنْدَ اللهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لاَ تَفْعَلُونَ).

Avoid haste in matters before their time, slowness at their proper time, insistence on them when the propriety of action is not known or weakens when it becomes clear. Assign every matter its proper place and do every job at the appropriate time.

و إِيَّاكَ وَالْعَجَلَةَ بِالاْمُورِ قَبْلَ أَوَانِهَا، أَوِ التَّسَاقُطَ فِيهَا عِنْدَ إِمْكَانِهَا، أَوِ اللَّجَاجَةَ فِيهَا إِذا تَنَكَّرَتْ، أَوِ الْوَهْنَ عَنْهَا إِذَا

اسْتَوْضَحَتْ، فَضَعْ كُلَّ أَمْر مَوْضِعَهُ، وَأَوْقِعْ كُلَّ عَمَل مَوْقِعَهُ.

Do not appropriate to yourself that in which the people have an equal share, nor be regardless of matters which have come to light with the excuse that you are accountable for others. Shortly, the curtains of all matters will be raised from your view and you will be required to render redress to the oppressed. Have control over (your) sense of prestige, any outburst of anger, the might of your arm and the sharpness of your tongue. Guard against all this by avoiding haste and by delaying severe action till your anger subsides and you regain your self-control. You cannot withhold yourself from this unless you bear in mind that you have to return to Allah.

وَإِيَّاكَ وَالاسْتِئْثَارَ بِمَا النَّاسُ فِيهِ أُسْوَةٌ، وَالتَّغَابِيَ عَمَّا تُعْنَى بِهِ مِمَّا قَدْ وَضَحَ لِلْعُيُونِ، فَإِنَّهُ مَأْخُوذٌ مِنْكَ لِغَيْرِكَ، وَعَمَّا قَلِيل تَنْكَشِفُ عَنْكَ أَغْطِيَةُ الأُمُورِ، وَيُنْتَصَفُ مِنْكَ لِلْمَظْلُومِ، امْلِكْ حَمِيَّةَ أَنْفِكَ، وَسَوْرَةَ حَدِّكَ، وَسَطْوَةَ يَدِكَ، وَغَرْبَ لِسَانِكَ، وَاحْتَرِسْ مِنْ كُلِّ ذلِكَ بِكَفِّ الْبَادِرَةِ، وَتَأْخِيرِ السَّطْوَةِ، حَتَّى يَسْكُنَ غَضَبُكَ فَتَمْلِكَ الاخْتِيَارَ، وَلَنْ تَحْكُمْ ذلِكَ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ حَتَّى تُكْثِرَ هُمُومَكَ بِذِكْرِ الْمَعَادِ إِلَى رَبِّكَ.

It is necessary for you to recall how matters went with those who preceded you, be it a government or a great tradition or a precedent of our Prophet (may Allah bless him and his descendants) or the obligatory commands contained in the Book of Allah. Then you should follow them as you have seen us acting upon them and should exert yourself in following that I have enjoined upon you in this document in which I have exhausted my pleas on you, so that if your heart advances towards its passions you may have no plea in its support.

None will protect from evil or grant success for good but Allah, the Exalted. Among the matters that Messenger of Allah, peace be on him, enjoined on me in his testament were the exhortation to prayer and zakat and (taking care of) the slaves. With that I end my document to you, and there is no strength or power but with Allah, the All-mighty.

وَالْوَاجِبُ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ تَتَذَكَّرَ مَا مَضَى لِمَنْ تَقَدَّمَكَ: مِنْ حُكُومَة عَادِلَة، أَوْ سُنَّة فَاضِلَة، أَوْ أَثَر عَنْ نَبِيِّنَا(صلى الله عليه وآله) أَوْفَرِيضَة فِي كِتَابِ اللهِ، فَتَقْتَدِيَ بِمَا شَاهَدْتَ مِمَّا عَمِلْنَا بِهِ فِيهَا، وَتَجْتَهِدَ لِنَفْسِكَ فِي اتِّبَاعِ مَا عَهِدْتُ إِلَيْكَ فِي عهْدِي هذَا، وَاسْتَوْثَقْتُ بِهِ مِنَ الْحُجَّةِ لِنَفْسِي عَلَيْكَ، لِكَيْلاَ تَكُونَ لَكَ عِلَّةٌ عِنْدَ تَسَرُّعِ نَفْسِكَ إِلَى هَوَاهَا، فَلَنْ يَعْصِمَ مِنَ السُّوءِ وَلاَ يُوَفِّقَ لِلْخَيْرِ إِلاَّ اللهُ تَعَالى. وَقَدْ كَانَ فِيمَا عَهِدَ إِليَّ رَسُولُهُ (عليه السلام) فِي وَصَايَاهُ تَحضيضاً عَلَى الصَّلاَةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ، فَبِذَلِكَ أَخْتِمُ لَكَ مَا عَهِدَ، وَلاَ قُوَّةَ إِلاَّ بِاللهِ العَظِيمِ.

I ask Allah through the vastness of His mercy and the greatness of His power of giving a good inclination that He may prompt me and you to advance a clear plea before Him and His creatures in a manner that may attract His pleasure along with handsome praise among the people, good effect in the country, an increase in prosperity and a hightening of honour; and that He may allow me and you to die a death of virtue and martyrdom. Surely, we have to return to Him. Peace be on the Messenger of Allah – may

Allah shower His blessings and plentiful salutations on him and his pure and chaste descendants; and that is an end to the matter.

وَأَنَا أَسْأَلُ اللهَ بِسَعَةِ رَحْمَتِهِ، وَعَظِيمِ قُدْرَتِهِ عَلَى إِعْطَاءِ كُلِّ رَغْبَة، أَنْ يُوَفِّقَنِي وَإِيَّاكَ لِمَا فيهِ رِضَاهُ مِنَ الْاِقَامَةِ عَلَى الْعُذْرِ الْوَاضِحِ إِلَيْهِ وَإِلَى خَلْقِهِ، مَعَ حُسْنِ الثَّنَاءِ فِي الْعِبَادِ، وَجَمِيلِ الْاَثَرِ فِي الْبَلَادِ، وَتَمَامِ النِّعْمَةِ، وَتَضْعِيفِ الْكَرَامَةِ، وَأَنْ يَخْتِمَ لِي وَلَكَ بالسَّعَادَةِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ، إِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ، وَالسَّلاَمُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللهِ ً. صَلَّى اللّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ آلِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطّاهِرِينَ وَ سَلَّمَ تَسْليماً كَثيراً. وَالسَّلامُ.

1. This document, which deserves to be called the constitution of Islamic polity, was prepared by the person who was the greatest scholar of Divine law and acted upon it more than anyone else. From the study of Amir al-mu 'minin's way of governance in these pages it can be concluded that his aim was only the enforcement of Divine law and the improvement of social conditions, and not to disrupt public security or to fill treasures by plunder, or to strive to extend the country's boundaries by fair means or foul. Worldly governments generally adopt such constitutions which cater to their utmost benefit and try to change every law which is against that aim or is injurious for their objective. But every article of this constitution serves as a custodian of common interests and protector of collective organization. Its enforcement has no touch of selfishness or any iota of self- interest. It contains such basic principles of the fulfilment of Allah's obligations, the protection of human rights without distinction of religion or community, the care of the destitute and the poor and the provision of succour to the low and the down-trodden from which full guidance can be had for the propagation of right and justice, the establishment of peace and security, and the prosperity and well-being of the people.

Amir al-mu'minin wrote this instrument for Malik ibn al-Harith al- Ashtar, when he was appointed the Governor of Egypt in 38 A. H. Malik al-Ashtar was one of the chief companions of Amir al-mu'minin. He had shown great endurance and steadfastness and perfect confidence and trust in Amir al-mu'minin. He had attained the utmost nearness and attachment to him by moulding his conduct and character after the conduct and character of Amir al-mu'minin. This can be gauged by Amir al-mu'minin's words: "Malik was to me as I was to the Messenger of Allah." (Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.15, p.98;al-A`lam, vol.6, p.131). Malik al-Ashtar too, actuated by self- less feelings of service, took a very active part in military encounters and proved himself to be Amir al-mu'minin's arm in all battles and encounters. He showed such feats of courage and daring that his bravery was acknowledged throughout Arabia. Along with this bravery he was also conspicuous in endurance and forebearing. In this connection, Warram ibn Abi Firas an-Nakha`i has written that once Malik was passing through the market of Kufah with the dress and turban made of gunny-cloth when a shopkeeper finding him in this condition and clothing, he threw some rotten leaves upon him, but he did not at all mind this dirty behaviour, nor did he even look at him. Rather, he quietly stepped forward. Then someone said to this shopkeeper, "Do you know to whom you have been so insolent?" He replied that he did not know who he was, whereupon he said that it was Malik al-Ashtar, the companion of Amir al-mu'minin. Hearing this, he lost his senses and at once ran behind him to seek pardon for this insolence and humiliating ti!'tment. While in his search he reached a mosque where Malik was offering prayers. When he finished the prayers this man went forward and fell on his feet and begged pardon with great pertinacity and weeping. Malik raised the man's beard up and said, "By Allah, I have come to the mosque to pray to Allah to forgive you. I myself had pardoned you that very moment, and I hope Allah too will pardon you." (Tanbihu 'l-khawatir wa nuzhatu 'n-nawazir, vol.1, p.2;al-Bihar, vol.42, p.157). This is the forgiveness and tolerance of a warrior at who name courage trembled, and whose swordsmanship was acknowledged by the brave men of Arabia. And this is the real sign of bravery that a man should exercise self-control during bitterness of anger and rage and endure hardships with patience and calmness. In this connection, Amir al-mu'minin's saying is that, "The bravest of men is he who over-powers his passions."

However, besides these characteristics and qualities, he had a perfect aptitude for organization and administration. Thus, when the `Uthmani (al-`Uthmaniyyah) party began to spread the germs of destruction in Egypt and tried to upset the law and order of the country by mischief and revolt then Amir al-mu'minin removed Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr from the govern-ship and decided to appoint Malik al-Ashtar in his place, although at that time he was posted as the Governor of Nasibin. However, Amir al-mu' minin sent him word that he should name someone as his deputy and come to Amir al-mu'minin. On

receipt of this order Malik al-Ashtar appointed Shabib ibn `Amir al-Azdi in his place and himself came to Amir al-mu'minin. Amir al- mu'minin gave him a warrant of appointment and sent him off to Egypt, and also sent a written order to Egyptians to obey him. When Mu`awiyah got the news of Malik al-Ashtar's appointment through his spies he was perplexed because he had promised `Amr ibn al-`As that he would give him the govern- ship of Egypt in reward of his services and he had hoped that `Amr ibn al-`As would easily defeat Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr and wrest the power from him, but could not imagine conquering Egypt by defeating Malik al-Ashtar. He therefore decided to do away with him before he took over the charge. For this he arranged with a landlord of the city of al-`Arish (or al-Qulzum) that when Malik passed through al-`Arish on his way to Egypt he should kill him by some device or other and in reward for this the revenue of his estate would be written off. So, when Malik al-Ashtar reached al-`Arish with retinue and force the chief of al-`Arish gave him a good ovation and insisted on having Malik as his guest. Malik agreed and stayed at his place. When he finished the meal the host gave him some syrup of honey to drink in which he had mixed with poison. Soon after drinking it the poison began to show its effect and before the eyes of everyone this great warrior known for his swordsmanship and for putting the rows of the enemy to flight calmly went into the embrace of death.

When Mu`awiyah got news of his success of this device he was overjoyed and shouted in merriment, "Oh, honey is also an army of Allah", and then said during a speech:

`Ali ibn Abi Talib had two right hand men. One was chopped off on the day of Siffin and he was `Ammar ibn Yasir, and the second has been severed now and he is Malik al-Ashtar.

But when the news of Malik's assassination reached Amir al-mu'minin, he was highly grieved and sorrowful, then he said:

Malik! Who is Malik? If Malik was a stone, he was hard and solid; if he was a rock, he was a great rock which had no parallel. It seems his death has made me also lifeless. I swear by Allah that his death made the Syrians joyous and insulted the Iraqis.

Then he continued:

Women have become barren to give birth to such as Malik. (at-Tabari, vol.1, pp.3392-3395; Ibn al-Athir, vol.3, pp.352-353; al-Ya`qubi, vol.2, p.194; al-Isti`ab, vol.3, p.1366; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.6, pp. 74-77; Ibn Kathir, vol.7, pp.313-314; Abu'l-Fida', vol.1, p.179)

Letter 54: To Talhah and az-Zubayr

To Talhah and az-Zubayr (*through `Imran ibn al-Husayn al-Khuza`i*) 1

Abu Ja`far al-Iskafi has mentioned this in his "Kitab al-maqamat" on the excellent qualities (manaqib) of Amir al-mu'minin (peace be upon him).

(ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام

إلى طلحة والزبير، مع عمران بن الحصين الخزاعي

وقد ذكره أبو جعفر الاسكافي في كتاب المقامات في مناقب أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام

Now, both of you know, although you conceal it, that I did not approach the people till they approached me, and I did not ask them to swear allegiance to me till they themselves swore allegiance to me, and both of you were among those who approached me and swore me allegiance. Certainly, the common people did not swear me allegiance under any force put on them or for any money given to them.

If you two swore allegiance to me obediently, come back and offer repentance to Allah soon, but if you swore allegiance to me reluctantly, you have certainly given me cause for action, by showing your obedience and concealing your disobedience. 2 By my life, you were not more entitled than other Muhajirun to conceal and hide the matter. Your refusing allegiance before entering into it would have been easier than getting out of it after having accepted it.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ عَلِمْتُما، وَإِنْ كَتَمْتُما، أَنِّي لَمْ أُرِدِ النَّاسَ حَتَّى أَرَادُونِي، وَلَمْ أُبَايِعْهُمْ حَتَّى بَايَعُونِي، وَإِنَّكُمَا مِمَّنْ أَرَادَنِي وَبَايَعَنِي، وَإِنَّ العَامَّةَ لَمْ تُبَايِعْنِي لِسُلْطَان غَاصِب، وَلاَ لِعَرَض حَاضِر، فَإِنْ كُنْتُما بَايَعْتُمانِي طَائِعَيْن، فارْجِعَا وَتُوبَا إِلَى اللهِ مِنْ قَرِيب، وَإِنْ كُنْتُما بَايَعْتُمانِي كَارِهَيْن، فَقَدْ جَعَلْتُما لِي عَلَيْكُمَا السَّبِيلَ بِإِظْهَارِكُمَا الطَّاعَةَ، وَإِسْرَارِكُمَا الْمَعْصِيَةَ، وَلَعَمْرِي مَا كُنْتُما بِأَحَقِّ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ بِالتَّقِيَّةِ وَالْكِتْمانِ، وَإِنَّ دَفْعَكُمَا هذَا الأَمْرَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَدْخُلاَ فِيهِ، كَانَ أَوْسَعَ عَلَيْكُمَا مِنْ خُرُوجِكُمَا مِنْهُ، بَعْدَ إِقْرَارِكُمَا بِهِ.

You have indicated that I killed `Uthman; then let someone from among the people of Medina who supported neither me nor you decide the matter between me and you. Then one of us shall face (the command of law) according to (their) involvement. You should give up your way now, O you two elderly men, when the great question before you is only one of shame, before you face the question of shame coupled with the Hell-fire; and that is an end to the matter.

وَقَدْ زَعَمْتُما أَنِّي قَتَلْتُ عُثْمانَ، فَبَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمَا مَنْ تَخَلَّفَ عَنِّي وَعَنْكُمَا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ، ثُمَّ يُلْزَمُ كُلُّ امْرِىء بِقَدْرِ مَا احْتَمَلَ. فَارْجِعَا أَيُّهَا الشَّيْخَانِ عَنْ رَأْيِكُمَا، فَإِنَّ الاْنَ أَعْظَمَ أَمْرِكُمَا الْعَارُ، مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَجْتَمِعَ الْعَارُ وَالنَّارُ،السَّلاَمُ.

1. `Imran ibn al-Husayn al-Khuza`i was a high ranking companion distinguished in learning and achievements and very cautious in relating traditions. He accepted Islam in the year of Khaybar and participated in jihad with the Prophet. Was honoured with the judicial position at Kufah and died at Basrah in 52 A.H.
One of the genuine traditions related by `Imran ibn al-Husayn about Amir al-mu'minin is:
The Messenger of Allah raised and sent an army under the command of `Ali ibn Abi Talib. From the khums (one-fifth) received by him `Ali set aside a slave girl for himself. This was distasteful to some of his men and four of them decided to complain of this to the Prophet (S). On their return they approached the Prophet, and one of them stood up and said: "O' Messenger of Allah! Do you not see that `Ali did so and so?" The Prophet turned away his face from him. Another man stood up and made the same complaint and the Prophet turned away his face from him. Still another man stood up and repeated what his two colleagues had said and met the same reaction. Then the fourth man stood up and spoke like his predecessors. The Prophet (S) then turned to them with signs of anger on his face and said: "What do you want me to do to `Ali? (repeating thrice). Surely, `Ali is from me and I am from him, and after me he is the Master of all the believers." (al-Jami` as -sahih, at-Tirmidhi,vol.5,p.632; al-Musnad, Abmad ibn Hanbal, vol.4, pp.437-438; al-Musnad, Abu Dawud at-Tayalisi, p.111;al-Mustadrak, al-Hakim, vol.3, pp.110-111; Hilyah al-awliya', Abu Nu`aym, vol.6, p.294; Tarikh al-Islam, adh- Dhahabi, vol.2, p.196; at-Tarikh, Ibn Kathir, vol.7, p.345; Usd al- ghabah, Ibn al-Athir, vol.4, p.27, al-Isabah, Ibn

Hajar, vol.2, p.509)

2. That is you are men of riches and means having a large tribe and community. What is the need to you to do for this double dealing of concealing the real feelings of the heart, showing obedience and swearing allegiance loathsomely and unwillingly? Of course, if someone else, who was weak and helpless, said that he was obliged to swear allegiance, his point could be accepted to some extent. But when no one else has expressed his helplessness in the matter, why did this helplessness befall you so that you now regard your swearing of allegiance to be the result of your helplessness.

Letter 55: To Mu`awiyah

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى معاوية

Now, Allah, the Glorified, has made this world for what is to come hereafter, and put its inhabitants to trial as to which of you is good in action, and we have not been created for this world, nor ordered to strive for it, but we have been made to stay in it to stand trial therein. So, Allah has tried me with you and tried you with me. He has therefore made either of us a plea for the other.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ اللهَ سُبْحَانَهُ قَدْ جَعَلَ الدُّنْيَا لِمَا بَعْدَهَا، وَابْتَلَى فِيهَا أَهْلَهَا، لِيَعْلَمَ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلاً، وَلَسْنَا لِلدُّنْيَا خُلِقْنَا، وَلاَ بِالسَّعْيِ فِيهَا أُمِرْنَا، وَإِنَّمَا وُضِعْنَا فِيها لِنُبْتَلَى بِهَا، وَقَدِ ابْتَلاَنِي اللهُ بِكَ وَابْتَلاَكَ بِي: فَجَعَلَ أَحَدَنَا حُجَّةً عَلَى الاْخَرِ،

Now, you have leapt on the world by a wrong interpretation of the Qur'an, and wanted me to account for what neither my hand nor tongue was responsible, but you and the Syrians put the blame on me, and your scholar incited against me the ignorant and one who is standing incited the one who is sitting. You should fear Allah about yourself and not allow Satan to lead you. Turn your face towards the next world because that is our path and your path, and fear that Allah may not entangle you in any sudden infliction which may destroy the root as well as cut away the branches. I swear to you by Allah an oath which will not be broken that if destiny brings me and you together I shall steadfastly hold before you

until Allah judges between us, and He is the Best of the judges. **(Qur'an, 7:87)**

فَعَدَوْتَ عَلَى طَلَبِ الدُّنْيَا بِتَأْوِيلِ الْقُرْآنِ، فَطَلَبْتَنِي بِمَا لَمْ تَجْنِ يَدِي وَلاَ لِسَانِي، وَعَصَيْتَهُ أَنْتَ وأَهْلُ الشَّامِ بِي، وَأَلَّبَ عَالِمُكُمْ جَاهِلَكُمْ، وَقَائِمُكُمْ قَاعِدَكُمْ. فَاتَّقِ اللهَ فِي نَفْسِكَ، وَنَازِعِ الشَّيْطَانَ قِيَادَكَ، وَاصْرِفْ إِلَى الاْخِرَةِ وَجْهَكَ، فَهِيَ طَرِيقُنَا وَطَرِيقُكَ. وَاحْذَرْ أَنْ يُصِيبَكَ اللهُ مِنْهُ بِعَاجِلِ قَارِعَةٍ تَمَسُّ الاْصْلَ، وَتَقْطَعُ الدَّابِرَ، فَإِنِّي أُولِي لَكَ بِاللهِ أَلِيَّةً غَيْرَ فَاجِرَةٍ، لَئِنْ جَمَعَتْنِي وَإِيَّاكَ جَوَامِعُ الاْقْدَارِ لاَ أَزَالُ بِبَاحَتِكَ(حَتَّى يَحْكُمَ اللهُ بَيْنَنَا وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْحَاكِمِينَ).

Letter 56: Instructions to Shuray bin Hani

Instructions to Shuray bin Hani when he was appointed as the commanding officer of the vanguard of his army, which was marching towards Syria.

When Amir al-mu'minin placed Shurayh ibn Hani (al-Madhhiji) at the head of the vanguard preceding towards Syria, he issued this document of instruction to him:

ومن كلام وصىّ به شريح بن هانىء

لما جعله على مقدمته إلى الشام

Fear Allah every morning and evening and remain apprehensive about yourself of this deceitful world and do not regard it safe in any case. Know that if for fear of some evil you do not refrain yourself from things which you love, then passions will fling you into a lot of harm. Therefore, be for yourself a refrainer and protector, and for your anger a suppressor and killer.

اتَّقِ اللهَ فِي كُلّ صَبَاح وَمَسَاء، وَخَفْ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ الدُّنْيَا الْغَرُورَ، وَلاَ تَأْمَنْهَا عَلَى حَال، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّكَ إِنْ لَمْ تَرْدَعْ نَفْسَكَ عَنْ كَثِير مِمَّا تُحِبُّ، مَخَافَةَ مَكْرُوهِهِ، سَمَتْ بِكَ الاَهْوَاءُ إِلَى كَثِير مِنَ الضَّرَرِ. فَكُنْ لِنَفْسِكَ مَانِعاً رَادِعاً، وَلِنَزْوَتِكَ عِنْدَ الْحَفِيظَةِ وَاقِماً قَامِعاً.

Letter 57: To the people of Kufah at the time of his march from Medina to Basrah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى أهل الكوفة

عند مسيره من المدينة إلى البصرة

Now, I have come out of my city either as an oppressor or as the oppressed, either as a rebel or one against whom rebellion has been committed. In any case, to whomsoever this letter of mine reaches, I appeal to him in the name of Allah that he should come to me and if I am in the right he should help me; but if I am in the wrong then he should try to get me to the right according to his view.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي خَرَجْتُ مِنْ حَيِّي هذَا: إِمَّا ظَالِماً، وَإِمَّا مَظْلُوماً، وَإِمَّا بَاغِياً، وَإِمَّا مَبْغِيّاً عَلَيْهِ. وَأنا أُذَكِّرُ اللهِ مَنْ بَلَغَهُ كِتَابِي هذَا لَمَّا نَفَرَ إِلَيَّ، فَإِنْ كُنْتُ مُحْسِناً أَعَانَنِي، وَإِنْ كُنْتُ مُسْيئاً اسْتَعْتَبَنِي.

Letter 58: Written to the people of various localities deseribing what took place between him and the people of Siffin

(ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام

إلى أهل الامصار يقتصّ فيه ما جرى بينه وبين أهل صفين

The whole thing began thus that we and the Syrians met in an encounter although we believe in one and the same Allah and the same Prophet, and our message in Islam is the same. We did not want them to add anything in the belief in Allah or in acknowledging His Messenger (Allah bless him and his descendants) nor did they want us to add any such thing. In fact, there was complete unity except that we differed on the question of `Uthman's blood while we were free of responsibility for it. We suggested to them to appease the situation by calming the temporary irritation and pacifying the people till matters settled down and stabilized when we would gain strength to put matters right.

وَكَانَ بَدْءُ أَمْرِنَا أَنَّا الْتَقَيْنَا وَالْقَوْمُ مِنْ أَهْلِ الشَّامِ، وَالظَّاهِرُ أَنَّ رَبَّنَا وَاحِدٌ، وَنَبِيَّنَا وَاحِدٌ، وَدَعْوَتَنَا فِي الاْسْلاَمِ وَاحِدَةٌ، لاَ نَسْتَزِيدُهُمْ فِي الاْيمَانِ باللهِ وَالتَّصْدِيقِ بِرَسُولِهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله)، وَلاَ يَسْتَزِيدُونَنَا، الاْمْرُ وَاحِدٌ، إِلاَّ مَا اخْتَلَفْنَا فِيهِ مِنْ دَمِ عُثْمانَ، وَنَحْنُ مِنْهُ بَرَاءٌ! فَقُلْنَا: تَعَالَوْا نُدَاوِ مَا لاَ يُدْرَكُ الْيَوْمَ بِإِطْفَاءِ النَّائِرَةِ، وَتَسْكِينِ الْعَامَّةِ، حَتَّى يَشْتَدَّ الاْمْرُ وَيَسْتَجْمِعَ، فَنَقْوَى عَلَى وَضْعِ الْحَقِّ مَوَاضِعَهُ.

They however said that they would settle it by war. Thus, they refused our offer and consequently war spread its wings and came to stay. Its flames rose and became strong. When the war had bitten us as

well as them and pierced its talons into us as well as them, they accepted what we had proposed to them.

So, we agreed to what they suggested and hastened to meet their request. In this way, the plea became clear to them and no excuse was left to them. Now, whoever among them adheres to this will be saved by Allah from ruin, and whoever shows obstinacy and insistence (on wrong) is the reverser whose heart has been blinded by Allah and evils will encircle his head.

فَقَالُوا: بَلْ نُدَاوِيهِ بِالْمُكَابَرَةِ! فَأَبَوْا حَتَّى جَنَحَتِ الْحَرْبُ وَرَكَدَتْ، وَوَقَدَتْ نِيرَانُهَا وَحَمِشَتْ. فَلَمَّا ضَرَّسَتْنَا وَإِيَّاهُمْ، وَوَضَعَتْ مَخَالِبَهَا فِينَا وَفِيهِمْ، أَجَابُوا عِنْدَ ذلِكَ إِلَى الَّذي دَعَوْنَاهُمْ إِلَيْهِ، فَأَجَبْنَاهُمْ إِلَى مَا دَعَوْا، وَسَارَعْنَاهُمْ إِلَى مَا طَلَبُوا، حَتَّى اسْتَبَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْحُجَّةُ، وَانْقَطَعَتْ مِنْهُمُ الْمَعْذِرَةُ. فَمَنْ تَمَّ عَلَى ذلِكَ مِنْهُمْ فَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْقَذَهُ اللهُ مِنَ الْهَلَكَةِ، وَمَنْ لَجَّ وَتَمَادَى فَهُوَ الرَّاكِسُ الَّذِي رَانَ اللهُ عَلَى قَلْبِهِ، وَصَارَتْ دَائِرَةُ السَّوْءِ عَلَى رَأْسِهِ.

Letter 59: To al-Aswad ibn Qutbah, the Governor of Hulwan

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى الاسود بن قُطْبَةَ صاحب جند حُلوان

Now, if the actions of a governor follow the passions he will be greatly hampered in justice. All the people should be equal in right before you, because injustice cannot be a substitute for justice. Avoid that thing the like of which you would not like for yourself. Exert yourself in what Allah has made obligatory on you, hoping for His reward and fearing His chastisement.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فإِنَّ الْوَالِيَ إِذَا اخْتَلَفَ هَوَاهُ مَنَعَهُ ذلِكَ كَثِيراً مِنَ الْعَدْلِ، فَلْيَكُنْ أَمْرُ النَّاسِ عِنْدَكَ فِي الْحَقِّ سَوَاءً، فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ فِي الْجَوْرِ عِوَضٌ مِنَ الْعَدْلِ، فَاجْتَنِبْ مَا تُنْكِرُ أَمْثَالَهُ، وَابْتَذِلْ نَفْسَكَ فِيمَا افْتَرَضَ اللهُ عَلَيْكَ، رَاجِياً ثَوَابَهُ، وَمُتَخَوِّفاً عِقَابَهُ.

Know that this world is the place of trial. Whoever here wastes any hour of his time will repent it on the Day of Judgement, and nothing can ever make you free of need of what is right. One of the rights on you is that you should protect yourself (from sins) and look after the subjects to your best. The benefit that

will come to you from this will be greater than that which will accrue (to people) through you; and that is an end to the matter.

وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الدُّنْيَا دَارُ بَلِيَّة لَمْ يَفْرُغْ صَاحِبُهَا قَطُّ فِيهَا سَاعَةً إِلاَّ كَانَتْ فَرْغَتُهُ عَلَيْهِ حَسْرَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ،أَنَّهُ لَنْ يُغْنِيَكَ عَنِ الْحَقِّ شَيْءٌ أَبَداً، وَمِنَ الْحَقِّ عَلَيْكَ حِفْظُ نَفْسِكَ، وَالاْحْتِسَابُ عَلَى الرَّعِيَّةِ بِجُهْدِكَ، فَإِنَّ الَّذِي يَصِلُ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ ذلِكَ أَفْضَلُ مِنَ الَّذِي يَصِلُ بِكَ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

Letter 60: To the officers through whose jurisdiction the army passed

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى العمال الذين يطأ عمَلَهُمْ الجيشُ

From the servant of Allah `Ali, Amir al-mu'minin, to all the collectors of revenue and officers of the realm through whose area the army passes.

مِنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ عَلِيٍّ أَمِيرِالْمُؤمِنِينَ إِلَى مَنْ مَرَّ بِهِ الْجَيْشُ مِنْ جُبَاةِ الْخَرَاجِ وَعُمَّالِ الْبِلاَدِ.

Now, I have sent an army that will pass by you, if Allah wills. I have instructed them about what Allah has made obligatory on them, namely that they should avoid molestation and avert harm. I hold myself clear before you and those (unbelievers) who are under your protection from any annoyance committed by the army except when one is compelled by hunger and there is no other way of satisfying it. If anyone of them takes anything through force you should punish him. None of you should be foolish enough to obstruct them or intervene in matters which we have allowed them by way of exception. I am myself within the army. So, refer to me their high-handedness and any hardship which is caused by them and which you cannot avert except through Allah and through me. I shall then avert it with the help of Allah, if He so wills.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي قَدْ سَيَّرْتُ جُنُوداً هِيَ مَارَّةٌ بِكُمْ إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ، وَقَدْ أَوْصَيْتُهُمْ بِمَا يَجِبُ لله عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ كَفِّ الاْذَى، وَصَرْفِ الشَّذَى، وَأَنَا أَبْرَأُ إِلَيْكُمْ وَإِلَى ذِمَّتِكُمْ مِنْ مَعَرَّةِ الْجَيْشِ، إِلاَّ مِنْ جَوْعَةِ الْمُضْطَرِّ، لاَ يَجِدُ عَنْهَا مَذْهَباً إِلَى شِبَعِهِ.فَنَكِّلُوا مَنْ تَنَاوَلَ مِنْهُمْ [شَيْئاً] ظُلْماً عَنْ ظُلْمِهِمْ، وَكُفُّوا أَيْدِيَ سُفَهَائِكُمْ عَنْ مُضَادَّتِهِمْ، وَالتَّعَرُّضِ لَهُمْ فِيما اسْتَثْنَيْنَاهُ مِنْهُمْ،

وَأَنَا بَيْنَ أَظْهُرِ الْجَيْشِ، فَارْفَعُوا إِلَيَّ مَظَالِمَكُمْ، وَمَا عَرَاكُمْ مِمَّا يَغْلِبُكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ، وَلاَ تُطِيقُونَ دَفْعَهُ إِلاَّ بِالله وَبِي، أُغَيِّرْهُ بِمَعُونَةِ اللهِ، إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ.

Letter 61: To Kumayl ibn Ziyad an-Nakha`i

To Kumayl ibn Ziyad an-Nakha`i, the Governor of Hit expressing displeasure on his inability to prevent the enemy forces that passed through his area from marauding

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى كميل بن زياد النخعي

وهو عامله على هيت، يُنكر عليه تركه دفع من يجتاز به من جيش العدو طالباً الغارة

Now, the neglecting by a man of what he has been made responsible for and doing what is to be done by others is a manifest weakness and a ruinous sight. Certainly, your advance on the people of Qarqisiya, and your leaving the arsenals over which we had set you, without anyone to protect them or to repulse the enemy force, savoured of shattered thinking. In this way, you served like a bridge for the enemy who came marauding on your allies while your arms were weak, you had no awe around you; you could not prevent the enemy from advancing; you could not break his might; you could not defend the people of your area and you could not discharge functions on behalf of your Imam.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ تَضْيِيعَ الْمَرْءِ مَا وُلِّيَ، وَتَكَلُّفَهُ مَا كُفِيَ، لَعَجْزٌ حَاضِرٌ، وَرَأْيٌ مُتَبَّرٌ، وَإِنَّ تَعَاطِيَكَ الْغَارَةَ عَلَى أَهْلِ قِرْقِيسِيَا، وَتَعْطِيلَكَ مَسَالِحَكَ الَّتِي وَلَّيْنَاكَ ـ لَيْسَ بِهَا مَنْ يَمْنعُهَا، وَلاَ يَرُدُّ الْجَيْشَ عَنْهَا ـ لَرَأْيٌ شَعَاعٌ. فَقَدْ صِرْتَ جِسْراً لِمَنْ أَرَادَ الْغَارَةَ مِنْ أَعْدَائِكَ عَلَى أَوْلِيَائِكَ، غَيْرَ شَدِيدِ الْمَنْكِبِ، وَلاَ مَهِيبِ الْجَانِبِ، وَلاَ سَادّ ثُغْرَةً، وَلاَ كَاسِر لِعَدُوّ شَوْكَةً، وَلاَ مُغْنٍ عَنْ أَهْلِ مِصْرِهِ، وَلاَ مُجْزٍ عَنْ أَمِيرِهِ.

Letter 62: To the people of Egypt sent through Malik al-Ashtar when he was made the Governor of that place

(ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام

إلى أهل مصر مع مالك الاشتر لما ولاّه إمارَتَها

Now, Allah the Glorified, deputed Muhammad (may Allah bless him and his descendants) as a warner for all the worlds and a witness for all the prophets. When the Prophet expired, the Muslims quarrelled about power after him. By Allah, it never occurred to me, and I never imagined, that after the Prophet the Arabs would snatch away the caliphate from his Ahlul Bayt (the members of his house), nor that they would take it away from me after him, but I suddenly noticed people surrounding the man to swear him allegiance. [1]

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ اللهَ سُبْحَانَهُ بَعَثَ مُحَمَّداً(صلى الله عليه وآله) نَذِيراً لِلْعَالَمِينَ، وَمُهَيْمِناً عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ. فلمَّا مَضى(صلى الله عليه وآله) تنَازَعَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ الاْمْرَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ، فَوَاللهِ مَا كَانَ يُلْقَى فِي رُوعِي، وَلاَ يَخْطُرُ بِبَالِي، أَنَّ الْعَرَبَ تُزْعِجُ هذَا الاْمْرَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) عَنْ أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ، وَلاَ أَنَّهُمْ مُنَحُّوهُ عَنِّي مِنْ بَعْدِهِ! فَمَا رَاعَنِي إِلاَّ انْثِيَالُ النَّاسِ عَلَى فُلاَن يُبَايِعُونَهُ،

I therefore withheld my hand till I saw that many people were reverting from Islam and trying to destroy the religion of Muhammad (may Allah bless him and his descendants). I then feared that if I did not protect Islam and its people and there occurred in it a breach or destruction, it would mean a greater blow to me than the loss of power over you which was, in any case, to last for a few days of which everything would pass away as the mirage passes away, or as the cloud scuds away. Therefore, in these happenings I rose till wrong was destroyed and disappeared, and religion attained peace and safety.

فَأَمْسَكْتُ يَدِي حَتَّى رَأَيْتُ رَاجِعَةَ النَّاسِ قَدْ رَجَعَتْ عَنِ الاْسْلاَمِ، يَدْعُونَ إِلَى مَحْقِ دِينِ مُحَمَّد (صلى الله عليه وآله) فَخَشِيتُ إِنْ لَمْ أَنْصُرِ الاْسْلاَمَ أَهْلَهُ أَنْ أَرَى فِيهِ ثَلْماً أَوْ هَدْماً، تَكُونُ الْمُصِيبَةُ بِهِ عَلَيَّ أَعْظَمَ مِنْ فَوْتِ وِلاَيَتِكُمُ الَّتِي إِنَّمَا هِيَ مَتَاعُ أَيَّام قَلاَئِلَ، يَزُولُ مِنْهَا مَا كَانَ، كَمَا يَزُولُ السَّرَابُ، أَوْ كَمَا يَتَقَشَّعُ السَّحَابُ، فَنَهَضْتُ فِي تِلْكَ الاْحْدَاثِ حَتَّى زَاحَ الْبَاطِلُ وَزَهَقَ، وَاطْمَأَنَّ الدِّينُ وَتَنَهْنَهَ.

A part of the same letter

ومن هذا الكتاب:

By Allah, if I had encountered them alone and they had been so numerous as to fill the earth to the brim, I would not have worried or become perplexed. I am clear in myself and possess conviction from Allah about their misguidance and my guidance. I am hopeful and expectant that I will meet Allah and get His good reward.

But I am worried that foolish and wicked people will control the affairs of the entire community, with the result that they will grab the funds of Allah as their own property and make His people slaves, 2 fight with the virtuous, and ally with the sinful. Indeed, there is among them he who drank (wine) unlawfully 3 and was whipped by way of punishment fixed by Islam, and there is he who did not accept Islam until he had secured financial gain through it. 4

If this had not been so I would not have insisted on gathering you, reprehending you, mobilizing you and urging you (for jihad) but if you refuse and show weakness I will leave you.

إِنّي وَاللهِ لَوْ لَقِيتُهُمْ وَاحِداً وَهُمْ طِلاَعُ الاْرْضِ كُلِّهَا مَا بَالَيْتُ وَلاَ اسْتَوْحَشْتُ، وَإِنّي مِنْ ضَلاَلِهِمُ الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ وَالْهُدَى الَّذِي أَنَا عَلَيْهِ لَعَلى بَصِيرَة مِنْ نَفْسِي وَيَقِين مِنْ رَبّي. وَإِنّي إِلَى لِقَاءِ اللهِ لَمُشْتَاقٌ، وَلِحُسْنِ ثَوَابِهِ لَمُنْتَظِرٌ رَاج، وَلكِنَّنِي آسَى أَنْ يَلِيَ أَمْرَ هذِهِ الاْمَّةِ سُفَهَاؤُهَا وَفُجَّارُهَا، فَيَتَّخِذُوا مَالَ اللهِ دُوَلاً، وَعِبَادَهُ خَوَلاً، وَالصَّالِحِينَ حَرْباً، وَالْفَاسِقِينَ حِزْباً، فَإِنَّ مِنْهُمُ الَّذِي قَدْ شَرِبَ فِيكُمُ الْحَرَامَ، وَجُلِدَ حَدّاً فِي الاْسْلاَمِ، وَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ لَمْ يُسْلِمْ حَتَّى رُضِخَتْ لَهُ عَلَى الاْسْلاَمِ الرَّضَائِخُ، فَلَوْلاَ ذلِكَ مَا أَكْثَرْتُ تَأْلِيبَكُمْ وَتَأْنِيبَكُمْ، وَجَمْعَكُمْ وَتَحْرِيضَكُمْ، وَلَتَرَكْتُكُمْ إِذْ أَبَيْتُمْ وَوَنَيْتُمْ.

Do you not see that the boundaries of your cities have diminished, your populated areas have been conquered, your possessions have been snatched away and your cities and lands have been attacked? May Allah have mercy on you, get up to fight your enemy and do not remain confined to the earth, otherwise you will face oppression and suffer ignominy and your fate will be the worst. The warrior should be wakeful because if he sleeps the enemy does not sleep; and that is an end to the matter.

أَلاَ تَرَوْنَ إِلَى أَطْرَافِكُمْ قَدِ انْتَقَصَتْ، وَإِلَى أَمْصَارِكُمْ قَدِ افْتُتِحَتْ، وَإِلَى مَمَالِكِكُمْ تُزْوَى، وَإِلَى بِلاَدِكُمْ تُغْزَى! انْفِرُوا ـ رَحِمَكُمُ اللهُ ـ إِلَى قِتَالِ عَدُوِّكُمْ، وَلاَ تَثَّاقَلُوا إِلَى الاْرْضِ فَتُقِرُّوا بِالْخَسْفِ، وَتَبُوؤُوا بِالذُّلِّ، وَيَكُونَ نَصِيبُكُمُ الاْخَسَّ، وَإِنَّ أَخَا الْحَرْبِ الاْرِقُ، وَمَنْ نَامَ لَمْ يُنَمْ عنْهُ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

1. The Prophet's declarations about Amir al-mu'minin that "This is my brother, my vicegerent and my caliph among you", and while returning from his farewell hajj at Ghadir Khum that "For whosoever I am the master, `Ali is his master" had settled the issue of his own replacement and succession after which there was no need at all for any new election, nor could it be imagined that the people of Medina would feel the need for an election. But some power-thirsty individuals so ignored these clear injunctions as if their ears had never been acquainted with them, and considered the election so

necessary, that, leaving the burial rites of the Prophet, they assembled in the Saqifah of Banu Sa`idah and elected Abu Bakr as Caliph with a show of democracy. This was a very critical moment for Amir al-mu'minin. On one side some interested persons declared that he should take up arms and on the other hand he noticed that those Arabs who had accepted Islam by dint of its military strength were leaving it and Musaylimah ibn Thumamah al-Hanafi the liar (al-Kadhdhab) and Tulayhah ibn Khuwaylid al-Asadi (the liar) were throwing tribe after tribe into misguidance. In these circumstances, if there had been a civil war and the Muslims had fought against the Muslims, the forces of heresy and hypocrisy would have joined together and swept Islam off the surface of the globe. Therefore, Amir al-mu'minin preferred to keep quiet rather than to fight, and, with the purpose of maintaining the solidarity of Islam, confined himself to protesting peacefully rather than taking up arms. This was because formal power was not so dear to him as the good and prosperity of the community. For stopping the machinations of the hypocrites and defeating the aims of the mischief-mongers there was no other course but that he should not fan the flames of war by giving up his own claim. This was such a big act for the preservation of Islamic polity that it is acknowledged by all the sects of Islam.

2. This refers to the saying of the Holy Prophet about the children of Umayyah and the children of Abi al-`As ibn Umayyah (the grandfather of `Uthman ibn `Affan and the dynasty of Marwan's caliphs) as related by Abu Dharr al-Ghifari that the Holy Prophet said:

When the number of Banu (children of) Umayyah reaches forty men they will make Allah's people their slaves, grab Allah's funds as their own property and make the Book of Allah a cause of corruption. (al-Mustadrak, vol.4, p.479; Kanz al-`ummal, vol.11, p.149).

About the children of Abi al-`As it is related by Abu Dharr, Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, Ibn `Abbas, Abu Hurayrah and others that the Holy Prophet said:

When the number of Banu (children of) Abi al-`As reaches thirty men, they will grab the funds of Allah as their own property, make Allah's people their slaves and make the religion of Allah a cause of corruption. (al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.3, p.80; al-Mustadrak, al-Hakim, vol.4, p.480; al-Matalib al-`aliyah, Ibn Hajar, vol.4, p.332; Majma` az-zawa'id, al-Haytami, vol.5, pp.241,243; Kanz al-`ummal, al-Muttaqi, vol.11, pp.148,149,351,354).

The history of Islam (after the death of the Holy Prophet) has enough evidence to prove this prophecy of the Holy Prophet; and the fear of Amir al-mu'minin for the Muslim community was based on this reason.

3. The man who drank wine was al-Walid ibn `Uqbah ibn Abi Mu`ayt. He was of the same mother as Caliph `Uthman and his Governor of Kufah. al-Walid on an occasion in a state of intoxication led the morning prayers in the Central mosque of Kufah with four units (raka`ah) instead of the usual two as prescribed by the Holy Prophet. The congregation, which consisted of several pious persons like Ibn Mas`ud, was much incensed and still more irritated when, finishing the four units, al-Walid said:

What a pleasant morning! I would like to extend the prayers further if you consent.

Repeated complaints had already been made to the Caliph against al-Walid on account of his debauchery, but as often dismissed. People now reproached `Uthman for not listening to their grievances, and favouring such a scoundrel. By chance they succeeded in taking off the signet ring from the hand of the Governor while he lay senseless from the effects of a debauch, and carried it off to Medina. Still the caliph was slow and hesitated to enforce punishment upon his Governor (of the same mother) ; giving cause to be himself reproachfully accused of ignoring the law; though at last he was persuaded to have al-Walid scourged with forty strokes. He was consequently deposed from his office. Sa`id ibn al-`As, a cousin of `Uthman was appointed to take his place, and this was a matter of great reproach against `Uthman. (Ansab al-ashraf, al-Baladhuri, vol.5, pp.33-35; al-Aghani; Abu'l-Faraj al-Isfahani, vol.4, pp.174- 187; al-Isti`ab, vol.4, pp.1554-1557; Usd al-ghabah, vol.5, pp.91-92; at-Tabari, vol.1, pp.2843-2850; Ibn al-Athir, vol.3, pp.1O5-1O7; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.17, pp.227-245)

4. The man who accepted Islam after securing financial gain was Mu`awiyah who was adhering to Islam only for worldly benefits.

Letter 63: To Abu Musa al-Ash`ari, when Amir al-mu'minin learned that he was dissuading the people from joining in the battle of Jamal

To Abu Musa (`*Abdullah ibn Qays*) *al-Ash`ari, the Governor of Kufah when Amir al-mu'minin learned that he was dissuading the people of Kufah from joining in the battle of Jamal when Amir al-mu'minin had called them to fight along with him.*

(ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام

إلى أبي موسى الاشعري

وهو عامله على الكوفة، وقد بلغه عنه تثبيطُه الناسَ عن الخروج إليه لمّا ندبهم لحرب أصحاب الجمل

From the servant of Allah, Amir al-mu'minin to `Abdullah ibn Qays:

مِنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ عَلِيّ أَمِيرِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِلَى عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ قَيْس.

Now, I have come to know of words uttered by you which go in your favour as well as against you. [1] So, when my messenger reaches you prepare yourself and get ready, come out of your den and call those who are with you. Then, if you are convinced of the truth get up but if you feel cowardice go away. By Allah, you will be caught wherever you may be and you will not be spared till you are completely upset and everything about you is scattered and till you are shaken from your seat. Then, you will fear from your front as you do from the rear.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي عَنْكَ قَوْلٌ هُوَ لَكَ وَعَلَيْكَ، فإِذَا قَدِمَ عَلَيْكَ رَسُولي فارْفَعْ ذَيْلَكَ، واشْدُدْ مِئْزَرَكَ، واخْرُجْ مِنْ جُحْرِكَ، وَانْدُبْ مَنْ مَعَكَ، فَإِنْ حَقَّقْتَ فَانْفُذْ، وَإِنْ تَفَشَّلْتَ فَابْعُدْ! وَايْمُ اللهِ لَتُؤْتَيَنَّ حَيْثُ أَنْتَ، وَلاَ تُتْرَكُ حَتَّى يُخْلَطَ زُبْدُكَ بِخَاثِرِكَ، وَذَائِبُكَ بِجَامِدِكَ، وَحَتَّى تُعْجَلَ عَنْ قِعْدَتِكَ، وَتَحْذَرَ مِنْ أَمَامِكَ كَحَذَرِكَ مِنْ خَلْفِكَ،

What you hope is not a light matter, but it is serious calamity. We have to ride its camels, overcome its difficulties and level its mountains. Set your mind in order, take a grip on your affairs and acquire your (lot and your) share. If you do not like it then go away to where neither you are welcome nor can you

escape from it. It is better that you be left alone and lie sleeping. Then no one will enquire where so-and-so is. By Allah, this is the case of right with the rightful person and we do not care what the heretics do; and that is an end to the matter.

وَمَا هِيَ بِالْهُوَيْنَى الَّتِي تَرْجُو، وَلٰكِنَّهَا الدَّاهِيَةُ الْكُبْرَى، يُرْكَبُ جَمَلُهَا، وَيُذَلُّ صَعْبُهَا، وَيُسَهَّلُ جَبَلُهَا. فَاعْقِلْ عَقْلَكَ، وَامْلِكْ أَمْرَكَ، وَخُذْ نَصِيبَكَ وَحَظَّكَ، فَإِنْ كَرِهْتَ فَتَنَحَّ إِلَى غَيْرِ رَحْب وَلاَ فِي نَجَاة، فَبِالْحَرِيِّ لَتُكْفَيَنَّ وَأَنْتَ نَائِم، حَتَّى لاَ يُقَالَ: أَيْنَ فُلاَنٌ؟ وَاللهِ إِنَّهُ لَحَقٌّ مَعَ مُحِقّ، وَمَا أُبَالِي مَا صَنَعَ الْمُلْحِدُونَ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

1. When Amir al-mu'minin had the idea of suppressing the revolt of the people of Basrah he sent this letter through Imam al-Hasan to Abu Musa (`Abdullah ibn Qays) al-Ash`ari, who had been appointed Governor of Kufah by `Uthman, wherein he has scolded him for his duplicitous and contradictory behaviour and attempted to persuade him to jihad, because on one side he used to say that Amir al-mu'minin was the true Imam and allegiance to him was right and on the other he said that to support him in fighting against the Muslims was not right; but it was a mischief and it was necessary to keep off this mischief. Thus, Amir al-mu'minin has referred to this contradictory view by the words "huwa laka wa `alayka" (which go in your favour as well as against you). The intention is that when Amir al-mu'minin is the rightful Imam how can fighting his enemy with him be wrong? And if fighting on his side is wrong then what is the meaning of his being the rightful Imam.
In any case, in spite of his dissuading from fighting, the people of Kufah came out in large numbers to join Amir al-mu'minin's army and took full part in the battle, giving such a defeat to the people of Basrah that they never again dared to revolt.

Letter 64: In reply to Mu`awiyah

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

كتبه إلى معاوية، جواباً عن كتاب منه

Now then, certainly, we and you were on amiable terms as you say but difference arose between us and you the other day, when we accepted belief (iman) and you rejected it. Today the position is that we are steadfast (in the belief) but you are creating mischief. Those of you who accepted Islam did so reluctantly and that too when all the chief men had accepted Islam and joined the Messenger of Allah- (may Allah bless him and his descendants).

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّا كُنَّا نَحْنُ وَأَنْتُمْ عَلَى مَا ذَكَرْتَ مِنَ الاْلْفَةِ وَالْجَمَاعَةِ، فَفَرَّقَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَمْسِ أَنَّا آمَنَّا وَكَفَرْتُمْ، وَالْيَوْمَ أَنَّا اسْتَقَمْنَا وَفُتِنْتُمْ، وَمَا أَسْلَمَ مُسْلِمُكُمْ إِلاَّ كَرْهاً، وَبَعْدَ أَنْ كَانَ أَنْفُ الاْسْلاَمِ كُلُّهُ لِرَسُولِ اللهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) حرباً.

You have stated that I killed Talhah and az-Zubayr, forced `A'ishah out of her house and adopted residence between the two cities (Kufah and Basrah). [1] These are matters with which you have no concern nor do they involve anything against you. Therefore, no explanation about them is due to you. You also state that you are coming to me with a party of Muhajirun and Ansar, but hijrah came to an end on the day your brother was taken prisoner. If you are in a hurry, then wait a bit as I may come to meet you and that would be more befitting as that would mean that Allah has appointed me to punish you. But if you come to me it would be as the poet of Banu Asad said:

They are advancing against summer winds which are hurling stones on them in the highlands and lowlands.

وَذَكَرْتَ أَنِّي قَتَلْتُ طَلْحَةَ وَالزُّبَيْرَ، وَشَرَّدْتُ بِعَائِشَةَ، وَنَزَلْتُ بَيْنَ الْمِصْرَيْنِ! وَذلِكَ أَمْرٌ غِبْتَ عَنْهُ، فَلاَ عَلَيْكَ، وَلاَ الْعُذْرُ فِيهِ إِلَيْكَ.

وَذَكَرْتَ أَنَّكَ زَائِرِي فِي الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالأَنْصَارِ، وَقَدِ انْقَطَعَتِ الْهِجْرَةُ يَوْمَ أُسِرَ أَخُوكَ، فَإِنْ كَانَ فِيكَ عَجَلٌ فَاسْتَرْفِهْ، فَإِنِّي إِنْ أَزُرْكَ فَذلِكَ جَدِيرٌ أَنْ يَكُونَ اللهُ إِنَّمَا بَعَثَنِي لِلنِّقْمَةِ مِنْكَ! وَإِنْ تَزُرْنِي فَكَمَا قَالَ أَخُو بَنِي أَسَد:

مُسْتَقْبِلِينَ رِيَاحَ الصَّيْفِ تَضْرِبُهُمْ * بِحَاصِبَيْنِ أَغْوَار وَجُلْمُودِ

(Remember) I have still the sword with which I dispatched your grandfather, your mother's brother and your brother to one and the same place. By Allah, I know what you are. Your heart is sheathed and your intelligence is weak. It is better to say that you have ascended to where you view a bad scene which is against you, not in your favour, because you are searching a thing lost by someone else, you are tending someone else's cattle and you are hankering after a thing which is not yours, nor have you any attachment with it.

How remote are your words from your actions, and how closely you resemble your paternal and maternal uncles who were led by their wickedness and love for wrong to oppose Muhammad (may Allah bless him and his descendants) and in consequence they were killed as you know. They could not put up a defence against the calamity and could not protect their place of safety from the striking of swords which abound in the battle and which do not show weakness.

وَعِنْدِيَ السَّيْفُ الَّذِي أَعْضَضْتُهُ بِجَدِّكَ وَخَالِكَ وَأَخِيكَ فِي مَقَام وَاحِد، وَإِنَّكَ وَاللهِ مَا عَلِمْتُ الأَغْلَفُ الْقَلْبِ، الْمُقَارِبُ الْعَقْلِ، وَالأَوْلَى أَنْ يُقَالَ لَكَ: إِنَّكَ رَقِيتَ سُلَّماً أَطْلَعَكَ مَطْلَعَ سُوء عَلَيْكَ لاَ لَكَ، لأَنَّكَ نَشَدْتَ غَيْرَ ضَالَّتِكَ، وَرَعَيْتَ غَيْرَ سَائِمَتِكَ، وَطَلَبْتَ أَمْراً لَسْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِهِ وَلاَ فِي مَعْدِنِهِ، فَمَا أَبْعَدَ قَوْلَكَ مِنْ فِعْلِكَ!! وَقَرِيبٌ مَا أَشْبَهْتَ مِنْ أَعْمَام وَأَخْوَال! حَمَلَتْهُمُ الشَّقَاوَةُ، وَتَمَنِّي الْبَاطِلِ، عَلَى الْجُحُودِ بِمُحَمَّد (صلى الله عليه وآله) فَصُرِعُوا مَصَارِعَهُمْ حَيْثُ عَلِمْتَ، لَمْ يَدْفَعُوا عَظِيماً، وَلَمْ يَمْنَعُوا حَرِيماً، بِوَقْعِ سُيُوف مَا خَلاَ مِنْهَا الْوَغَى، وَلَمْ تُمَاشِهَا الْهُوَيْنَى

You have said a lot about killing of `Uthman. You first join what the people have joined (i.e., allegiance) then seek a verdict about (the accused people) from me and I shall settle the matter between you and them according to the Book of Allah, the Sublime. But what you are aiming at is just the fake nipple given to a child in the first days of stopping of nursing. Peace be on those who deserve it.

وَقَدْ أَكْثَرْتَ فِي قَتَلَةِ عُثْمانَ، فَادْخُلْ فِيما دَخَلَ فيهِ النَّاسُ، ثُمَّ حَاكِمِ الْقُوْمَ إِلَيَّ، أَحْمِلْكَ وَإِيَّاهُمْ عَلَى كِتَابِ اللهِ. وَأَمَّا تِلْكَ الَّتِي تُرِيدُ فَإِنَّهَا خُدْعَةُ الصَّبِيِّ عَنِ اللَّبَنِ فِي أَوَّلِ الْفِصَالِ، وَالسَّلاَمُ لاِهْلِهِ.

1. Mu`awiyah had written a letter to Amir al-mu'minin in which after recalling mutual unity and amicability he laid on him the blame of killing Talhah and az-Zubayr and ousting `A'ishah from her house and objected to his adopting Kufah as his seat of government in place of Medina. In the end, he gave a threat of war and said that he was about to come out with a force of muhajirun and ansar to fight. Amir al-mu'minin wrote this letter in reply to him, wherein commenting on Mu`awiyah's claim for unity he says that: "There might have been unity between you and us but with the advent of Islam such a gulf has developed between the two that it is not possible to bridge it, and such a separation has occurred which cannot be removed. This was because we responded to the call of the Prophet and hastened towards Islam but your position was that you were still in the state of unbelief and ignorance whereby we and you came to adopt separate ways. But when Islam secured stability and the chiefs of Arabs entered its fold you too were obliged to, and secured protection of your lives by putting the covering of Islam on your faces, but continued secretly to fan the mischief intended to shatter its foundations. Since we had accepted Islam of our own free will and pleasure we adhered to the right path and at no stage did any faltering occur in our steadfastness. Therefore, your acceptance of Islam too could not make us agree with your views."
As regards Nlu`awiyah's accusation that Amir al-mu'minin engineered the killing of Talhah and az-Zubayr; then even if this blame is admitted as true, is it not a fact that they had openly revolted against Amir al-mu'minin and had risen for war after breaking the allegiance. Therefore, if they were killed in connection with the revolt their blood would be wasted and no blame would lie on the killer, because the penalty for him who revolts against the rightful Imam is death, and fighting against him is permissible, without doubt. The fact however, is that this accusation has no reality because Talhah was killed by a man of his own party. Thus, the historians write:
Marwan ibn al-Hakam shot Talhah with an arrow and turning to Aban ibn `Uthman said: "We have killed a killer of your father and relieved you of revenge." (Ibn Sa`d, vol.3, part 1, p.159; Ibn al-Athir, vol.3, p.244; al-Isti`ab, vol.2, pp.766-769; Usd al-ghabah, vol.3, pp.60,61; al-Isabah, vol.2, p.230; Tahdhib, at-tahdhib, vol.5, p.21).
As for az-Zubayr, he was killed by `Amr ibn Jurmuz on his way back from Basrah, and there was no prompting by Amir al-mu'minin in it. Similarly, `A'ishah herself came out of her house as the head of this rebellious group while Amir al-mu'minin counselled her several times to realize her position and not to step out of her bounds but these things had no effect on her. Of the same type was his criticism that Amir al-mu'minin left Medina and adopted Kufah as the seat of his government because Medina turns out bad people from itself and throws away dirt. The reply to it is only this that Mu`awiyah himself too always retained Syria as his capital keeping away from Medina.
In this way, what right can he have to object to Amir al-mu'minin changing his seat. Amir al-mu'minin left Medina because of those rebellions which had cropped up from all sides. To suppress them only the selection of such a place as capital from where military assistance could be mobilized at any time could be useful. Thus, Amir al-mu'minin had seen on the occasion of the battle of Jamal that a great majority of the people of Kufah had supported him and that therefore by making it a base for the army, defence against the enemy could be easily managed, while Medina was not appropriate for military mobilization or for supplies.
Lastly, as for Mu'awiyah's threat that he would march with muhajirun and ansar, Amir al-mu'minin gave a reply to this point in a very subtle way, namely that, "How would you bring muhajirun now since the door for hijrah was closed the day when your brother Yazid ibn Abi Sufyan was taken prisoner." This man was taken prisoner on the day of the fall of Mecca and there is no question of hijrah after the fall of Mecca so as to enable any one to be called a muhajirun because of the Prophet's saying: "There is no hijrah after the victory over Mecca."

Letter 65: To Mu`awiyah

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إليه أيضاً

Now, this is the time [1] that you should derive benefit by observing a clear view of the main matters, because you have been treading in the path of your forefathers in making wrong claims, spreading false and untrue notions, claiming for yourself what is far above you and demanding what is not meant for you, because you want to run away from right and to revolt against what is more fastened to your flesh and blood namely what has been heard by the depth of your ears and has filled your chest. And after forsaking right there remains nothing except clear misguidance, and after disregarding a (clear) statement there is nothing except confusion. You should therefore guard (yourself) against doubts and its ill-effects of confusion, because for a long time mischief has spread its veils and its gloom has blinded your eyes.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ آنَ لَكَ أَنْ تَنْتَفِعَ بِاللَّمْحِ الْبَاصِرِ مِنْ عِيَانِ الاْمُورِ، فَقَدْ سَلَكْتَ مَدَارِجَ أَسْلاَفِكَ بِادِّعَائِكَ الاْبَاطِيلَ، وَإِقْحَامِكَ غُرُورَ الْمَيْنِ وَالاْكَاذِيبِ، وَبِانْتِحَالِكَ مَا قَدْ عَلاَ عَنْكَ، وَابْتِزَازِكَ لِمَا قَدِ اخْتُزِنَ دُونَكَ، فِرَاراً مِنَ الْحَقِّ، وَجُحُوداً لِمَا هُوَ أَلْزَمُ لَكَ مِنْ لَحْمِكَ وَدَمِكَ، مِمَّا قَدْ وَعَاهُ سَمْعُكَ، وَمُلِىءَ بِهِ صَدْرُكَ، فَمَاذَا بَعْدَ الْحَقِّ إِلاَّ الضَّلاَلُ، وَبَعْدَ الْبَيَانِ إِلاَّ اللَّبْسُ؟ فَاحْذَرِ الشُّبْهَةَ وَاشْتِمالَهَا عَلَى لَبْسَتِهَا، فَإِنَّ الْفِتْنَةَ طَالَمَا أَغْدَفَتْ جَلاَبِيبَهَا، وَأَغْشَتِ الاْبْصَارَ ظُلْمَتُهَا.

I have received your letter which is full of uncouth utterances which weaken the cause of peace and nonsensical expressions which have not been prepared with knowledge and forbearance. By reason of these things you have become like one who is sinking in a marsh or groping in a dark place. You have raised yourself to a position which is difficult to approach and devoid of any signs (to guide). Even the royal kite cannot reach it. It is parallel to the `Ayyuq (the star Capella), in height.

وَقَدْ أَتَانِي كِتَابٌ مِنْكَ ذُو أَفَانِينَ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ ضَعُفَتْ قُوَاهَا عَنِ السِّلْمِ، وَأَسَاطِيرَ لَمْ يَحُكْهَا مِنْكَ عِلْمٌ وَلاَ حِلْمٌ، أَصْبَحْتَ مِنْهَا كَالْخَائِضِ فِي الدَّهَاسِ، وَالخَابِطِ فِي الدِّيمَاسِ، وَتَرَقَّيْتَ إِلَى مَرْقَبَة بَعِيدَةِ الْمَرَامِ، نَازِحَةِ الاْعْلاَمِ، تَقْصُرُ دُونَهَا الاْنُوقُ، وَيُحَاذَى بِهَا الْعَيُّوقُ.

May Allah forbid that you be in charge of people's affairs after my assuming authority as Caliph, or that I issue an edict or document granting you authority over any one of them. Therefore, from now onwards guard yourself and be watchful, because if you recalcitrate till the people of Allah (are forced to) rush upon you, then matters will be closed for you and whatever can be accepted from you today will not be

accepted then; and that is an end to the matter.

وَحَاشَ لله أَنْ تَلِيَ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ بَعْدِي صَدْراً أَوْ وِرْداً، أَوْ أُجْرِيَ لَكَ عَلَى أَحَد مِنْهُمْ عَقْداً أَوْ عَهْداً!! فَمِنَ الاْنَ فَتَدَارَكْ نَفْسَكَ، وَانْظُرْ لَهَا، فَإِنَّكَ إِنْ فَرَّطْتَ حَتَّى يَنْهَدَ إِلَيْكَ عِبَادُ اللهِ أُرْتِجَتْ عَلَيْكَ الاْمُورُ،مُنِعْتَ أَمْراً هُوَ مِنْكَ الْيَوْمَ مَقْبُولٌ.

1. At the end of the battle of the Kharijites, Mu`awiyah wrote a letter to Amir al-mu'minin wherein, as usual, he indulged in mud-throwing. In reply, Amir al-mu'minin wrote this letter in which he has tried to draw Mu`awiyah's attention to the clear facts about this very battle of the Kharijites, because this battle took place in accordance with the prophecy of the Prophet while Amir al-mu'minin himself too had said before the battle that besides the people of Jamal and Siffin he had to fight against one more group and they were the "deviators" from the religion, namely the Kharijites. The occurrence of this battle and the killing of the man with breasts (Dhu'th- thudayyah) was a clear proof of Amir al-mu'minin being in the right. If Mu'awiyah had not been obsessed with self-advertisement and lust for conquests, and had not shut his eyes against the right like his forefathers Abu Sufyan and his brother `Utbah he would have seen right and come on its path. But compelled by his natural inclination he always evaded right and truth and kept himself blind to those sayings of the Prophet which threw light on Amir al-mu'minin's Imamate and vicegerency. Because of being with the Prophet in the farewell pilgrimage the Prophet's saying: "Of whomsoever I am the master, `Ali is his master" was not hidden from him, and neither was the Prophet's saying that: "O' `Ali you are to me as Harun was to Musa", because of his presence on the occasion of the battle of Tabuk. In spite of all this, he passed his life in concealing right and encouraging wrong. This was not due to any misunderstanding but it was his lust for power that kept prompting him to suppress and trample truth and justice.

Letter 66: To `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas

(*This letter has already been included with a different version*)

(ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام

إلى عبدالله بن العباس رحمه الله

وقد مضى هذا الكتاب فيما تقدّم بخلاف هذه الرواية

And then, sometimes a person feels joyful about a thing which he was not to miss in any case and feels grieved for a thing which was not to come to him at all. Therefore, you should not regard the attainment of pleasure and the satisfaction of the desire for revenge as the best favour of this world, but it should be the putting off of the (flame of) wrong and the revival of right. Your pleasure should be for what (good acts) you have sent forward; your grief should be for what you are leaving behind; and your worry should be about what is to befall after death.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فإِنَّ العَبْدَ لَيَفْرَحُ بِالشَّيْءِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيَفُوتَهُ، وَيَحْزَنُ عَلَى الشَّيْءِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُصِيبَهُ، فَلاَ يَكُنْ أَفْضَلَ مَا نِلْتَ في نَفْسِكَ مِنْ دُنْيَاكَ بُلُوغُ لَذَّة أَوْ شِفَاءُ غَيْظ، وَلكِنْ إِطْفَاءُ بِاطِل أَوْ إِحْيَاءُ حَقّ. وَلْيَكُنْ سُرورُكَ بِمَا قَدَّمْتَ، وَأَسَفُكَ عَلَى مَا خَلَّفْتَ، وَهَمُّكَ فِيَما بَعْدَ الْموْتِ

Letter 67: To Qutham ibn al-`Abbas, his Governor of Mecca

(ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام

إلى قُثَمِ بن العباس (رحمه الله) وهو عامله على مكة

Now, make arrangements for Hajj by the people, remind them of the days (to be devoted to) Allah. Sit for giving them audience morning and evening. Explain the law to the seeker, teach the ignorant and discuss with the learned. There should be no intermediary between you and the people except your tongue, and no guard save your own face. Do not prevent any needy person from meeting you, because if the needy is returned unsatisfied from your door in the first instance then even doing it thereafter will not bring you praise.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَأَقِمْ لِلنَّاسِ الْحَجَّ، وَذَكِّرْهُمْ بِأَيَّامِ اللهِ، وَاجْلِسْ لَهُمُ الْعَصْرَيْنِ، فَأَفْتِ الْمُسْتَفْتِيَ، وَعَلِّمِ الْجَاهِلَ، وَذَاكِرِ الْعَالِمَ، وَلاَ يَكُنْ لَكَ إِلَى النَّاسِ سَفِيرٌ إِلاَّ لِسَانُكَ، وَلاَ حَاجِبٌ إِلاَّ وَجْهُكَ، وَلاَ تَحْجُبَنَّ ذَا حَاجَة عَنْ لِقَائِكَ بِهَا، فَإِنَّهَا إِنْ ذِيدَتْ عَنْ أَبْوَابِكَ في أَوَّلِ وِرْدِهَا لَمْ تُحْمَدْ فيما بَعْدُ عَلَى قَضَائِهَا.

See what has been collected with you of the funds of Allah (in the public treasury) and spend it over the persons with families, the distressed, the starving and the naked, at your end. Then, send the remaining to us for distribution to those who are on this side.

وَانْظُرْ إِلَى مَا اجْتَمَعَ عِنْدَكَ مِنْ مَالِ اللهِ فَاصْرِفْهُ إِلَى مَنْ قِبَلَكَ مِنْ ذَوِي الْعِيَالِ وَالْمَجَاعَةِ، مُصِيباً بِهِ مَوَاضِعَ المَفَاقِرِ وَالْخَلاَّتِ، وَمَا فَضَلَ عَنْ ذلِكَ فَاحْمِلْهُ إِلَيْنَا لِنَقْسِمَهُ فِيمَنْ قِبَلَنَا.

Ask the people of Mecca not to charge rent from lodgers, because Allah, the Glorified, says that:

"alike; for the dweller therein as well as the stranger" (***Qur'an, 22:25***).

"al-`akif" (the dweller) here means he who is living there while "al-badi" (the stranger) means he who is not among the people of Mecca, comes for Hajj from outside. May Allah grant us and you promptitude for seeking His love (by doing good acts); and that is an end to the matter.

وَمُرْ أَهْلَ مَكَّةَ أَلاَّ يَأْخُذُوا مِنْ سَاكِنٍ أَجْراً، فَإِنَّ اللهَ سُبْحَانَهُ يَقُولُ: (سَوَاءً الْعَاكِفُ فِيهِ وَالْبَادِ) فَالْعَاكِفُ: الْمُقِيمُ بِهِ، وَالْبَادِي: الَّذِي يَحُجُّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ غَيْرِ أَهْلِهِ. وَفَّقَنَا اللهُ وَإِيَّاكُمْ لِمحَابِّهِ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

Letter 68: To Salman al-Farisi before Amir al-mu'minin's caliphate

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى سلمان الفارسي (رحمه الله) قبل أيام خلافته

Now, the example of the world is like that of a snake which is soft in touch but whose poison is fatal. Therefore, keep yourself aloof from whatever appears good to you because of its short stay with you. Do not worry for it because of your conviction that it will leave you and that its circumstances are vicissitudes. When you feel most attracted towards it, shun it most, because whenever someone is assured of happiness in it, it throws him into danger; or when he feels secure in it, the world alters his security into fear; and that is an end to the matter.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فإِنَّمَا مَثَلُ الدُّنْيَا مَثَلُ الْحَيَّةِ: لَيِّنٌ مَسُّهَا، قَاتِلٌ سُمُّهَا، فَأَعْرِضْ عَمَّا يُعْجِبُكَ فِيهَا، لِقِلَّةِ مَا يَصْحَبُكَ مِنْهَا، وَضَعْ عَنْكَ هُمُومَهَا، لِمَا أَيْقَنْتَ بِهِ مِنْ فِرَاقِهَا، وَكُنْ آنَسَ مَا تَكُونُ بِهَا، أَحْذَرَ مَا تَكُونَ مِنْهَا، فَإِنَّ صَاحِبَهَا كُلَّمَا اطْمأَنَّ فِيهَا إِلَى سُرُور أَشْخَصَتْهُ عَنْهُ إِلىَ مَحْذُور، أَوْ إِلَى إِينَاس أَزالَهُ عَنْهُ إِيحَاشٌ!

Letter 69: To al-Harith (ibn `Abdillah, al-A`war)

al-Hamdani

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى الحارث الهَمْدَاني

Adhere to the rope of the Qur'an and seek instructions from it. Regard its lawful as lawful and its unlawful as unlawful. Testify the right that has been in the past. Take lessons for the present condition of this world from the past (condition), because its one phase resembles the other, its end is to meet its beginning, and the whole of it is to change and depart. Regard the name of Allah as too great to mention Him, save in the matter of right. Remember death frequently and (what is to come) after death. Do not long for death except on a reliable condition.

وَتَمَسَّكْ بِحَبْلِ الْقُرآنِ، وَانْتَصِحْهُ، وَأَحِلَّ حَلاَلَهُ، وَحَرِّمْ حَرَامَهُ، وَصَدِّقْ بِمَا سَلَفَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ، وَاعْتَبِرْ بِمَا مَضَى مِنَ الدُّنْيَا لِـ مَا بَقِي مِنْهَا، فَإِنَّ بَعْضَهَا يُشْبِهُ بَعْضاً، وَآخِرَهَا لاَحِقٌ بِأَوَّلِهَا! وَكُلُّهَا حَائِلٌ مُفَارِقٌ.

وَعَظِّمِ اسْمَ اللهِ أَنْ تَذْكُرَهُ إِلاَّ عَلَى حَقّ . وَأَكْثِرْ ذِكْرَ الْمَوْتِ وَمَا بَعْدَ الْمَوتِ، وَلاَ تَتَمَنَّ الْمَوْتَ إِلاَّ بِشَرْط وَثِيق.

Avoid every action which the doer likes for his own self but dislikes for the Muslims in general. Avoid every such action which is performed in secret and from which shame is felt in the open. Also avoid that action about which if the doer is questioned he himself regards it bad or offers excuses for it. Do not expose your honour to be treated as the subject of people's discussions. Do not relate to the people all that you hear, for that would amount to falsehood.

Do not contest all that the people relate to you for that would mean ignorance. Kill your anger and forgive when you have power (to punish). Show forbearance in the moment of rage, and pardon in spite of authority; the eventual end will then be in your favour. Seek good out of every favour that Allah has bestowed on you, and do not waste any favour of Allah over you. The effect of Allah's favours over you should be visible on you.

وَاحْذَرْ كُلَّ عَمَل يَرْضَاهُ صَاحِبُهُ لِنَفْسِهِ، وَيُكْرَهُ لِعَامَّةِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَاحْذَرْ كُلَّ عَمَل يُعْمَلُ بِهِ فِي السِّرِّ، وَيُسْتَحَى مِنْهُ فِي الْعَلاَنِيَةِ، واحْذَرْ كُلَّ عَمَل إِذَا سُئِلَ عَنْهُ صَاحِبُهُ أَنْكَرَهُ أَوِ اعتَذَرَ مِنْهُ. وَلاَ تَجْعَلْ عِرْضَكَ غَرَضاً لِنِبَالِ الْقَوْلِ، وَلاَ تُحَدِّث النَّاسَ بِكُلِّ مَا سَمِعْتَ بِهِ، فَكَفَى بِذلِكَ كَذِباً، وَلاَ تَرُدَّ عَلَى النَّاسِ كُلَّ مَا حَدَّثُوكَ بِهِ، فَكَفَى بِذلِكَ جَهْلاً. وَاكْظِمِ الْغَيْظَ، وَاحْلُمْ عِنْدَ الْغَضَبِ، وَتَجاوَزْ عِنْدَ المَقْدِرَةِ، وَاصْفَحْ مَعَ الدَّوْلَةِ، تَكُنْ لَكَ الْعَاقِبَةُ. وَاسْتَصْلِحْ كُلَّ نِعْمَة أَنْعَمَهَا اللهُ

عَلَيْكَ، وَلاَ تُضَيِّعَنَّ نِعْمَةً مِنْ نِعَمِ اللهِ عِنْدَكَ، وَلْيُرَ عَلَيْكَ أَثَرُ مَا أَنْعَمَ اللهُ بِهِ عَلَيْكَ.

Know that the most distinguished among the believers is he who is the most forward of them in spending from himself, his family and his property, because whatever good you send forward Will remain in store for you and the benefit of whatever you keep behind will be derived by others. Avoid the company of the person whose opinion is unsound and whose action is detestable, because a man is judged after his companion.

وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ أَفْضَلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَفْضَلُهُمْ تَقْدِمَةً مِنْ نَفْسِهِ وَأَهْلِهِ وَمَالِهِ، فَإِنَّكَ مَا تُقَدِّمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَبْقَ لَكَ ذُخْرُهُ، وَمَا تُؤَخِّرْهُ يَكُنْ لِغَيْرِكَ خَيْرُهُ. وَاحْذَرْ صَحَابَةَ مَنْ يَفِيلُ رَأْيُهُ، وَيُنْكَرُ عَمَلُهُ، فَإِنَّ الصَّاحِبَ عَتَبَرٌ صَاحِبِهِ.

Live in big cities because they are collective centres of the Muslims. Avoid places of neglectfulness and wickedness and places where there are paucity of supporters for the obedience of Allah. Confine your thinking to matters which are helpful to you. Do not sit in the marketing centres because they are the meeting-places of Satan, and targets of mischiefs. Frequently look at those over whom you enjoy superiority because this is a way of giving thanks.

وَاسْكُنِ الأَمْصَارَ الْعِظَامَ فَإِنَّهَا جِمَاعُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَاحْذَرْ مَنَازِلَ الْغَفْلَةِ وَالْجَفَاءِ وَقِلَّةَ الأَعْوَانِ عَلَى طَاعَةِ اللهِ، وَاقْصُرْ رَأْيَكَ عَلَى مَا يَعْنِيكَ، وَإِيَّاكَ وَمَقَاعِدَ الأَسْوَاقِ، فَإِنَّهَا مَحَاضِرُ الشَّيْطَانِ وَمَعَارِيضُ الْفِتَنِ. وَأَكْثِرْ أَنْ تَنْظُرَ إِلَى مَنْ فُضِّلْتَ عَلَيْهِ، فإِنَّ ذلِكَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ الشُّكْرِ.

Do not undertake a journey on Friday until you have attended the prayers, except when you are going in the way of Allah, or in an excusable matter. Obey Allah in all your affairs because Allah's obedience has precedence over all other things. Deceive your heart into worshipping, persuade it and do not force it. Engage it (in worshipping) when it is free and merry, except as regards the obligations enjoined upon you, for they should not be neglected and must be performed at the five times. Be on guard lest death comes down upon you while you have fled away from your Lord in search of worldly pleasure. Avoid the company of the wicked because vice adjoins vice. Regard Allah as great, and love His lovers. Keep off anger because it is one large army from Satan's armies; and that is an end to the matter.

وَلاَ تُسَافِرْ فِي يَوْمِ جُمُعَةٍ حَتّى تَشْهَدَ الصَّلاَةَ إِلاَّ فَاصِلاً فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ، أَوْ فِي أَمْرٍ تُعْذَرُ بِهِ. وَأَطِعِ اللهَ فِي جُمَلِ أُمُورِكَ، فَإِنَّ طَاعَةَ اللهِ فَاضِلَةٌ عَلَى مَا سِوَاهَا. وَخَادِعْ نَفْسَكَ فِي الْعِبَادَةِ، وَارْفُقْ بِهَا وَلاَ تَقْهَرْهَا، وَخُذْ عَفْوَهَا وَنَشَاطَهَا، إِلاَّ مَا كَانَ مَكْتُوباً عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْفَرِيضَةِ، فَإِنَّهُ لاَ بُدَّ مِنْ قَضَائِهَا وتَعَاهُدِهَا عِنْدَ مَحَلِّهَا. وَإِيَّاكَ أَنْ يَنْزِلَ بِكَ الْمَوْتُ وَأَنْتَ آبِقٌ(1) مِنْ رَبِّكَ فِي طَلَبِ الدُّنْيَا، وَإِيَّاكَ وَمُصَاحَبَةَ الْفُسَّاقِ، فَإِنَّ الشَّرَّ بِالشَّرِّ مُلْحَقٌ. وَوَقِّرِ اللهَ، وَأَحْبِبْ أَحِبَّاءَهُ، وَاحْذَرِ الْغَضَبَ، فَإِنَّهُ جُنْدٌ عَظِيمٌ مِنْ جُنُودِ إِبْلِيسَ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

Letter 70: To Sahl ibn Hunayf al-Ansari

To Sahl ibn Hunayf al-Ansari, his Governor of Medina about certain persons in Medina who had gone over to Mu`awiyah

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى سهل بن حُنَيف الانصاري

وهو عامله على المدينه، في معنى قوم من أهلها لحقوا بمعاوية

Now, I have come to know that certain persons from your side are stealthily going over to Mu`awiyah. Do not feel sorry for their numbers so lost to you or for their help of which you are deprived. It is enough that they have gone into misguidance and you have been relieved of them. They are running away from guidance and truth and advancing towards blindness and ignorance. They are seekers of this world and are proceeding to it and are leaping towards it. They have known justice, seen it, heard it and appreciated it. They have realized that here, to us, all men are equal in the matter of right. Therefore, they ran away to selfishness and partiality. Let them remain remote and far away.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي أَنَّ رِجَالاً مِمَّنْ قِبَلَكَ يَتَسَلَّلُونَ إِلَى مُعَاوِيَةَ، فَلاَ تَأْسَفْ عَلَى مَا يَفُوتُكَ مِنْ عَدَدِهِمْ، وَيَذْهَبُ عَنْكَ مِنْ مَدَدِهِمْ، فَكَفَى لَهُمْ غَيّاً، وَلَكَ مِنْهُمْ شَافِياً، فِرَارُهُمْ مِنَ الْهُدَى والْحَقّ، وَإِيضَاعُهُمْ إِلَى الْعَمَى وَالْجَهْلِ، وَإِنَّمَا هُمْ أَهْلُ دُنْيَا مُقْبِلُونَ عَلَيْهَا، وَمُهْطِعُونَ إِلَيْهَا، قَدْ عَرَفُوا الْعَدْلَ وَرَأَوْهُ، وَسَمِعُوهُ وَ وَعَوْهُ، وَعَلِمُوا أَنَّ النَّاسَ عِنْدَنَا فِي الْحَقّ أُسْوَةٌ، فَهَرَبُوا إِلَى الأَثَرَةِ، فَبُعْداً لَهُمْ وَسُحْقاً!

By Allah, surely they have not gone away from oppression and joined justice. In this matter, we only desire Allah to resolve for us its hardships and to level for us its uneveness, if Allah wills; and that is an end to the matter.

إِنَّهُمْ ـ وَاللهِ ـ لَمْ يَنْفِرُوا مِنْ جَوْر، وَلَمْ يَلْحَقُوا بِعَدْل، وَإِنَّا لَنَطْمَعُ فِي هذَا الأَمْرِ أَنْ يُذَلِّلَ اللهُ لَنَا صَعْبَهُ،يُسَهِّلَ لَنَا حَزْنَهُ، إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ، وَالسَّلاَمُ عَلَيْكَ.

Letter 71: To al-Mundhir ibn Jarud al-`Abdi

To al-Mundhir ibn Jarud al-`Abdi who had misappropriated certain things given into his administrative charge

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى المنذر بن الجارود العَبْدي

وقد خان في بعض ما ولاّه من أعماله

Now, the good behaviour of your father deceived me about you and I thought that you would follow his way and tread in his path. But according to what has reached me about you, you are not giving up following your passions and are not retaining any provision for the next world. You are making this world by ruining your next life, and doing good to your kinsmen by cutting yourself off from religion.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ صَلاَحَ أَبِيكَ غَرَّنِي مِنْكَ، وَظَنَنْتُ أَنَّكَ تَتَّبِعُ هَدْيَهُ، وَتَسْلُكُ سَبِيلَهُ، فَإِذَا أَنْتَ فِيمَا رُقِّيَ إِلَيَّ عَنْكَ لاَتَدَعُ لِهَوَاكَ انْقِيَاداً، وَلاَ تُبْقِي لِاخِرَتِكَ عَتَاداً، تَعْمُرُ دُنْيَاكَ بَخَرَابِ آخِرَتِكَ، وَتَصِلُ عَشِيرَتَكَ بِقَطِيعَةِ دِينِكَ.

If what has reached me about you is correct, then the camel of your family and the strap of your shoe is better than yourself. A man with qualities like yours is not fit to close a hole in the ground, nor for performing any deed, nor for increasing his position, nor for taking him as a partner in any trust, nor for trusting him against misappropriation. Therefore, proceed to me as soon as this letter of mine reaches you if Allah so wills.

وَلَئِنْ كَانَ مَا بَلَغَنِي عَنْكَ حَقّاً، لَجَمَلُ أَهْلِكَ وَشِسْعُ نَعْلِكَ خَيْرٌ مِنْكَ، وَمَنْ كَانَ بِصِفَتِكَ فَلَيْسَ بِأَهْل أَنْ يُسَدَّ بِهِ ثَغْرٌ، أَوْ يُنْفَذَ بِهِ أَمْرٌ، أَوْ يُعْلَى لَهُ قَدْرٌ، أَوْ يُشْرَكَ فِي أَمَانَة، أَوْ يُؤْمَنَ عَلَى خِيَانَة. فَأَقْبِلْ إِلَيَّ حِينَ يَصِلُ إِلَيْكَ كِتَابِي هذَا إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: al-Mundhir ibn Jarud al-`Abdi is he about whom Amir al-mu'minin (peace be upon him) said that:

He looks very often at his shoulders, feels proud in his garments (appearance) and frequently blows away (dust) from his shoes.

قال السيد الرضي: وَالمنذر هذا هو الذي قال فيه أميرالمؤمنين (عليه السلام): إنه لنظّارٌ في عِطْفَيْهِ، مُختالٌ في بُرْدَيْه، تَفّالٌ في شِرَاكَيْهِ.

Letter 72: To `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى عبدالله بن العباس

Now, you cannot go farther than the limit of your life, nor can you be given a livelihood which is not for you. Remember that this life consists of two days – a day for you and a day against you, and that the world is a house (changing) authorities. Whatever in it is for you will come to you despite your weakness; and whatever in it turns against you cannot be brought back despite your strength.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّكَ لَسْتَ بِسَابِق أَجَلَكَ، وَلاَ مَرْزُوق مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ. وَاعْلَمْ بِأَنَّ الدَّهْرَ يَوْمَانِ: يَوْمٌ لَكَ وَيَوْمٌ عَلَيْكَ، وَأَنَّ الدُّنْيَا دَارُ دُوَل، فَمَا كَانَ مِنْهَا لَكَ أَتَاكَ عَلَى ضَعْفِكَ، وَمَا كَانَ مِنْهَا عَلَيْكَ لَمْ تَدْفَعْهُ بِقُوَّتِكَ.

Letter 73: To Mu'awiyah

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى معاوية

Now, (in) exchanging replies and listening to your letters my view has been weak and my perception has been mistaken. When you refer your demands to me and expect me to send you written replies, you are like one who is in deep slumber while his dreams contradict him, or one who stands perplexed and overwhelmed, not knowing whether whatever comes to him is for him or against him.

You are not such a man but he is (to some extent) like you (as you are worse than him). I swear by Allah that, had it not been for (my) giving you time, you would have faced from me catastrophe that would have crushed the bones and removed the flesh. Know that Satan has prevented you from turning to good actions and listening to the words of counsels. Peace be upon those who deserve it.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي عَلَى التَّرَدُّدِ فِي جَوَابِكَ، وَالاسْتِمَاعِ إِلَى كِتَابِكَ، لَمُوَهِّنٌ رَأْيِي، وَمُخَطِّىءٌ فِرَاسَتِي. وَإِنَّكَ إِذْ تُحَاوِلُنِي الأُمُورَ وَتُرَاجِعُنِي السُّطُورَ، كَالْمُسْتَثْقِلِ النَّائِمِ تَكْذِبُهُ أَحْلاَمُهُ، وَالْمُتَحَيِّرِ الْقَائِمِ يَبْهَظُهُ مَقَامُهُ، لاَ يَدْرِي أَلَهُ مَا يَأْتِي أَمْ عَلَيْهِ، وَلَسْتَ بِهِ، غَيْرَ أَنَّهُ بِكَ شَبِيهٌ. وَأُقْسِمُ بِاللهِ لَوْ لاَ بَعْضُ الاسْتِبْقَاءِ لَوَصَلَتْ إِلَيْكَ مِنِّي قَوَارِعُ، تَقْرَعُ الْعَظْمَ، وَتَهْلِسُ اللَّحْمَ! وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ قَدْ ثَبَّطَكَ عَنْ أَنْ تُرَاجِعَ أَحْسَنَ أُمُورِكَ، وَتَأْذَنَ لِمَقَالِ نَصِيحَتِكَ، وَالسَّلاَمُ لِأَهْلِهِ

Letter 74: A treaty which Imam Ali (a) has worded for the Bani Rabi'a tribe and the Yemenites to agree upon

Written by Amir al-mu'minin as a protocol between the tribes of Rabi`ah and the people of Yemen. Taken from the writing of Hisham ibn (Muhammad) al-Kalbi

(وَمن حلْف كتبه (عليه السلام

بين اليمن وربيعة

نُقل من خط هشام بن الكلبي

This indenture contains what the people of Yemen, including the townsmen and nomads, and the tribes of Rabi`ah, including the townsmen and nomads, have agreed upon: that they will adhere to the Book of Allah, will call to it and order according to it and will respond to whoever calls to it and orders according to it. They will not sell it for any price nor accept any alternative for it. They will join hands against anyone who opposes it and abandons it. They will help one another. Their voice will be one. They will not break their pledge on account of the rebuke of a rebuker, the wrath of an angry person, the humiliating treatment of one group to the other, or the use of abusive terms by one party against the other.

هذَا مَا اجْتَمَعَ عَلَيْهِ أَهْل الْـيَمَنِ حَاضِرُهَا وَبَادِيهَا، وَرَبِيعَةُ حَاضِرُهَا وَبَادِيهَا: أَنَّهُمْ عَلَى كِتَابِ اللهِ يَدْعُونَ إِلَيْهِ، وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِهِ، وَيُجِيبُونَ مَنْ دَعَا إِلَيْهِ وَأَمَرَ بِهِ، لاَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِهِ ثَمَناً، وَلاَ يَرْضَوْنَ بِهِ بَدَلاً، وَأَنَّهُمْ يَدٌ وَاحِدَةٌ عَلَى مَنْ خَالَفَ ذَلِكَ وَتَرَكَهُ، أَنْصَارٌ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْض، دَعْوَتُهُمْ وَاحِدَةٌ، لاَيَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَهُمْ لِمَعْتَبَةِ عَاتِب، وَلاَ لِغَضَبِ غَاضِب، وَلاَ لِاسْتِذْلاَلِ قَوْم قَوْماً، وَلاَ لِمَسَبَّةِ قَوْم قَوْماً!

This pledge is binding on those of them who are present and those of them who are absent; those of them who are forbearing and those of them who are foolish; those of them who are learned and those of them who are ignorant. Along with this the pledge of Allah is also binding on them, and the pledge of Allah is to be accounted for.

عَلَى ذلِكَ شَاهِدُهُمْ وَغَائِبُهُمْ، وَسَفِيهُهُمْ وَعَالِمُهُمْ، وَحَلِيمُهُمْ وَجَاهِلُهُمْ. ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ بِذلِكَ عَهْدَ اللهِ وَمِيثَاقَهُ، إِنَّ عَهْدَ اللهِ كَانَ مسْؤولاً.

Written by: `Ali ibn Abi Talib.

و كتب: علي بن أبي طالب

Letter 75: To Mu`awiyah, soon after Amir al-mu'minin was sworn in

After the Muslims took oath of allegiance to Imam Ali (*a*)*, he wrote the following letter to Mu'awiya.* (*Muhammad ibn `Umar*) *al-Waqidi has mentioned this in his "Kitab al-Jamal"*

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى معاوية في أول ما بويع له بالخلافه

ذكره الواقدي في كتاب الجمل

From the servant of Allah, `Ali Amir al-mu'minin to Mu`awiyah son of Abu Sufyan:

مِنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ عَلِيّ أَمِيرِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِلَى مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ أَبِي سُفْيَانَ:

Now, you are aware of my excuses before you people and my shunning you till that happened which was inevitable and which could not be prevented. The stroy is long and much is to be said. What was to pass has passed and what was to come has come. Therefore, secure (my) allegiance from those who are with you and come in a deputation of your people to me; and that is an end to the matter.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ إِعْذَارِي فِيكُمْ، وَإِعْرَاضِي عَنْكُمْ، حَتَّى كَانَ مَا لاَ بُدَّ مِنْهُ وَلاَ دَفْعَ لَهُ، وَالْحَدِيثُ طَوِيلٌ، وَالْكَلاَمُ كَثِيرٌ، وَقَدْ أَدْبَرَ مَا أَدْبَرَ، وَأَقْبَلَ مَا أَقْبَلَ، فَبَايِعْ مَنْ قِبَلَكَ، وَأَقْبِلْ إِلَيَّ فِي وَفْد مِنْ أَصْحَابِكَ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

Letter 76: Instructions to Abdullah b. Abbas when he sent him as his representative to Basra

Given to `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas at the time of his appoint ment as his Governor of Basrah

(ومن وصية له (عليه السلام

لعبد الله بن العباس عند استخلافه إياه على البصرة

Meet people with a broad face, allow them free audience and pass generous orders. Avoid anger because it is a augury of Satan. Remember that whatever takes you near Allah takes you away from the Fire (of Hell), and whatever takes you away from Allah takes you near the Fire.

سَعِ النَّاسَ بِوَجْهِكَ وَمَجْلِسِكَ وَحُكْمِكَ، وإِيَّاكَ وَالْغَضَبَ فَإِنَّهُ طَيْرَةٌ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ. وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ مَا قَرَّبَكَ مِنَ اللهِ يُبَاعِدُكَ مِنْ النَّارِ، وَمَا بَاعَدَكَ مِنَ اللهِ يُقَرِّبُكَ مِنَ النَّارِ.

Letter 77: Instructions to Abdullah b. Abbas

Instructions given to `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas, at the time of his being deputed to confront the Kharijites

ومن وصيته (عليه السلام) لَهُ

لما بعثه للا حتجاج على الخوارج

Do not argue with them by the Qur'an because the Qur'an has many faces. You would say your own and they would say their own; but argue with them by the sunnah, because they cannot find escape from it.

لاَ تُخَاصِمْهُمْ بِالْقُرْآنِ، فَإِنَّ الْقُرْآنَ حَمَّالٌ ذُو وُجُوه، تَقُولُ وَيَقُولُونَ، وَلكِنْ حاجّهُمْ بالسُّنَّةِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ لَنْ يَجِدُوا عَنْهَا مَحِيصاً.

Letter 78: To Abu Musa al-Ash`ari

To Abu Musa al-Ash`ari in reply to his letter regarding the two arbitrators. Sa`id ibn Yahya al-Umawi has mentioned this in his "Kitab al-maghazi"

(ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام

إلى أبي موسى الاشعري جواباً في أمر الحكمين

ذكره سعيد بن يحيى الاموي في كتاب المغازي

Certainly, many people have turned away from many a (lasting) benefit (of the next life), for they bent towards the world and spoke with passions. I have been struck with wonder in this matter, upon which people who are self-conceited have agreed. I am providing a cure for their wound but I fear lest it develops into a clot of blood (and becomes incurable). Remember that no person is more covetous than I for the unity of the ummah of Muhammad (may Allah bless him and his descendants) and their

solidarity. I seek through it good reward and an honourable place to return to.

فَإِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ تَغَيَّرَ كَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ عَنْ كَثِير مِنْ حَظِّهِمْ، فَمَالُوا مَعَ الدُّنْيَا، وَنَطَقُوا بِالْهَوى، وَإِنِّي نَزَلْتُ مِنْ هذَا الاْمْزِ مَنْزِلاً مُعْجِباً، اجْتَمَعَ بِهِ أَقْوَامٌ أَعْجَبَتْهُمْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ، فإِنِّي أُدَاوِي مِنْهُمْ قَرْحاً أَخَافُ أَنْ يَكُونَ عَلَقاً.

وَلَيْسَ رَجُلٌ ـ فَاعْلَمْ ـ أَحْرَصَ عَلَى جَمَاعَةِ أُمَّةِ مُحَمَّد ـ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ ـ وَأُلْفَتِهَا مِنِّي، أَبْتَغِي بِذلِكَ حُسْنَ الثَّوَابِ، وَكَرَمَ الْمَآبِ.

I shall fulfil what I have pledged upon myself even though you may go back from the sound position that existed when you left me last, because wretched is he who is denied the benefit of wisdom and experience. I feel enraged if anyone speaks wrong, or if I should worsen a matter which Allah has kept sound. Therefore, leave out what you do not understand, because wicked people will be conveying to you vicious things; and that is an end to the matter.

وَسَأَفِي بِالَّذِي وَأَيْتُ عَلَى نَفْسِي، وَإِنْ تَغَيَّرْتَ عَنْ صَالِحِ مَا فَارَقْتَنِي عَلَيْهِ، فَإِنَّ الشَّقِيَّ مَنْ حُرِمَ نَفْعَ مَا أُوتِيَ مِنَ الْعَقْلِ وَالتَّجْرِبَةِ، وَإِنِّي لاَعْبَدُ أَنْ يَقُولَ قَائِلٌ بِبَاطِل،أَنْ أُفْسِدَ أَمْراً قَدْ أَصْلَحَهُ اللهُ، فَدَعْ مَا لاَ تَعْرِفُ، فَإِنَّ شِرَارَ النَّاسِ طَائِرُونَ إِلَيْكَ بِأَقَاوِيلِ السُّوءِ، وَالسَّلاَمُ.

Letter 79: To the army officers when Amir al-mu'minin became Caliph

(ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام

لما استُخْلِف

إلى أمراء الاجناد

Now, what ruined those before you was that they denied people their rights and then they had to purchase them (by bribes), and they led the people to wrong and they followed it.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فإِنَّمَا أَهْلَكَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ أَنَّهُمْ مَنَعُوا النَّاسَ الْحَقَّ فَاشْتَرَوْهُ، وَأَخَذُوهُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ فَاقْتَدَوْهُ.

تمّ الباب بحمدالله.

Selections from The Sayings And Preaching Of Amir Al-Mu'minin 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (Peace Be Upon Him) Including His Replies To Questions And Maxims Expressed For Various Purposes

حكم أمير المُؤمنين عليه السلام

بَابُ المُخْتَارِ مِنْ حِكَمِ أَمِيرالمؤمنين عليه السلام

وَمَوَاعِظِهِ وَيَدْخُلُ في ذلِكَ المخْتَارُ مِنْ أَجْوِبَةِ مَسَائِلِهِ

وَالْكَلاَمِ القصير الخارج في سائِرِ اَغْراضِهِ

Hadith n. 1

1. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: During civil disturbance be like an adolescent camel [1] who has neither a back strong enough for riding nor udders for milking.

1. قَال(عليه السلام): كُنْ فِي الْفِتْنَةِ كَابْنِ اللَّبُونِ ، لاَ ظَهْرٌ فَيُرْكَبَ، وَلاَ ضَرْعٌ فَيُحْلَبَ.

Hadith n. 2

2. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who adopts greed as a habit devalues himself; he who discloses his hardship agrees to humiliation; and he who allows his tongue to overpower his soul debases the soul.

2. وَ قَالَ (عليه‌السلام): أَزْرَى بِنَفْسِهِ مَنِ اسْتَشْعَرَ الطَّمَعَ وَ رَضِيَ بِالذُّلِّ مَنْ كَشَفَ عَنْ ضُرِّهِ وَ هَانَتْ عَلَيْهِ نَفْسُهُ مَنْ أَمَّرَ عَلَيْهَا لِسَانَهُ.

Hadith n. 3

3. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Miserliness is shame; cowardice is a defect; poverty disables an intelligent man from arguing his case; and a destitute person is a stranger in his home town.

3. وَ قَالَ (عليه‌السلام(: الْبُخْلُ عَارٌ وَ الْجُبْنُ مَنْقَصَةٌ وَ الْفَقْرُ يُخْرِسُ الْفَطِنَ عَنْ حُجَّتِهِ وَ الْمُقِلُّ غَرِيبٌ فِي بَلْدَتِهِ

Hadith n. 4

4. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Incapability is a catastrophe; endurance is bravery; abstinence is riches; self-restraint is a shield (against sin); and the best companion is submission (to Allah's will).

4. وَ قَالَ (عليه‌السلام): الْعَجْزُ آفَةٌ وَ الصَّبْرُ شَجَاعَةٌ وَ الزُّهْدُ ثَرْوَةٌ وَ الْوَرَعُ جُنَّةٌ وَ نِعْمَ الْقَرِينُ الرِّضَى

Hadith n. 5

5. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Knowledge is a venerable estate; good manners are new dresses; and thinking is clear mirror.

5. وَ قَالَ (عليه‌السلام): الْعِلْمُ وِرَاثَةٌ كَرِيمَةٌ وَ الْآدَابُ حُلَلٌ مُجَدَّدَةٌ وَ الْفِكْرُ مِرْآةٌ صَافِيَةٌ.

Hadith n. 6

6. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The bosom of the wise is the safe of his secrets; cheerfulness is the bond of friendship; effective forbearance is the grave of short-comings.

It is narrated that Amir al-mu'minin said in expressing this meaning that: Mutual reconciliation is the covering for shortcomings; and he who admires himself attracts many opponents against him. 2

6. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: صَدْرُ الْعَاقِلِ صُنْدُوقُ سِرِّهِ وَ الْبَشَاشَةُ حِبَالَةُ الْمَوَدَّةِ وَ الِاحْتِمَالُ قَبْرُ الْعُيُوبِ

وَ رُوِيَ أَنَّهُ قَالَ فِي الْعِبَارَةِ عَنْ هَذَا الْمَعْنَى أَيْضاً :

الْمَسْأَلَةُ خِبَاءُ الْعُيُوبِ وَ مَنْ رَضِيَ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ كَثُرَ السَّاخِطُ عَلَيْهِ

Hadith n. 7

7. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Charity is an effective cure, and the actions of people in their present life will be before their eyes in the next life. 3

7. قَال عليه السلام: الصَّدَقَةُ دَوَاءٌ مُنْجِحٌ، وَأَعْمَالُ الْعِبَادِ فِي عَاجِلِهِمْ، نُصْبُ أَعْيُنِهِمْ فِي آجِلِهِمْ

Hadith n. 8

8. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: How wonderful is man that sees with fat, talks with a piece of flesh, hears with a bone and breathes through a hole.

8. قَال عليه السلام : اعْجَبُوا لِهذَا الاْنْسَانِ يَنْظُرُ بِشَحْمٍ و يَتَكَلَّم بِلَحْمٍ وَيَسْمَعُ بِعَظْمٍ، وَيَتَنَفَّسُ مِنْ خَرْمٍ

Hadith n. 9

9. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When this world advances towards anyone (with its favours) it attributes to him other's good; and when it turns away from him it deprives him of his own good. 4

9. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام: إِذَا أَقْبَلَتِ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى أَحَدٍ أَعَارَتْهُ مَحَاسِنَ غَيْرِهِ وَ إِذَا أَدْبَرَتْ عَنْهُ سَلَبَتْهُ مَحَاسِنَ نَفْسِهِ.

Hadith n. 10

10. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Meet people in such a manner that if you die they

should weep for you and if you live they should long for you. 5

10. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام: خَالِطُوا النَّاسَ مُخَالَطَةً إِنْ مِتُّمْ مَعَهَا بَكَوْا عَلَيْكُمْ وَ إِنْ عِشْتُمْ حَنُّوا إِلَيْكُمْ.

Hadith n. 11

11. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When you gain power over your adversary pardon him by way of thanks for being able to overpower him. 6

11. وَ قَالَ (عليه‌السلام)إِذَا قَدَرْتَ عَلَى عَدُوِّكَ فَاجْعَلِ الْعَفْوَ عَنْهُ شُكْراً لِلْقُدْرَةِ عَلَيْهِ

Hadith n. 12

12. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The most helpless of all men is he who cannot find a few brothers during his life, but still more helpless. is he who finds such a brother but loses him. 7

12. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام: أَعْجَزُ النَّاسِ مَنْ عَجَزَ عَنِ اكْتِسَابِ الْإِخْوَانِ وَ أَعْجَزُ مِنْهُ مَنْ ضَيَّعَ مَنْ ظَفِرَ بِهِ مِنْهُمْ

Hadith n. 13

13. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When you get (only) small favours do not push them away through lack of gratefulness.

13. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام: إِذَا وَصَلَتْ إِلَيْكُمْ أَطْرَافُ النِّعَمِ فَلَا تُنَفِّرُوا أَقْصَاهَا بِقِلَّةِ الشُّكْرِ.

Hadith n. 14

14. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who is abandoned by near ones is dear to remote ones.

14. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام: مَنْ ضَيَّعَهُ الْأَقْرَبُ أُتِيحَ لَهُ الْأَبْعَدُ.

Hadith n. 15

15. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Every mischief monger cannot even be reproved. 8

15. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام: مَا كُلُّ مَفْتُونٍ يُعَاتَبُ

Hadith n. 16

16. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: All matters are subject to destiny, so much so that sometimes death results from effort.

16. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام: تَذِلُّ الْأُمُورُ لِلْمَقَادِيرِ حَتَّى يَكُونَ الْحَتْفُ فِي التَّدْبِيرِ.

Hadith n. 17

17. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked to explain the saying of the Messenger of Allah: Banish your old age (by hair-dye) and do not acquire resemblance to the Jews.

Amir al-mu'minin replied:

The Prophet (S) said this at a time when the religion was confined to a few, but now that its expanse has widened and it is firmly settled everyone is free in his action. 9

17. وَ سُئِلَ عليه السلام عَنْ قَوْلِ الرَّسُولِ (صلى‌الله‌عليه وآله وسلم): غَيِّرُوا الشَّيْبَ وَ لَا تَشَبَّهُوا بِالْيَهُودِ

فَقَالَ عليه‌السلام: إِنَّمَا قَالَ (صلى‌الله‌عليه وآله وسلم) ذَلِكَ وَ الدِّينُ قُلٌّ فَأَمَّا الْآنَ وَ قَدِ اتَّسَعَ نِطَاقُهُ وَ ضَرَبَ بِجِرَانِهِ فَامْرُؤٌ وَ مَا اخْتَارَ .

Hadith n. 18

18. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said about those who avoided fighting on his side: They abandoned right but did not support wrong. 10

18. وقال عليه السلام في الذين اعتزلوا القتال معه: خَذَلُوا الْحَقَّ، وَلَمْ يَنْصُرُوا الْبَاطِلَ.

Hadith n. 19

19. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who gallops with loose rein collides with death.

19. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ جَرَى فِي عِنَانِ أَمَلِهِ عَثَرَ بِأَجَلِهِ .

Hadith n. 20

20. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Forgive the shortcomings of people of virtue and honor because when they fall into error Allah raises them up.

20. وقال عليه السلام : أَقِيلُوا ذَوِي الْمُرُوءَاتِ عَثَرَاتِهِمْ فَمَا يَعْثُرُ مِنْهُمْ عَاثِرٌ إِلاَّ وَيَدُهُ بِيَدِ اللهِ يَرْفَعُهُ

Hadith n. 21

21. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The consequence of fear is disappointment and of bashfulness is frustration. Opportunity passes away like the cloud. Therefore, make use of good opportunities. 11

21. وقال عليه السلام : قُرِنَتِ الْهَيْبَةُ بِالْخَيْبَةِ وَالْحَيَاءُ بِالْحِرْمَانِ وَالْفُرْصَةُ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ، فَانْتَهِزُوا فُرَصَ الْخَيْرِ

Hadith n. 22

22. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said We have a right. If it is allowed to us well and good, otherwise, we will ride on the hind part of the camel (like lowly people) even though the night journey may be long.

22. وقال عليه السلام : لَنَا حَقٌّ، فَإِنْ أُعْطِينَاهُ، وَإِلاَّ رَكِبْنَا أَعْجَازَ الإبِلِ، وَإِنْ طَالَ السُّرَى.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is a very fine and eloquent expression. It means that if we are not allowed our right we will be regarded humble. This sense comes out from this expression because on the rear part of the camel only slaves, prisoners or other people of this type used to ride. 12

قال الرضي: و هذا من لطيف الكلام و فصيحه و معناه أنا إن لم نعط حقنا كنا أذلاء و ذلك أن الرديف يركب عجز البعير كالعبد و الأسير و من يجري مجراهما.

Hadith n. 23

23. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He whose deeds accord (him) a back position cannot be given a front position because of his lineage.

23. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ أَبْطَأَ بِهِ عَمَلُهُ لَمْ يُسْرِعْ بِهِ حَسَبُهُ.

Hadith n. 24

24. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Rendering relief to the grief-stricken and providing comfort in hardship are among the means of atonement for great sins.

24. وقال عليه السلام : مِنْ كَفَّارَاتِ الذُّنُوبِ الْعِظَامِ إِغَاثَةُ الْمَلْهُوفِ، وَالتَّنْفِيسُ عَنِ الْمكْرُوبِ.

Hadith n. 25

25. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O son of Adam, when you see that your Lord, the Glorified, bestows His favours on you while you are disobeying Him, you should fear Him. 13

25. وقال عليه السلام : يَابْنَ آدَمَ، إِذَا رَأَيْتَ رَبَّكَ سُبْحَانَهُ يُتَابِعُ عَلَيْكَ نِعَمَهُ وَأَنْتَ تَعْصِيهِ فَاحْذَرْهُ.

Hadith n. 26

26. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whenever a person conceals a thing in his heart it manifests itself through unintentional words from his tongue and (in) the expressions of his face. 14

26. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام: مَا أَضْمَرَ أَحَدٌ شَيْئاً إِلَّا ظَهَرَ فِي فَلَتَاتِ لِسَانِهِ وَ صَفَحَاتِ وَجْهِهِ

Hadith n. 27

27. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Keep walking in your sickness as long as you can. 15

27. وقال عليه السلام : امْشِ بِدَائِكَ مَا مَشَى بِكَ

Hadith n. 28

28. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The best abstemiousness is to conceal it.

28. وقال عليه السلام : أَفْضَلُ الزُّهْدِ إِخْفَاءُ الزُّهْدِ.

Hadith n. 29

29. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When you are running away from the world and death is approaching, there is no question of delay in the encounter.

29. وقال عليه السلام : إِذَا كُنْتَ فِي إِدْبَارٍ وَالْمَوْتُ فِي إِقْبَالٍ فَمَا أَسْرَعَ الْمُلْتَقَى.

Hadith n. 30

30. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Fear! Fear! By Allah, He has hidden your sins so much so as though He has forgiven.

30. وقال عليه السلام: الْحَذَرَ الْحَذَرَ! فَوَاللهِ لَقَدْ سَتَرَ، حتَّى كَأَنَّهُ قَدْ غَفَرَ.

Hadith n. 31: Faith, Unbelief, Doubt And Their Supports

31. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked about faith. He said:

31. وسُئِلَ عليه السلام عَنِ الايمَانِ، فَقَالَ:

Faith stands on four supports: on endurance, conviction, justice and jihad (fighting in the way of Allah).

الايمَانُ عَلَى أَرْبَعِ دَعَائِمَ: عَلَى الصَّبْرِ، والْيَقِينِ، وَالْعَدْلِ، وَالْجَهَادِ.

Endurance again has four aspects: eagerness, fear, abstention (from the world) and anticipation (of death). So, whoever is eager for Paradise will ignore the passions; whoever fears the Fire (of Hell) will refrain from prohibited acts; whoever abstains from the world takes hardships lightly; and whoever anticipates death will hasten towards good deeds.

فَالصَّبْرُ مِنْهَا عَلَى أَرْبَعِ شُعَبٍ: عَلَى الشَّوْقِ، وَالشَّفَقِ وَالزُّهْدِ، وَالتَّرَقُّبِ: فَمَنِ اشْتَاقَ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ سَلاَ عَنِ الشَّهَوَاتِ، وَمَنْ أَشْفَقَ مِنَ النَّارِ اجْتَنَبَ الْمُحَرَّمَاتِ، وَمَنْ زَهِدَ فِي الدُّنْيَا اسْتَهَانَ بِالْمُصِيبَاتِ، وَمَنِ ارْتَقَبَ الْمَوْتَ سَارَعَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ.

Conviction also has four aspects: prudent perception, intelligence and understanding, drawing lessons from instructive things and following the precedents of past people. So, whoever perceives with prudence, wise knowledge will be manifest to him, and to whomsoever wise knowledge becomes

manifest he appreciates instructive objects, and whoever appreciates instructive objects he is just like past people.

وَالْيَقِينُ مِنْهَا عَلَى أَرْبَعِ شُعَبٍ: عَلَى تَبْصِرَةِ الْفِطْنَةِ، وَتَأَوُّلِ الْحِكْمَةِ وَمَوْعِظَةِ الْعِبْرَةِ وَسُنَّةِ الأَوَّلِينَ فَمَنْ تَبَصَّرَ فِي الْفِطْنَةِ تَبَيَّنَتْ لَهُ الْحِكْمَةُ، وَمَنْ تَبَيَّنَتْ لَهُ الْحِكْمَةُ عَرَفَ الْعِبْرَةَ، وَمَنْ عَرَفَ الْعِبْرَةَ فَكَأَنَّمَا كَانَ فِي الأَوَّلِينَ.

Justice also has four aspects: keen understanding, deep knowledge, a good power of decision and firm forbearance. Therefore, whoever understands comes to acquire depth of knowledge; whoever acquires depth of knowledge drinks from the spring of judgement; and whoever exercises forbearance never commits evil actions in his affairs and leads a praiseworthy life among the people.

وَالْعَدْلُ مِنْهَا عَلَى أَرْبَعِ شُعَبٍ: عَلَى غائِصِ الْفَهْمِ، وَغَوْرِ الْعِلْمِ وَزُهْرَةِ الْحُكْمِ،، وَرَسَاخَةِ الْحِلْمِ: فَمَنْ فَهِمَ عَلِمَ غَوْرَ الْعِلْمِ، و من عَلِمَ غَوْرَ الْعِلْمِ صَدَرَ عَنْ شَرَائِعِ الْحُكْمِ وَمَنْ حَلُمَ لَمْ يُفَرِّطْ فِي أَمْرِهِ وَعَاشَ فِي النَّاسِ حَمِيداً.

Jihad also has four aspects: to ask others to do good, to keep away others from doing evil, to fight (in the way of Allah) sincerely and firmly on all occasions, and to detest the vicious. So, whoever asks others to do good provides strength to the believers; whoever desists others from evil humiliates the unbelievers; whoever fights sincerely on all occasions discharges all his obligations; and whoever detests the vicious and becomes angry for the sake of Allah, then Allah will be angry in favour of him and will keep him and will keep him pleased on the Day of Judgement.

وَالْجِهَادُ مِنْهَا عَلَى أَرْبَعِ شُعَبٍ: عَلَى الأَمْرِ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ، وَالنَّهْيِ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ، وَالصِّدْقِ فِي الْمَوَاطِنِ وَشَنَآنِ الْفَاسِقِينَ: فَمَنْ أَمَرَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ شَدَّ ظُهُورَ الْمُؤمِنِينَ، وَمَنْ نَهَى عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ أَرْغَمَ أُنُوفَ الْكَافِرِينَ ،مَنْ صَدَقَ فِي الْمَوَاطِنِ قَضَى مَا عَلَيْهِ، وَمَنْ شَنِىءَ الْفَاسِقِينَ وَغَضِبَ لله غَضِبَ اللهُ لَهُ وَأَرْضَاهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

Unbelief stands on four supports: hankering after whims, mutual quarrelling, deviation from the truth, and dissension. So, whoever hankers after whims does not incline towards right: whoever quarrels much on account of ignorance remains permanently blinded from the right; whoever deviates from truth, for him good becomes evil and evil becomes good and he remains intoxicated with misguidance; and whoever makes a breach (with Allah and His Messenger), his path becomes difficult, his affairs become complicated and his way of escape becomes narrow.

وَالْكُفْرُ عَلَى أَرْبَعِ دَعَائِمَ: عَلَى التَّعَمُّقِ وَالتَّنَازُعِ، وَالزَّيْغِ وَالشِّقَاقِ فَمَنْ تَعَمَّقَ لَمْ يُنِبْإِلَى الْحَقِّ، وَمَنْ كَثُرَ نِزَاعُهُ بِالْجَهْلِ دَامَ عَمَاهُ عَنِ الْحَقِّ، وَمَنْ زَاغَ سَاءَتْ عِنْدَهُ الْحَسَنَةُ وَحَسُنَتْ عِنْدَهُ السَّيِّئَةُ وَسَكِرَ سُكْرَ الضَّلاَلَةِ، وَمَنْ شَاقَّ وَعُرَتْ عَلَيْهِ طُرُقُهُ وَأَعْضَلَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرُهُ وَضَاقَ عَلَيْهِ مَخْرَجُهُ.

Doubt has also four aspects: unreasonableness, fear, wavering and undue submission to every thing.

So, he who adopts unreasonableness as his way, for him there is no dawn after the night; he who is afraid of what befalls him has to run on his heels; he who wavers in doubt Satans trample him under their feet and he who submits to the destruction of this and tile next world succumbs to it.

وَالشَّكُّ عَلَى أَرْبَعِ شُعَب: عَلَى الَّتمارِي وَالهَوْلِ وَالتَّرَدُّدِ والاْسْتِسْلاَمِ فَمَنْ جَعَلَ الْمِرَاءَدَيْدَناًلَمْ يُصْبِحْ لَيْلُهُ وَمَنْ هَالَهُ مَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ نَكَصَ عَلَى عَقِبَيْهِ وَمَن تَرَدَّدَ فِي الرَّيْبوَطِئَتْهُ يَدَيْهِ نَكَصَ عَلَى عَقِبَيْهِ وَمَن تَرَدَّدَ فِي الرَّيْبوَطِئَتْهُ سَنَابِكُ الشَّيَاطِينِ وَمَنِ اسْتَسْلَمَ لِهَلَكَةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالآخِرَةِ هَلَكَ فِيهِمَا.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: We have left out the remaining portion of this saying for fear of length and for being outside the purpose of this chapter.

قال الرضي: و بعد هذا كلام تركنا ذكره خوف الإطالة و الخروج عن الغرض المقصود في هذا الكتاب.

Hadith n. 32

32. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The doer of good is better than the good itself, and the doer of evil is worse than the evil itself.

32. وقال عليه السلام : فَاعِلُ الْخَيْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ، وَفَاعِلُ الشَّرِّ شَرٌّ مِنْهُ .

Hadith n. 33

33. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Be generous but not extravagant; be thrifty but not miserly.

33. وقال عليه السلام : كُنْ سَمَحاً وَلاَ تَكُنْ مُبَذِّراً، وَكُنْ مُقَدِّراًوَلاَ تَكُنْ مُقَتِّراً.

Hadith n. 34

34. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The best of riches is the abandonement of desires.

34. وقال عليه السلام : أَشْرَفُ الْغِنَى تَرْكُ الْمُنى.

Hadith n. 35

35. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If someone is quick in saying about people what they dislike, they speak about him that about which they have no knowledge.

35. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ أَسْرَعَ إِلَى النَّاسِ بِمَا يَكْرَهُونَ، قَالُوا فِيهِ [بـ] ما لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ.

Hadith n. 36

36. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever prolongs his desire ruins his actions.

36. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ أَطَالَ الاْمَلَ أَسَاءَ الْعَمَلَ

Hadith n. 37

37. Once Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was proceeding towards Syria when the countrymen of a1-Anbar met him. Seeing him they began to walk on foot and then ran in front of him. He enquired why they were doing so and they replied that this was the way they respected their chiefs. Then he said:

37. وقال عليه السلام وقد لقيه عند مسيره إلى الشام دهاقين الاَنبار فترجّلوا له واشتدّوابين يديه، فقال: مَا هذَا الَّذِي صَنَعْتُمُوهُ؟ فقالوا: خُلُقٌ مِنَّا نُعَظِّمُ بِهِ أُمَرَاءَنَا. فقال عليه السلام :

By Allah, this does not benefit your chiefs. You are belabouring yourself in this world and earning misery for the next world by it. How harmful is the labour in whose wake there is punishment and how profitable is the case with which there is deliverance from the Fire (of Hell).

وَاللهِ مَا يَنْتَفِعُ بِهذَا أُمَرَاؤُكُمْ! وَإِنَّكُمْ لَتَشُقُّونَ عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ فِي دُنْيَاكُمْ، وَتَشْقَوْنَ بِهِ فِي آخِرَتِكُمْ، وَمَا أَخْسَرَ الْمَشَقَّةَ وَرَاءَهَا الْعِقَابُ، وَأَرْبَحَ الدَّعَةَ مَعَهَا الاْمَانُ مِنَ النَّارِ.

Hadith n. 38

38. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to his son al- Hasan:

38. وقال عليه السلام : لابنه الحسن عليه السلام :

O my son, learn four things and (a further) four things from me. Nothing will harm you if you practise them. That the richest of riches is intelligence; the biggest destitution is foolishness; the wildest wildness is vanity and the best achievement is goodness of the moral character.

يَا بُنَيَّ، احْفَظْ عَنِّي أَرْبَعاً وَأَرْبَعاً، لاَ _ يَضُرُّكَ مَا عَمِلْتَ مَعَهُنَّ: إِنَّ أَغْنَى الْغِنَى الْعَقْلُ، وَأَكْبَرَ الْفَقْرِ الْحُمْقُ، وَأَوحَشَ الْوَحْشَةِ الْعُجْبُ وَأَكْرَمَ الْحَسَبَ حُسْنُ الْخُلُقِ.

O my son, you should avoid making friends with a fool because he may intend to benefit you but may harm you; you should avoid making friends with a miser because he will run away from you when you need him most; you should avoid making friends with a sinful person because he will sell you for nought; and you should avoid making friends with a liar because he is like a mirage, making you feel far things near and near things far.

يَا بُنَيَّ، إِيَّاكَ وَمُصَادَقَةَ الاْحْمَقِ، فَإِنَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَنْفَعَكَ فَيَضُرَّكَ. وَإِيَّاكَ وَمُصَادَقَةَ الْبَخِيلِ، فَإِنَّهُ يَقْعُدُ عَنْكَ أَحْوَجَ مَا تَكُونُ إِلَيْهِ. وَإِيَّاكَ وَمُصَادَقَةَ الْفَاجِرِ، فَإِنَّهُ يَبِيعُكَ بِالتَّافِهِ وَإِيَّاكَ وَمُصَادَقَةَ الْكَذَّابِ، فَإِنَّهُ كَالسَّرَابِ يُقَرِّبُ عَلَيْكَ الْبَعِيدَ، وَيُبَعِّدُ عَلَيْكَ الْقَرِيبَ.

Hadith n. 39

39. Amir al-mu'minin, peace he upon him, said: Supererogatory worship cannot bring about nearness to Allah if it hampers the obligatory.

39. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ قُرْبَةَ بِالنَّوَافِلِ إِذَا أَضَرَّتْ بِالْفَرَائِضِ

Hadith n. 40

40. Amir a'-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The tongue of the wise man is behind his heart, and the heart of the fool is behind his tongue.

40. وقال عليه السلام : لِسَانُ الْعَاقِلِ وَرَاءَ قَلْبِهِ، وَقَلْبُ الاْحْمَقِ وَرَاءَ لِسَانِهِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This sentence has a strange and beautiful meaning. It means that the wise man does not speak with his tongue except after consulting his mind and exercising his imagination, but the fool quickly utters whatever comes to his tongue without thinking. In this way, the tongue of the wise man follows his heart while the heart of the fool follows his tongue.

قال الرضي: و هذا من المعاني العجيبة الشريفة، والمراد به أنّ العاقل لا يطلق لسانه إلاّ بعد مشاورة الرَّوِيّةِ ومؤامرة الفكرة، والاحمق تسبق خذفاتُ لسانه وفلتاتُ كلامه مراجعةَ فكره ومماخضة رأيه، فكأن لسان العاقل تابع لقلبه، وكأن قلب الاحمق تابع للسانه.

Hadith n. 41

41. This very sense has been related from Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, in a different version as follows:

The heart of a fool is in his mouth while the tongue of the wise man is in his heart.

The meaning of both the sayings (40 and 41) is the same.

41. وقد روي عنه عليه السلام هذا المعنى بلفظ آخر، وهو قوله: قَلبُ الاْحْمَقِ فِي فِيهِ، وَلِسَانُ الْعَاقِلِ فِي قَلْبِهِ.

ومعناهما واحد.

Hadith n. 42

42. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to one of his companions during his sickness:

May Allah make your illness a means for writing off your sins, because there is no reward for sickness but that it erases sins and makes them fall like (dried) leaves. Reward lies in saying by the tongue and doing something with the hands and feet. Certainly, Allah, the Glorified, admits into Paradise by virtue of truthfulness of intention and chastity of heart to whomsoever He wishes from among His creatures.

42. وقال عليه السلام لبعض أَصحابه في علّة اعتلّها: جَعَلَ اللهُ مَا كَانَ مِنْ شَكْوَاكَ حطّاً لِسَيِّئَاتِكَ، فَإِنَّ الْمَرَضَ لاَ أَجْرَ فِيهِ، وَلكِنَّهُ يَحُطُّ السَّيِّئَات، وَيَحُتُّهَا حَتَّ الاْوْرَاقِ، وَإِنَّمَا الاْجْرُ فِي الْقَوْلِ بِاللِّسَانِ، وَالْعَمَلِ بِالاْيْدِي وَالاْقْدَامِ، وَإِنَّ اللهَ سُبْحَانَهُ يُدْخِلُ بِصِدْقِ النِّيَّةِ وَالسَّرِيرَةِ الصَّالِحَةِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عَبَادِهِ الْجَنَّةَ

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Amir al-mu'minin is right in saying that there is no reward for sickness as such because compensation is admissible in respect of the acts of Allah, the Sublime, towards his creatures such as grief, illness and the like, whereas reward and recompense becomes admissible against actions by the creature. This is the difference between the two and Amir al-mu'minin has clarified it through his lustrous knowledge and sound view.

قال الرضي: و أقول: صدق(عليه السلام)، «إنّ المرض لا أجر فيه»، لانه ليس من قبيل ما يُستحَقّ عليه العوض،

لان العوض يستحق على ما كان في مقابلة فعل الله تعالى بالعبد، من الالام والامراض، وما يجري مجرى ذلك،الاجر والثواب يستحقان على ما كان في مقابلة فعل العبد، فبينهما فرق قد بينه(عليه السلام)، كما يقتضيه علمه الثاقب رأيه الصائب.

Hadith n. 43

43. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said about Khabbab ibn al-Aratt : 16

May Allah have mercy on Khabbab ibn al-Aratt since he accepted Islam willingly, immigrated (from Mecca) obediently, remained content with what sufficed him, was pleased with Allah and lived the life of a mujahid (holy soldier).

43. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام فِي ذِكْرِ خَبَّابِ بْنِ الْأَرَتِّ: يَرْحَمُ اللَّهُ خَبَّابَ بْنَ الْأَرَتِّ فَلَقَدْ أَسْلَمَ رَاغِباً وَ هَاجَرَ طَائِعاً وَ قَنِعَ بِالْكَفَافِ وَ رَضِيَ عَنِ اللَّهِ وَ عَاشَ مُجَاهِداً .

Hadith n. 44

44. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Blessed is the person who kept in mind the next life, acted so as to be able to render account, remained content with what sufficed him and remained pleased with Allah.

44. وقال عليه السلام : طُوبَى لِمَنْ ذَكَرَ الْمَعَادَ، وَعَمِلَ لِلْحِسَابِ، وَقَنِعَ بِالْكَفَافِ، وَرَضِيَ عَنِ اللهِ .

Hadith n. 45

45. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Even if I strike the nose of a believer with this, my sword, for hating me he will not hate me, and even if I pile all the wealth of the world before a hypocrite (Muslim) for loving me he will not love me. This is because it is a verdict pronounced by the tongue of the revered Prophet, may Allah bless him and his descendants, as he said:

O `Ali, a believer will never hate you arid a hypocrite (Muslim) will never love you. 17

45. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام: لَوْ ضَرَبْتُ خَيْشُومَ الْمُؤْمِنِ بِسَيْفِي هَذَا عَلَى أَنْ يُبْغِضَنِي مَا أَبْغَضَنِي وَ لَوْ صَبَبْتُ الدُّنْيَا بِجَمَّاتِهَا عَلَى الْمُنَافِقِ عَلَى أَنْ يُحِبَّنِي مَا أَحَبَّنِي . وَ ذَلِكَ أَنَّهُ قُضِيَ فَانْقَضَى عَلَى لِسَانِ النَّبِيِّ الْأُمِّيِّ (صلى‌الله‌عليه‌وآله وسلم) أَنَّهُ قَالَ: يَا عَلِيُّ لَا يُبْغِضُكَ مُؤْمِنٌ وَ لَا يُحِبُّكَ مُنَافِقٌ

Hadith n. 46

46. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The sin that displeases you is better in the view of Allah than the virtue which makes you proud. 18

46. وقال عليه السلام : سَيِّئَةٌ تَسُوءُكَ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَاللهِ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ تُعْجِبُكَ

Hadith n. 47

47. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The worth of a man is according to his courage, his truthfulness is according to his balance of temper, his valour is according to his self-respect and his chasteness is according to his sense of shame.

47. وقال عليه السلام : قَدْرُ الرَّجُلِ عَلَى قَدْرِ هِمَّتِهِ، وَصِدْقُهُ عَلَى قَدْرِ مُرُوءَتِهِ، وَشَجَاعَتُهُ عَلَى قَدْرِ أَنَفَتِهِ،عِفَّتُهُ عَلَى قَدْرِ غَيْرَتِهِ

Hadith n. 48

48. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Victory is by determination; determination is by the turning over of thoughts; and thoughts are formed by guarding secrets.

48. وقال عليه السلام : الظَّفَرُ بالْحَزْمِ، وَالْحَزْمُ بِإِجَالَةِ الرَّأْيِ، وَالرَّأْيُ بِتَحْصِينِ الاَسْرَارِ.

Hadith n. 49

49. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Fear the attack of a noble person when he is hungry, and that of an ignoble person when he is satiated. 19

49. وقال عليه السلام : احْذَرُوا صَوْلَةَ الْكَرِيمِ إِذَا جَاعَ، واللَّئِيمِ إِذَا شَبِعَ.

Hadith n. 50

50. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The hearts of the people are like wild beasts. Whoever tames them, they would pounce upon him. 20

50. وقال عليه السلام : قُلُوبُ الرِّجَالِ وَحْشِيَّةٌ، فَمَنْ تَأَلَّفَهَا أَقْبَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ

Hadith n. 51

51. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: So long as your position is good, your defects will remain covered.

51. وقال عليه السلام : عَيْبُكَ مَسْتُورٌ مَا أَسْعَدَكَ جَدُّكَ.

Hadith n. 52

52. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The most capable of pardoning is he who is the most powerful to punish.

52. وقال عليه السلام : أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِالْعَفْوِ أَقْدَرُهُمْ عَلَى الْعُقُوبَةِ

Hadith n. 53

53. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Generosity is that which is by one's own initiative, because giving on being asked is either out of self-respect or to avoid rebuke.

53. وقال عليه السلام : السَّخَاءُ مَا كَانَ ابْتِدَاءً، فَأَمَّا مَا كَانَ عَنْ مَسْأَلَةٍ فَحَيَاءٌ وَتَذَمُّمٌ.

Hadith n. 54

54. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There is no wealth like wisdom, no destitution like ignorance, no inheritance like refinement and no support like consultation.

54. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ غِنَى كَالْعَقْلِ، وَلاَ فَقْرَ كَالْجَهْلِ، وَلاَ مِيرَاثَ كَالاَدَبِ، وَلاَ ظَهِيرَ كَالْمُشَاوَرَةِ.

Hadith n. 55

55. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Patience is of two kinds, patience over what pains you, and patience against what you covet.

55. وقال عليه السلام : الصَّبْرُ صَبْرَانِ: صَبْرٌ عَلَى مَا تَكْرَهُ، وَصَبْرٌ عَمَّا تُحِبُّ.

Hadith n. 56

56. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: With wealth a strange land is a homeland, while with destitution even a homeland is a strange land. 21

56. وقال عليه السلام : الْغِنَى فِي الْغُرْبَةِ وَطَنٌ، وَالْفَقْرُ فِي الْوَطَنِ غُرْبَةٌ.

Hadith n. 57

57. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Contentment is wealth that does not diminish. 22

57. وقال عليه السلام : الْقَنَاعَةُ مَالٌ لاَ يَنْفَدُ

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This saying has also been related from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his descendants.

قال الرضي: و قد روي هذا الكلام عن النبي صلي الله عليه و آله و سلم.

Hadith n. 58

58. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Wealth is the fountain head of passions.

58. وقال عليه السلام : الْمَالُ مَادَّةُ الشَّهَوَاتِ

Hadith n. 59

59. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever warns you is like one who gives you good tidings.

59. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ حَذَّرَكَ كَمَنْ بَشَّرَكَ.

Hadith n. 60

60. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The tongue is a beast; if it is let loose, it devours.

60. وقال عليه السلام : اَلِّلسَانُ سَبُعٌ، إِنْ خُلِّيَ عَنْهُ عَقَرَ.

Hadith n. 61

61. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Woman is a scorpion whose sting is sweet.

61. وقال عليه السلام : اَلْمَرْأَةُ عَقْرَبٌ حُلْوَةُ اللَّسْبَةِ

Hadith n. 62

62. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If you are met with a greeting, give better greetings in return. If a hand of help is extended to you, do a better favour in return, although the credit would remain with the one who was first.

62. وقال عليه السلام : إِذَا حُيِّيْتَ بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيِّ بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا، وإِذَا أُسْدِيَتْ إِلَيْكَ يَدٌ فَكَافِئْهَا بِمَا يُرْبِي عَلَيْهَا، وَالْفَضْلُ مَعَ ذلِكَ لِلْبَادِىءِ

Hadith n. 63

63. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The interceder is the wing of the seeker.

63. وقال عليه السلام : الشَّفِيعُ جَنَاحُ الطَّالِبِ

Hadith n. 64

64. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The people of the world are like travellers who are being carried while they are asleep.

64. وقال عليه السلام : أَهْلُ الدُّنْيَا كَرَكْبٍ يُسَارُ بِهِمْ وَهُمْ نِيَامٌ.

Hadith n. 65

65. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A lack of friends means strangeness.

65. وقال عليه السلام : فَقْدُ الأَحِبَّةِ غُرْبَةٌ.

Hadith n. 66

66. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: To miss what one needs is easier than to beg from an inappropriate person. 23

66. وقال عليه السلام : فَوْتُ الْحَاجَةِ أَهْوَنُ مِنْ طَلَبِهَا إِلَى غَيْرِ أَهْلِهَا.

Hadith n. 67

67. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do not feel ashamed for giving little because refusal is smaller than that.

67. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ تَسْتَحِ مِنْ إِعْطَاءِ الْقَلِيلِ، فَإِنَّ الْحِرْمَانَ أَقَلُّ مِنْهُ.

Hadith n. 68

68. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Charity is the adornment of destitution while gratefulness (to Allah) is the adornment of riches.

68. وقال عليه السلام : الْعَفَافُ زِينَةُ الْفَقْرِ، والشُّكْرُ زِينَةُ الغِنَى.

Hadith n. 69

69. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If what you aim at does not come about then do not worry as to what you were.

69. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام: إِذَا لَمْ يَكُنْ مَا تُرِيدُ فَلَا تُبَلْ مَا كُنْتَ

Hadith n. 70

70. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: You will not find an ignorant person but at one extreme or the other (i.e. a person who neglects or a person who exaggerates).

70. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام: لَا تَرَى الْجَاهِلَ إِلَّا مُفْرِطاً أَوْ مُفَرِّطاً.

Hadith n. 71

71. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: As intelligence increases, speech decreases. 24

71. وقال عليه السلام: إِذَا تَمَّ الْعَقْلُ نَقَصَ الْكَلَامُ.

Hadith n. 72

72. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Time wears our bodies, renews desires, brings death nearer and takes away aspirations. Whoever is successful with it encounters grief and whoever misses its favours also undergoes hardships.

72. وقال عليه السلام: الدَّهرُ يُخْلِقُ الأبْدَانَ، وَيُجَدِّدُ الآمَالَ، وَيُقَرِّبُ الْمَنِيَّةَ، ويُبَاعِدُ الأمْنِيَّةَ، مَنْ ظَفِرَ بِهِ نَصِبَ، ومَنْ فَاتَهُ تَعِبَ.

Hadith n. 73

73. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever places himself as a leader of the people should commence with educating his own self before educating others; and his teaching should be by his own conduct before teaching by the tongue.

The person who teaches and instructs his own self is more entitled to esteem then he who teaches and instructs others.

73. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ نَصَبَ نَفْسَهُ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَاماً فَعَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَبْدَأَ بِتَعْلِيمِ نَفْسِهِ قَبْلَ تَعْلِيمِ غَيْرِهِ، وَلْيَكُنْ تَأْدِيبُهُ بِسِيرَتِهِ قَبْلَ تَأْدِيبِهِ بِلِسَانِهِ، وَمُعَلِّمُ نَفْسِهِ وَمُؤَدِّبُهَا أَحَقُّ بِالاجْلَالِ مِنْ مُعَلِّمِ النَّاسِ وَمُؤَدِّبِهِمْ.

Hadith n. 74

74. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The breath of a man is a step towards his death. 25

74. وقال عليه السلام: نَفْسُ الْمَرْءِ خُطَاهُ إِلَى أَجَلِهِ.

Hadith n. 75

75. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Every countable thing is to pass away and every

expected thing must come about.

75. وقال(عليه السلام): كُلُّ مَعْدُود مُنْقَض، وَكُلُّ مُتَوَقَّع آت.

Hadith n. 76

76. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If matters get mixed up then the last ones should be appreciated according to the previous one. 26

76. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ الأُمُورَ إذا اشْتَبَهَتْ اعْتُبِرَ آخِرُهَا بِأَوَّلِهَا.

Hadith n. 77

77. It is related that when Dirar ibn Hamzah (the correct: Damrah) ad-Dibabi (or as-Suda'i) 27 **went to Mu'awiyah. and Mu`awiyah enquired from him about Amir al-mu'minin, peace he upon him, he said: I stand witness that I have seen him on several occasions when night had spread and he was standing in the niche (of the mosque) holding his heard, groaning like a man bitten by a snake and weeping as a grieved man, saying:**

77. وَ مِنْ خَبَرِ ضِرَارِ بْنِ حَمْزَةَ الضَّبَائِيِّ عِنْدَ دُخُولِهِ عَلَى مُعَاوِيَةَ وَ مَسْأَلَتِهِ لَهُ عَنْ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ع وَ قَالَ فَأَشْهَدُ لَقَدْ رَأَيْتُهُ فِي بَعْضِ مَوَاقِفِهِ وَ قَدْ أَرْخَى اللَّيْلُ سُدُولَهُ وَ هُوَ قَائِمٌ فِي مِحْرَابِهِ قَابِضٌ عَلَى لِحْيَتِهِ يَتَمَلْمَلُ تَمَلْمُلَ السَّلِيمِ وَ يَبْكِي بُكَاءَ الْحَزِينِ وَ يَقُولُ

O world, O world! Get away from me. Why do you present yourself to me? Or are you eager for me? You may not get that opportunity to impress me. Deceive some other person. I have no concern with you. I have divorced you thrice whereafter there is no restitution. Your life is short, your importance is little and your aspirations are base. Alas! The provision is little, the way is long, the journey is far and the goal is hard to reach.

يَا دُنْيَا يَا دُنْيَا إِلَيْكِ عَنِّي، أَ بِي تَعَرَّضْتِ أَمْ إِلَيَّ تَشَوَّقْتِ؟ لَا حَانَ حِينُكِ هَيْهَاتَ غُرِّي غَيْرِي لَا حَاجَةَ لِي فِيكِ قَدْ طَلَّقْتُكِ ثَلَاثاً لَا رَجْعَةَ فِيهَا فَعَيْشُكِ قَصِيرٌ وَ خَطَرُكِ يَسِيرٌ وَ أَمَلُكِ حَقِيرٌ. آهِ مِنْ قِلَّةِ الزَّادِ وَ طُولِ الطَّرِيقِ وَ بُعْدِ السَّفَرِ وَ عَظِيمِ الْمَوْرِدِ.

Hadith n. 78: On Predestination

78. A Syrian enquired from Amir al-mu'minin: Was our going to fight against the Syrians destined

by Allah? Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, gave a detailed reply, a selection from which is hereunder:

78. وَ مِنْ كَلَامٍ لَهُ عليه‌السلام لِلسَّائِلِ الشَّامِيِّ لَمَّا سَأَلَهُ أَ كَانَ مَسِيرُنَا إِلَى الشَّامِ بِقَضَاءٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَ قَدَرٍ بَعْدَ كَلَامٍ طَوِيلٍ هَذَا مُخْتَارُهُ

Woe to you! You take it as a final and unavoidable destiny 28 (according to which we are bound to act). If it were so, there would have been no question of reward or chastisement and there would have been no sense in Allah's promises or warnings. (On the other hand) Allah, the Glorified, has ordered ills people to act by free will and has cautioned them and refrained them (from evil). He has placed easy obligations on them and has not put heavy obligations. He gives them much (reward) in return for little (action). He is disobeyed, not because He is overpowered. He is obeyed but not under force. He did not send prophets just for fun. He did not send down the Book for the people without purpose. He did not create the skies, the earth and all that is in between them in vain. *That is the imagination of those who disbelieve; then woe to those who disbelieve – because of the fire.* (Qur'an, 38:27)

وَيْحَكَ لَعَلَّكَ ظَنَنْتَ قَضَاءً لَازِماً وَ قَدَراً حَاتِماً لَوْ كَانَ ذَلِكَ كَذَلِكَ لَبَطَلَ الثَّوَابُ وَ الْعِقَابُ وَ سَقَطَ الْوَعْدُ وَ الْوَعِيدُ . إِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ أَمَرَ عِبَادَهُ تَخْيِيراً وَ نَهَاهُمْ تَحْذِيراً وَ كَلَّفَ يَسِيراً وَ لَمْ يُكَلِّفْ عَسِيراً وَ أَعْطَى عَلَى الْقَلِيلِ كَثِيراً وَ لَمْ يُعْصَ مَغْلُوباً وَ لَمْ يُطَعْ مُكْرِهاً وَ لَمْ يُرْسِلِ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ لَعِباً وَ لَمْ يُنْزِلِ الْكُتُبَ لِلْعِبَادِ عَبَثاً وَ لَا خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَ الْأَرْضَ وَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَاطِلًا (ذلِكَ ظَنُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنَ النَّارِ).

Hadith n. 79

79. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Take wise points from wherever they may be, because if a wise saying is in the bosom of a hypocrite it flutters in his bosom till it comes out and settles with others of its own category in the bosom of the believer.

79. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام: خُذِ الْحِكْمَةَ أَنَّى كَانَتْ فَإِنَّ الْحِكْمَةَ تَكُونُ فِي صَدْرِ الْمُنَافِقِ فَتَلَجْلَجُ فِي صَدْرِهِ حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ فَتَسْكُنَ إِلَى صَوَاحِبِهَا فِي صَدْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ.

Hadith n. 80

80. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A wise saying is a lost article of the believer. Therefore, get wise sayings even though from people of hypocrisy.

80. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام: الْحِكْمَةُ ضَالَّةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ فَخُذِ الْحِكْمَةَ وَ لَوْ مِنْ أَهْلِ النِّفَاقِ.

Hadith n. 81

81. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The worth of every man is in his attainments. 29

81. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام: قِيمَةُ كُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا يُحْسِنُهُ.

as- Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is the sentence whose value cannot be assessed, with which no wise saying can be weighed and with which no other sentence can be matched.

قال الرضي: و هي الكلمة التي لا تصاب لها قيمة و لا توزن بها حكمة و لا تقرن إليها كلمة.

Hadith n. 82

82. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I impart to you five things which, if you ride your camels fast in search of them, you will find them worth it.

No one of you should repose hope save in his Lord (Allah); no one of you should fear anything save his sin; no one should feel ashamed of saying "I do not know" when he is asked a matter which he does not know; no one should feel ashamed of learning a thing that he does not know; and you should practise endurance, because endurance is for belief what the head is for the body, so that just as there is no good in a body without the head there is no good in belief without endurance.

82. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام: أُوصِيكُمْ بِخَمْسٍ لَوْ ضَرَبْتُمْ إِلَيْهَا آبَاطَ الْإِبِلِ لَكَانَتْ لِذَلِكَ أَهْلًا . لَا يَرْجُوَنَّ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا رَبَّهُ وَ لَا يَخَافَنَّ إِلَّا ذَنْبَهُ وَ لَا يَسْتَحِيَنَّ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ إِذَا سُئِلَ عَمَّا لَا يَعْلَمُ أَنْ يَقُولَ لَا أَعْلَمُ وَ لَا يَسْتَحِيَنَّ أَحَدٌ إِذَا لَمْ يَعْلَمِ الشَّيْءَ أَنْ يَتَعَلَّمَهُ . وَ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالصَّبْرِ فَإِنَّ الصَّبْرَ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ كَالرَّأْسِ مِنَ الْجَسَدِ وَ لَا خَيْرَ فِي جَسَدٍ لَا رَأْسَ مَعَهُ وَ لَا فِي إِيمَانٍ لَا صَبْرَ مَعَهُ.

Hadith n. 83

83. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said about a man who praised him much, although he did not admire him: I am below what you express and above what you feel in your heart.

83. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام لِرَجُلٍ أَفْرَطَ فِي الثَّنَاءِ عَلَيْهِ وَ كَانَ لَهُ مُتَّهِماً: أَنَا دُونَ مَا تَقُولُ وَ فَوْقَ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ.

Hadith n. 84

84. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The survivors of the sword (from getting killed) are large in number and have a large progeny.

وَ قَالَ (عليه‌السلام)بَقِيَّةُ السَّيْفِ أَبْقَى عَدَداً وَ أَكْثَرُ وَلَداً

Hadith n. 85

85. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever abandons saying, "I do not know" meets his destruction.

85. وَ قَالَ عليه‌السلام: مَنْ تَرَكَ قَوْلَ لَا أَدْرِي أُصِيبَتْ مَقَاتِلُهُ.

Hadith n. 86

86. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I love the opinion of an old man more than the determination of a young man; (**or according to another version**) more than the martyrdom of a young man.

86. وقال عليه السلام : رَأْيُ الشَّيْخِ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ جَلَدِ الْغُلَامِ ـ وَروي: مِنْ مَشْهَدِ الْغُلَامِ.

Hadith n. 87

87. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I wonder about the man who loses hope despite the possibility of seeking forgiveness.

87. وقال عليه السلام : عَجِبْتُ لِمَنْ يَقْنَطُ وَمَعَهُ الاِسْتِغْفَارُ.

Hadith n. 88

88. (Imam) Abu Ja`far Muhammad ibn `Ali al-Baqir, peace be upon both of them, has related from Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, that he said:

88. وَ حَكَى عَنْهُ أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ الْبَاقِرُ عليه السلام أَنَّهُ قَالَ:

There are two sources of deliverance from the Allah's punishment, one of which has been raised up, while the other is before you. You should therefore adhere to it. The source of deliverance which has been raised up is the Messenger of Allah (may He bless him and his descendants), while the source of deliverance that remains is the seeking of forgiveness. Allah, the Glorified, has said: *And Allah is not to chastise them while you are among them, nor is Allah to chastise them while yet they seek forgiveness*. (Qur'an, 8:33)

انَ فِی الْأَرْضِ أَمَانَانِ مِنْ عَذَابِ اللَّهِ وَ قَدْ رُفِعَ أَحَدُهُمَا فَدُونَكُمُ الْآخَرَ فَتَمَسَّكُوا بِهِ: أَمَّا الْأَمَانُ الَّذِی رُفِعَ فَهُوَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ص) وَ أَمَّا الْأَمَانُ الْبَاقِی فَالِاسْتِغْفَارُ قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَی (وَ ما كانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَ أَنْتَ فِيهِمْ وَ ما كانَ اللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ).

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is one of the most beautiful way of deducing the meaning and the most delicate manner of interpretation.

. قال الرضی: و هذا من محاسن الاستخراج و لطائف الاستنباط

Hadith n. 89

89. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If a man sets right matters between himself and Allah, then Allah sets right matters between him and other people; and if a man sets right the affairs of his next life then Allah sets right for him the affairs of this world. Whoever is a preacher for himself is protected by Allah.

89. وقال علیه السلام : مَنْ أَصْلَحَ مَا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ اللهِ أَصْلَحَ اللهُ مَا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ النَّاسِ، وَمَنْ أَصْلَحَ أَمْرَ آخِرَتِهِ أَصْلَحَ اللهُ لَهُ أَمْرَ دُنْيَاهُ، وَمَنْ كَانَ لَهُ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ وَاعِظٌ كَانَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ اللهِ حَافِظٌ .

Hadith n. 90

90. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The perfect jurist of Islam is he who does not let people lose hope from the mercy of Allah, does not make them despondent of Allah's kindness and does not make them feel safe from Allah's punishment.

90. وقال علیه السلام : الْفَقِيهُ كُلُّ الْفَقِيهِ مَنْ لَمْ يُقَنِّطِ النَّاسَ مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللهِ، وَلَمْ يُؤْيِسْهُمْ مِنْ رَوْحِ اللهِ وَلَمْ يُؤْمِنْهُمْ مِنْ مَكْرِاللهِ .

Hadith n. 91

91. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The hearts get weary as bodies get weary; so look for beautiful wise sayings for them (to dispel their weariness).

91. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ هذِهِ الْقُلُوبَ تَمَلُّ كَمَا تَمَلُّ الاَبْدَانُ، فَابْتَغُوا لَهَا طَرَائِفَ الْحِكْمَةِ.

Hadith n. 92

92. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The lowest form of knowledge is that which remains on the tongue and the most superior form is that which manifests itself through (the action of) the limbs and the organs of the body.

92. وقال عليه السلام : أَوْضَعُ الْعِلْمِ مَا وُقِفَ عَلَى اللِّسَانِ وَأَرْفَعُهُ مَا ظَهَرَ فِي الْجَوَارِحِ وَالاَرْكَانِ .

Hadith n. 93

93. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: None of you should say, "O Allah, I seek Your protection from trouble" because there is no one who is not involved in trouble, but whoever seeks Allah's protection he should seek it from misguiding troubles, because Allah, the Glorified, says: *And know you that your wealth and your children are a temptation!.* (Qur'an, 8:28) and its meaning is that He tries people with wealth and progeny in order to distinguish one who is displeased with his livelihood from the one who is happy with what he has been given. Even though Allah, the Glorified, knows them more than they know themselves yet He does so to let them perform actions with which they earn reward or punishment because some of them like to have male (children) and dislike to have female (children), and some like to amass wealth, and dislike adversity.

93. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: لَا يَقُولَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّی أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْفِتْنَةِ لِأَنَّهُ لَيْسَ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا وَ هُوَ مُشْتَمِلٌ عَلَى فِتْنَةٍ وَ لَكِنْ مَنِ اسْتَعَاذَ فَلْيَسْتَعِذْ مِنْ مُضِلَّاتِ الْفِتَنِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ يَقُولُ وَ اعْلَمُوا أَنَّما أَمْوالُكُمْ وَ أَوْلادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَ مَعْنَى ذَلِكَ أَنَّهُ يَخْتَبِرُهُمْ بِالْأَمْوَالِ وَ الْأَوْلَادِ لِيَتَبَيَّنَ السَّاخِطَ لِرِزْقِهِ وَ الرَّاضِيَ بِقِسْمِهِ وَ إِنْ كَانَ سُبْحَانَهُ أَعْلَمَ بِهِمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَ لَكِنْ لِتَظْهَرَ الْأَفْعَالُ الَّتِی بِهَا يُسْتَحَقُّ الثَّوَابُ وَ الْعِقَابُ لِأَنَّ بَعْضَهُمْ يُحِبُّ الذُّكُورَ وَ يَكْرَهُ الْإِنَاثَ وَ بَعْضَهُمْ يُحِبُّ تَثْمِيرَ الْمَالِ وَ يَكْرَهُ انْثِلَامَ الْحَالِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is one of the wonderful interpretations related from him.

قال الرضی و هذا من غریب ما سمع منه فی التفسیر .

Hadith n. 94

94. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked what is good and he replied: Good is not that your wealth and progeny should be much, but good is that your knowledge should be much, your forbearance should be great, and that you should vie with other people in worship of Allah. If you do good deeds you thank Allah, but if you commit evil you seek forgiveness of Allah. In this world good is for two persons only; the man who commits sins but rectifies them by repentance; and the man who hastens towards good actions.

94. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام : وَ سُئِلَ عَنِ الْخَيْرِ مَا هُوَ فَقَالَ لَيْسَ الْخَيْرُ أَنْ يَكْثُرَ مَالُكَ وَ وَلَدُكَ وَ لَكِنَّ الْخَيْرَ أَنْ يَكْثُرَ عِلْمُكَ وَ أَنْ يَعْظُمَ حِلْمُكَ وَ أَنْ تُبَاهِيَ النَّاسَ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّكَ فَإِنْ أَحْسَنْتَ حَمِدْتَ اللَّهَ وَ إِنْ أَسَأْتَ اسْتَغْفَرْتَ اللَّهَ وَ لَا خَيْرَ فِي الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لِرَجُلَيْنِ رَجُلٍ أَذْنَبَ ذُنُوباً فَهُوَ يَتَدَارَكُهَا بِالتَّوْبَةِ وَ رَجُلٍ يُسَارِعُ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ .

Hadith n. 95

95. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Action accompanied by fear for Allah does not fail, and how can a thing fail that has been accepted. 30

وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: لَا يَقِلُّ عَمَلٌ مَعَ التَّقْوَى وَ كَيْفَ يَقِلُّ مَا يُتَقَبَّلُ.

Hadith n. 96

96. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The persons most attached to the prophets are those who know most what the prophets have brought. **Then Amir al-mu'minin recited the verse:** *Verily, of men the nearest to Abraham are surely those who followed him and this* (*Our*) *Prophet* (*Muhammad*) *and those who believe* (Qur'an, 3:68).

Then he said: The friend of Muhammad is he who obeys Allah, even though he may have no blood relationship, and the enemy of Muhammad is he who disobeys Allah even though he may have near kinship.

96. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِالْاَنْبِيَاءِ أَعْلَمُهُمْ بِمَا جَاؤُوا بِهِ، ثُمَّ تَلاَ (عليه السلام): (إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ لَلَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهذَا النَّبِيُّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا واللهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

ثُمَّ قَالَ (عليه السلام): إِنَّ وَلِيَّ مُحَمَّد مَنْ أَطَاعَ اللهَ وإِنْ بَعُدَتْ لُحْمَتُهُ، وَإِنَّ عَدُوَّ مُحَمَّد مَنْ عَصَى اللهَ وَإِنْ قَرُبَتْ قَرَابَتُهُ!

Hadith n. 97

97. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, heard about a Kharijite who said the mid-night prayers and recited the Qur'an, then he said: Sleeping in a state of firm belief is better than praying in a state of doubtfulness.

97. وَ سَمِعَ عليه السلام رَجُلًا مِنَ الْحَرُورِيَّةِ يَتَهَجَّدُ وَ يَقْرَأُ فَقَالَ: نَوْمٌ عَلَى يَقِينٍ خَيْرٌ مِنْ صَلَاةٍ فِي شَكٍّ .

Hadith n. 98

98. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When you hear a tradition test it according to the criterion of intelligence not that of mere hearing, because relaters of knowledge are numerous but those who guard it are few.

98. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام : اعْقِلُوا الْخَبَرَ إِذَا سَمِعْتُمُوهُ عَقْلَ رِعَايَةٍ لَا عَقْلَ رِوَايَةٍ فَإِنَّ رُوَاةَ الْعِلْمِ كَثِيرٌ وَ رُعَاتَهُ قَلِيلٌ .

Hadith n. 99

99. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, heard a man recite: *Verily we are Allah's and verily to Him shall we return* (*Qur'an, 2:156*).

Then he said: Our saying *inna li'llah* (Verily we are Allah's) is an admission of His Majesty over us and our saying "*wa inna ilayhi raji 'un*" (and verily to Him shall we return) is an admission of our being mortal.

99. وَ سَمِعَ رَجُلًا يَقُولُ (إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَ إِنَّا إِلَيْهِ راجِعُونَ):

فَقَالَ: إِنَّ قَوْلَنَا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ إِقْرَارٌ عَلَى أَنْفُسِنَا بِالْمُلْكِ وَ قَوْلَنَا وَ إِنَّا إِلَيْهِ راجِعُونَ إِقْرَارٌ عَلَى أَنْفُسِنَا بِالْهُلْكِ .

Hadith n. 100

100. Some people praised Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, to his face, then he said: O My God! You know me better than myself, and I know myself better than they do. O My God! Make us better than what they think and forgive us what they do not know.

100. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام وَ مَدَحَهُ قَوْمٌ فِي وَجْهِهِ فَقَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ أَعْلَمُ بِي مِنْ نَفْسِي وَ أَنَا أَعْلَمُ بِنَفْسِي مِنْهُمْ. اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنَا خَيْراً مِمَّا يَظُنُّونَ وَ اغْفِرْ لَنَا مَا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ .

Hadith n. 101

101. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Fulfilment of (others') needs becomes a lasting virtue in three ways:-- regarding it small so that it attains bigness, concealing it so that it may manifest itself, and doing it quickly so that it becomes pleasant.

101. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: لَا يَسْتَقِيمُ قَضَاءُ الْحَوَائِجِ إِلَّا بِثَلَاثٍ بِاسْتِصْغَارِهَا لِتَعْظُمَ وَ بِاسْتِكْتَامِهَا لِتَظْهَرَ وَ بِتَعْجِيلِهَا لِتَهْنُؤَ .

Hadith n. 102

102. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Shortly a time will come for people when high positions will be given only to those who defame others, when vicious people will be regarded as witty and the just will be regarded as weak. People will regard charity as a loss, consideration for kinship as an obligation, and worship grounds for claiming greatness among others. At this time, authority will be exercised through the counsel of women, the posting of young boys in high positions and the running of the administration by eunuchs.

102. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: يَأْتِي عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ لَا يُقَرَّبُ فِيهِ إِلَّا الْمَاحِلُ وَ لَا يُظَرَّفُ فِيهِ إِلَّا الْفَاجِرُ وَ لَا يُضَعَّفُ فِيهِ إِلَّا الْمُنْصِفُ يَعُدُّونَ الصَّدَقَةَ فِيهِ غُرْماً وَ صِلَةَ الرَّحِمِ مَنّاً وَ الْعِبَادَةَ اسْتِطَالَةً عَلَى النَّاسِ فَعِنْدَ ذَلِكَ يَكُونُ السُّلْطَانُ بِمَشُورَةِ النِّسَاءِ وَ إِمَارَةِ الصِّبْيَانِ وَ تَدْبِيرِ الْخِصْيَانِ .

Hadith n. 103

103. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was seen in worn-out clothes with patches and when it was pointed out to him he said: With it the heart fears, the mind feels humble and the believers emulate it. Certainly, this world and the next are two enemies against each other and two paths in different directions. Whoever likes this world and loves it hates the next arid is its enemy. These two are like East and West. If the walker between them gets near to one, he gets farther from the other. After all, they are like two fellow-wives.

103. وَ رُئِيَ عَلَيْهِ إِزَارٌ خَلَقٌ مَرْقُوعٌ فَقِيلَ لَهُ فِي ذَلِكَ فَقَالَ :

يَخْشَعُ لَهُ الْقَلْبُ وَ تَذِلُّ بِهِ النَّفْسُ وَ يَقْتَدِي بِهِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِنَّ الدُّنْيَا وَ الْآخِرَةَ عَدُوَّانِ مُتَفَاوِتَانِ وَ سَبِيلَانِ مُخْتَلِفَانِ فَمَنْ أَحَبَّ الدُّنْيَا وَ تَوَلَّاهَا أَبْغَضَ الْآخِرَةَ وَ عَادَاهَا وَ هُمَا بِمَنْزِلَةِ الْمَشْرِقِ وَ الْمَغْرِبِ وَ مَاشٍ بَيْنَهُمَا كُلَّمَا قَرُبَ مِنْ وَاحِدٍ بَعُدَ مِنَ الْآخَرِ وَ هُمَا بَعْدُ ضَرَّتَانِ .

Hadith n. 104

104. It is related by Nawf al-Bikali that: I saw that one night Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, came out from his bed and looked at the stars, then he said to me: "O Nawf, are you awake or sleeping?" **I said:** "I am awake, O Amir al-mu'minin." **Then he said:**

104. وَ عَنْ نَوْفٍ الْبَكَالِيِّ قَالَ رَأَيْتُ أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ع ذَاتَ لَيْلَةٍ وَ قَدْ خَرَجَ مِنْ فِرَاشِهِ فَنَظَرَ فِي النُّجُومِ فَقَالَ لِي يَا نَوْفُ أَ رَاقِدٌ أَنْتَ أَمْ رَامِقٌ فَقُلْتُ بَلْ رَامِقٌ فَقَالَ:

O Nawf! Blessed be those who abstain from this world and are eager for the next world. They are the people who regard this earth as a floor; its dust as their bed-cloth; and its water as their perfume; they recite the Qur'an in low tones and supplicate in high tones and then they are cut off from the world like 'Isa (Jesus).

يَا نَوْفُ طُوبَى لِلزَّاهِدِينَ فِي الدُّنْيَا الرَّاغِبِينَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أُولَئِكَ قَوْمٌ اتَّخَذُوا الْأَرْضَ بِسَاطاً وَ تُرَابَهَا فِرَاشاً وَ مَاءَهَا طِيباً وَ الْقُرْآنَ شِعَاراً وَ الدُّعَاءَ دِثَاراً ثُمَّ قَرَضُوا الدُّنْيَا قَرْضاً عَلَى مِنْهَاجِ الْمَسِيحِ .

O Nawf! The prophet Dawud (David), peace be upon him, rose up at a similar hour one night and said, "This is the hour when whatever a person prays for is granted to him unless he is a tax-collector, an intelligence man, a police officer, a lute player or a drummer.

يَا نَوْفُ إِنَّ دَاوُدَ ع قَامَ فِي مِثْلِ هَذِهِ السَّاعَةِ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَقَالَ إِنَّهَا لَسَاعَةٌ لَا يَدْعُو فِيهَا عَبْدٌ إِلَّا اسْتُجِيبَ لَهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ عَشَّاراً أَوْ عَرِيفاً أَوْ شُرْطِيّاً أَوْ صَاحِبَ عَرْطَبَةٍ (وَ هِيَ الطُّنْبُورُ) أَوْ صَاحِبَ كُوبَةٍ (وَ هِيَ الطَّبْلُ)

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: It is also said that "'artabah" means "tabl" (drum) and "kubah" means 'lute'.

وَ قَدْ قِيلَ أَيْضاً إِنَّ الْعَرْطَبَةَ الطَّبْلُ وَ الْكُوبَةَ الطُّنْبُورُ .

Hadith n. 105

105. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Allah has placed on you some obligations which you should not ignore, laid down for you limits which you should not transgress and prohibited you from certain things which you should not violate. He has kept silent about certain things but has not left them out through forgetfulness, so do not burden yourself with them.

105. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: إِنَّ اللَّهَ افْتَرَضَ عَلَيْكُمْ فَرَائِضَ فَلَا تُضَيِّعُوهَا وَ حَدَّ لَكُمْ حُدُوداً فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا وَ نَهَاكُمْ عَنْ

أَشْيَاءَ فَلَا تَنْتَهِكُوهَا وَ سَكَتَ لَكُمْ عَنْ أَشْيَاءَ وَ لَمْ يَدَعْهَا نِسْيَاناً فَلَا تَتَكَلَّفُوهَا .

Hadith n. 106

106. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If people give up something relating to religion to set right their worldly affairs, Allah will inflict upon them something more harmful than that.

106. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: لَا يَتْرُكُ النَّاسُ شَيْئاً مِنْ أَمْرِ دِينِهِمْ لِاسْتِصْلَاحِ دُنْيَاهُمْ إِلَّا فَتَحَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مَا هُوَ أَضَرُّ مِنْهُ .

Hadith n. 107

107. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Often the ignorance of a learned man ruins him while the knowledge he has does not avail him.

107. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: رُبَّ عَالِمٍ قَدْ قَتَلَهُ جَهْلُهُ وَ عِلْمُهُ مَعَهُ لَا يَنْفَعُهُ .

Hadith n. 108

108. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: In man there is a piece of flesh attached to him with a vein and it is the strangest thing in him. It is the heart. It has a store of wisdom and things contrary to wisdom. If it sees a ray of hope, eagerness humiliates it and when eagerness increases, greed ruins it. If disappointment overtakes it, grief kills it. If anger rises in it, a serious rage develops. If it is blessed with pleasure, it forgets to be cautious. If it becomes fearing, it becomes heedless. If peace extends all round, it becomes neglectful. If it earns wealth, freedom from care puts it in the wrong. If trouble befalls it, impatience makes it humble. If it faces starvation, distress overtakes it. If hunger attacks it, weakness makes it sit down. If its eating increases, heaviness of stomach pains it. Thus, every shortness is harmful to it and every excess is injurious to it.

108. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: لَقَدْ عُلِّقَ بِنِيَاطِ هَذَا الْإِنْسَانِ بَضْعَةٌ هِيَ أَعْجَبُ مَا فِيهِ وَ ذَلِكَ الْقَلْبُ وَ ذَلِكَ أَنَّ لَهُ مَوَادَّ مِنَ الْحِكْمَةِ وَ أَضْدَاداً مِنْ خِلَافِهَا فَإِنْ سَنَحَ لَهُ الرَّجَاءُ أَذَلَّهُ الطَّمَعُ وَ إِنْ هَاجَ بِهِ الطَّمَعُ أَهْلَكَهُ الْحِرْصُ وَ إِنْ مَلَكَهُ الْيَأْسُ قَتَلَهُ الْأَسَفُ وَ إِنْ عَرَضَ لَهُ الْغَضَبُ اشْتَدَّ بِهِ الْغَيْظُ وَ إِنْ أَسْعَدَهُ الرِّضَى نَسِيَ التَّحَفُّظَ وَ إِنْ غَالَهُ الْخَوْفُ شَغَلَهُ الْحَذَرُ وَ إِنِ اتَّسَعَ لَهُ الْأَمْرُ اسْتَلَبَتْهُ الْغِرَّةُ وَ إِنْ أَفَادَ مَالًا أَطْغَاهُ الْغِنَى وَ إِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ مُصِيبَةٌ فَضَحَهُ الْجَزَعُ وَ إِنْ عَضَّتْهُ الْفَاقَةُ شَغَلَهُ الْبَلَاءُ وَ إِنْ جَهَدَهُ الْجُوعُ قَعَدَ بِهِ الضَّعْفُ وَ إِنْ أَفْرَطَ بِهِ الشِّبَعُ كَظَّتْهُ الْبِطْنَةُ فَكُلُّ تَقْصِيرٍ بِهِ مُضِرٌّ وَ كُلُّ إِفْرَاطٍ لَهُ مُفْسِدٌ .

Hadith n. 109

109. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: We (the members of the Prophet's family) are like the pillow in the middle. He who lags behind has to come forward to meet it while he who has exceeded the bounds has to return to it.

109. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: نَحْنُ النُّمْرُقَةُ الْوُسْطَى بِهَا يَلْحَقُ التَّالِي وَ إِلَيْهَا يَرْجِعُ الْغَالِي .

Hadith n. 110

110. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: No one can establish the rule of Allah, the Glorified, except he who shows no relenting (in the matter of right), who does not behave like wrong doers and who does not run after objects of greed.

110. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: لَا يُقِيمُ أَمْرَ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ إِلَّا مَنْ لَا يُصَانِعُ وَ لَا يُضَارِعُ وَ لَا يَتَّبِعُ الْمَطَامِعَ .

Hadith n. 111

111. Sahl ibn Hunayf al-Ansari died at Kufah after his return from the battle of Siffin and he was very much loved by Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him. On this occasion Amir al-mu'minin said: Even if a mountain had loved me, it would have crumbled down.

111. وقال عليه السلام وقد توفي سهل بن حُنَيْفٍ الاَنصاري بالكوفة بعد مرجعه معه من صفين، وكان من أحبّ الناس إليه: لَوْ أَحَبَّنِي جَبَلٌ لَتَهَافَتَ

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: The meaning of this is that since the trial of the man who loves Amir al-mu'minin will be so, severe troubles would leap towards him, and this is not the case except with the God-fearing, the virtuous and select good. There is another similar saying of Amir al-mu'minin's individuals, namely:

معنى ذلك أن المحنة تغلظ عليه فتسرع المصائب إليه و لا يفعل ذلك إلا بالأتقياء الأبرار و المصطفين الأخيار و هذا مثل قوله [عليه السلام]:

Hadith n. 112

112. Whoever loves us, members of the Household (of the Prophet), should be prepared to face

destitution.

112. مَنْ أَحَبَّنَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ فَلْيَسْتَعِدَّ لِلْفَقْرِ جِلْبَاباً.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This has been interpreted in a different way as well, but on this occasion is not fit to mention here. 31

. و قد يؤول ذلك على معنى آخر ليس هذا موضع ذكره

Hadith n. 113

113. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: No wealth is more profitable than wisdom, no loneliness is more estranging than vanity, no wisdom is as good as tact, no honour is like fear from Allah, no companion is like the goodness of moral character, no inheritance is like civility, no guide is like promptitude, no trade is like virtuous acts, no profit is like Divine reward, no self- control is like inaction in time of doubt, no abstention is like that (which is) from prohibitions, no knowledge is like thinking, no worship is like the discharge of obligation, no belief is like modesty and endurance, no attainment is like humility, no honour is like knowledge, no power is like forbearance, and no support is more reliable than consultation.

113. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ مَالَ أَعْوَدُ مِنَ الْعَقْلِ، وَلاَ وَحْدَةَ أَوْحَشُ مِنَ الْعُجْبِ، وَلاَ عَقْلَ كَالتَّدْبِيرِ، وَلاَ كَرَمَ كَالتَّقْوَى، وَلاَ قَرِين كَحُسنِ الخُلْقِ، وَلاَ مِيرَاثَ كَالاَدَبِ، وَلاَ قَائِدَ كَالتَّوْفِيقِ، وَلاَ تِجَارَةَ كَالْعَمَلِ الصَّالِحِ، وَلاَ رِبْحَ كَالثَّوَابِ، وَلاَ وَرَعَ كَالْوُقُوفِ عِنْدَ الشُّبْهَةِ، وَلاَ زُهْدَ كَالزُّهْدِ فِي الْحَرَامِ، ولاَ عِلْمَ كَالتَّفَكُّرِ، وَلاَ عِبَادَةَ كَأَدَاءِ الْفَرائِضِ، وَلاَ إِيمَانَ كَالْحَيَاءِ وَالصَّبْرِ، وَلاَ حَسَبَ كَالتَّوَاضُعِ، وَلاَ شَرَفَ كَالْعِلْمِ، وَلاَ مُظَاهَرَةَ أَوْثَقُ مِن مُشَاوَرَةٍ.

Hadith n. 114

114. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: At a time when virtue is in vogue in the world and among people, if a person entertains an evil suspicion about another person from whom nothing evil has ever been seen, then he has been unjust. And at a time when vice is in vogue in the world and among people, if a man entertains a good idea about another person he has flung himself in peril.

114. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: إِذَا اسْتَوْلَى الصَّلَاحُ عَلَى الزَّمَانِ وَ أَهْلِهِ ثُمَّ أَسَاءَ رَجُلٌ الظَّنَّ بِرَجُلٍ لَمْ تَظْهَرْ مِنْهُ حَوْبَةٌ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ وَ إِذَا اسْتَوْلَى الْفَسَادُ عَلَى الزَّمَانِ وَ أَهْلِهِ فَأَحْسَنَ رَجُلٌ الظَّنَّ بِرَجُلٍ فَقَدْ غَرَّرَ .

Hadith n. 115

115. It was said to Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him: How are you, O Amir al-mu'minin? **and he replied:** How can he be whom life is driving towards death, whose state of healthiness can change into sickness any moment and who is to be caught (by death) from his place of safety.

115. وَ قِيلَ لَهُ عليه السلام: كَيْفَ نَجِدُكَ يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَقَالَ ع: كَيْفَ يَكُونُ حَالُ مَنْ يَفْنَى بِبَقَائِهِ وَ يَسْقَمُ بِصِحَّتِهِ وَ يُؤْتَى مِنْ مَأْمَنِهِ .

Hadith n. 116

116. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There are many people who are given time (by Allah) through good treatment towards them, and many who are deceived because their sinful activities are veiled (by Allah), and many who are enamoured by good talk about themselves. And Allah does not try anyone as seriously as He tries him whom He allows time (to remain sinful).

116. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: كَمْ مِنْ مُسْتَدْرَجٍ بِالْإِحْسَانِ إِلَيْهِ وَ مَغْرُورٍ بِالسَّتْرِ عَلَيْهِ وَ مَفْتُونٍ بِحُسْنِ الْقَوْلِ فِيهِ وَ مَا ابْتَلَى اللَّهُ أَحَداً بِمِثْلِ الْإِمْلَاءِ لَهُ .

Hadith n. 117

117. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Two categories of persons will face ruin on account of me: he who loves me with exaggeration, and he who hates me intensely.

117. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: هَلَكَ فِيَّ رَجُلَانِ مُحِبٌّ غَالٍ وَ مُبْغِضٌ قَالٍ .

Hadith n. 118

118. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: To miss an opportunity brings about grief.

118. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: إِضَاعَةُ الْفُرْصَةِ غُصَّةٌ .

Hadith n. 119

119. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The example of the world is like a serpent. It is soft to the touch but its inside is full of venom. An ignorant person who has fallen into deceit is attracted

towards it but a wise and intelligent man keeps on his guard against it.

119. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: مَثَلُ الدُّنْيَا كَمَثَلِ الْحَيَّةِ لَيِّنٌ مَسُّهَا وَ السَّمُّ النَّاقِعُ فِي جَوْفِهَا يَهْوِي إِلَيْهَا الْغِرُّ الْجَاهِلُ وَ يَحْذَرُهَا ذُو اللُّبِّ الْعَاقِلُ .

Hadith n. 120

120. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked about the Quraysh, when he replied: As for Banu Makhzum they are the blossoms of the Quraysh. It is delightful to talk to their men and to marry their women. As for Banu 'Abd Shams, they are farsighted and cautious about all that is hidden from them. As for ourselves (Banu Hashim) we spend whatever we get and are very generous in offering ourselves in death. Consequently, those people are more numerous, more contriving and more ugly while we are more eloquent, well-wishing and handsome.

120. وقال عليه السلام وقد سئل عن قريش: أَمَّا بَنُو مَخْزُومٍ فَرَيْحَانَةُ قُرَيْشٍ، نُحِبُّ حَدِيثَ رِجَالِهِمْ، وَالنِّكَاحَ فِي نِسَائِهِمْ. وَأَمَّا بَنُو عَبْدِ شَمسٍ فَأَبْعَدُهَا رَأْياً، وَأَمْنَعُهَا لِمَا وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهَا. وَأَمَّا نَحْنُ فَأَبْذَلُ لِمَا فِي أَيْدِينَا، وَأَسْمَحُ عِنْدَ الْمَوْتِ بِنُفُوسِنَا. وَهُمْ أَكْثَرُ وَأَمْكَرُ وَأَنْكَرُ، وَنَحْنُ أَفْصَحُ وَأَنْصَحُ وَأَصْبَحُ.

Hadith n. 121

121. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: What a difference there is between two kinds of actions: an act whose pleasure passes away but its (ill) consequence remains, and. the act whose hardship passes away but its reward stays.

121. وقال عليه السلام : شَتَّانَ بَيْنَ عَمَلَيْنِ: عَمَلٍ تَذْهَبُ لَذَّتُهُ وَتَبْقَى تَبِعَتُهُ، وَعَمَلٍ تَذْهَبُ مَؤُونَتُهُ وَيَبْقَى أَجْرُهُ.

Hadith n. 122

122. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was accompanying a funeral when he heard someone laugh. Then he said : Is it that death has been ordained only for others? Is it that right is obligatory only on others? Is it that those whom we see departing on their journey of death will come back to us? We lay them down in their graves and then enjoy their estate (as if we will live for good after them). We have ignored every preacher, man or woman, and have exposed ourselves to every catastrophe.

122. وَ تَبِعَ جِنَازَةً فَسَمِعَ رَجُلًا يَضْحَكُ فَقَالَ كَأَنَّ الْمَوْتَ فِيهَا عَلَى غَيْرِنَا كُتِبَ وَ كَأَنَّ الْحَقَّ فِيهَا عَلَى غَيْرِنَا وَجَبَ وَ كَأَنَّ الَّذِي نَرَى مِنَ الْأَمْوَاتِ سَفْرٌ عَمَّا قَلِيلٍ إِلَيْنَا رَاجِعُونَ. نُبَوِّئُهُمْ أَجْدَاثَهُمْ وَ نَأْكُلُ تُرَاثَهُمْ كَأَنَّا مُخَلَّدُونَ بَعْدَهُمْ ثُمَّ قَدْ نَسِينَا كُلَّ وَاعِظٍ وَ وَاعِظَةٍ وَ رُمِينَا بِكُلِّ فَادِحٍ وَ جَائِحَةٍ .

Hadith n. 123

123. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Blessed be lie who humbles himself, whose livelihood is pure, whose heart is chaste, whose habits are virtuous, who spends his savings (in the name of Allah), who prevents his tongue from speaking nonsense, who keeps people safe from evil, who is pleased with the (Prophet's) sunnah, and who is unconnected with innovation (in religion).

123. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: طُوبَى لِمَنْ ذَلَّ فِی نَفْسِهِ وَ طَابَ كَسْبُهُ وَ صَلَحَتْ سَرِيرَتُهُ وَ حَسُنَتْ خَلِيقَتُهُ وَ أَنْفَقَ الْفَضْلَ مِنْ مَالِهِ وَ أَمْسَكَ الْفَضْلَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَ عَزَلَ عَنِ النَّاسِ شَرَّهُ وَ وَسِعَتْهُ السُّنَّةُ وَ لَمْ يُنْسَبْ إِلَى الْبِدْعَةِ .

As-Sayyid ar-Radi Says: Some people attribute this and the previous saying to the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and his descendants).

قال الرضی: أقول: و من الناس من ينسب هذا الكلام إلى رسول الله ص و كذلك الذی قبله .

Hadith n. 124

124. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The jealousy of a woman (with co-wives) is heresy, while the jealousy of a man is a part of belief.

124. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: غَيْرَةُ الْمَرْأَةِ كُفْرٌ وَ غَيْرَةُ الرَّجُلِ إِيمَانٌ .

Hadith n. 125

125. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I am defining Islam as no one has defined before me: Islam is submission, submission is conviction, conviction is affirmation, affirmation is acknowledgement, acknowledgement is discharge (of obligations), and discharge of obligations is action.

125. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: لَأَنْسُبَنَّ الْإِسْلَامَ نِسْبَةً لَمْ يَنْسُبْهَا أَحَدٌ قَبْلِی الْإِسْلَامُ هُوَ التَّسْلِيمُ وَ التَّسْلِيمُ هُوَ الْيَقِينُ وَ الْيَقِينُ هُوَ التَّصْدِيقُ وَ التَّصْدِيقُ هُوَ الْإِقْرَارُ وَ الْإِقْرَارُ هُوَ الْأَدَاءُ وَ الْأَدَاءُ هُوَ الْعَمَلُ .

Hadith n. 126

126. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I wonder at the miser who is speeding towards the very destitution from which he wants to run away and misses the very ease of life which he covets. Consequently, he passes his life in this world like the destitute, but will have to render an account in the

next world like the rich.

126. وَ قَالَ علیه السلام: عَجِبْتُ لِلْبَخِيلِ يَسْتَعْجِلُ الْفَقْرَ الَّذِی مِنْهُ هَرَبَ وَ يَفُوتُهُ الْغِنَى الَّذِی إِيَّاهُ طَلَبَ فَيَعِيشُ فِی الدُّنْيَا عَيْشَ الْفُقَرَاءِ وَ يُحَاسَبُ فِی الْآخِرَةِ حِسَابَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ.

I wonder at the proud man who was just a drop of semen the other day and will turn into a corpse tomorrow. I wonder at the man who doubts Allah although he sees His creations. I wonder at him who has forgotten death although he sees people dying. I wonder at him who denies the second life although he has seen the first life. I wonder at him who inhabits this transient abode but ignores the everlasting abode.

وَ عَجِبْتُ لِلْمُتَكَبِّرِ الَّذِی كَانَ بِالْأَمْسِ نُطْفَةً وَ يَكُونُ غَداً جِيفَةً وَ عَجِبْتُ لِمَنْ شَكَّ فِی اللَّهِ وَ هُوَ يَرَى خَلْقَ اللَّهِ وَ عَجِبْتُ لِمَنْ نَسِيَ الْمَوْتَ وَ هُوَ يَرَى الْمَوْتَى وَ عَجِبْتُ لِمَنْ أَنْكَرَ النَّشْأَةَ الْأُخْرَى وَ هُوَ يَرَى النَّشْأَةَ الْأُولَى وَ عَجِبْتُ لِعَامِرٍ دَارَ الْفَنَاءِ وَ تَارِكٍ دَارَ الْبَقَاءِ .

Hadith n. 127

127. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever falls short of actions falls into grief, and Allah has nothing to do with him who spares nothing from his wealth in the name of Allah.

127. وَ قَالَ علیه السلام: مَنْ قَصَّرَ فِی الْعَمَلِ ابْتُلِيَ بِالْهَمِّ وَ لَا حَاجَةَ لِلَّهِ فِيمَنْ لَيْسَ لِلَّهِ فِی مَالِهِ وَ نَفْسِهِ نَصِيبٌ .

Hadith n. 128

128. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Guard against cold in its (seasonal) beginning and welcome it towards its end because it effects bodies in the same way as it effects plants. In the beginning, it destroys them but in the end it gives them fresh leaves. 32

128. وَ قَالَ علیه السلام: تَوَقَّوُا الْبَرْدَ فِی أَوَّلِهِ وَ تَلَقَّوْهُ فِی آخِرِهِ فَإِنَّهُ يَفْعَلُ فِی الْأَبْدَانِ كَفِعْلِهِ فِی الْأَشْجَارِ أَوَّلُهُ يُحْرِقُ وَ آخِرُهُ يُورِقُ .

Hadith n. 129

129. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Greatness of the Creator appreciated by you would belittle the creatures in your view.

129. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: عِظَمُ الْخَالِقِ عِنْدَكَ يُصَغِّرُ الْمَخْلُوقَ فِی عَيْنِكَ .

Hadith n. 130

130. When Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, returned from (the battle of) Siffin and noticed the graves outside Kufah, he said: O residents of houses which give a sense of loneliness, of depopulated areas and gloomy graves. O people of the dust, O victims of strangeness, O people of loneliness and O people of desolateness! You have gone ahead and preceded us while we are following you and will meet you. The houses (you left) have been inhabited by others; the wives (you left) have been married by others; the properties have been distributed (among heirs). This is the news about those around us; what is the news about things around you?

130. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام وَ قَدْ رَجَعَ مِنْ صِفِّينَ فَأَشْرَفَ عَلَى الْقُبُورِ بِظَاهِرِ الْكُوفَةِ: يَا أَهْلَ الدِّيَارِ الْمُوحِشَةِ وَ الْمَحَالِّ الْمُقْفِرَةِ وَ الْقُبُورِ الْمُظْلِمَةِ يَا أَهْلَ التُّرْبَةِ يَا أَهْلَ الْغُرْبَةِ يَا أَهْلَ الْوَحْدَةِ يَا أَهْلَ الْوَحْشَةِ أَنْتُمْ لَنَا فَرَطٌ سَابِقٌ وَ نَحْنُ لَكُمْ تَبَعٌ لَاحِقٌ أَمَّا الدُّورُ فَقَدْ سُكِنَتْ وَ أَمَّا الْأَزْوَاجُ فَقَدْ نُكِحَتْ وَ أَمَّا الْأَمْوَالُ فَقَدْ قُسِمَتْ هَذَا خَبَرُ مَا عِنْدَنَا فَمَا خَبَرُ مَا عِنْدَكُمْ

Then Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, turned to his companions and said: Beware If they were allowed to speak they would inform you that:

Verily, the best provision is fear of Allah. (***Qur'an, 2:197***)

ثُمَّ الْتَفَتَ إِلَى أَصْحَابِهِ فَقَالَ: أَمَا لَوْ أُذِنَ لَهُمْ فِی الْكَلَامِ لَأَخْبَرُوكُمْ أَنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَى .

Hadith n. 131: About Those Who Falsely Accuse This World

131. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, heard a man abusing the world and said: O you who abuse the world, O you who have been deceived by its deceit and cheated by its wrongs. Do you covet the world and then abuse it? Do you accuse it or it should accuse you? When did it bewilder you or deceive you whether by the decay and fall of your forefathers, or by the sleeping places of your mothers under the ground? How much you looked after them in their illness and nursed them during sickness, desiring them to be cured and consulting physicians for them in the morning when your medicine did not avail them and your wailing for them did not benefit them. Your mourning over them did not prove useful to them and you could not achieve your aims. You could not ward off (death) from them with all your power. In fact, through the dying man the world presented an illustration for you and showed you by the example of his falling down how you would (also) fall.

131. قَالَ عليه السلام: وَ قَدْ سَمِعَ رَجُلًا يَذُمُّ الدُّنْيَا أَيُّهَا الذَّامُّ لِلدُّنْيَا الْمُغْتَرُّ بِغُرُورِهَا الْمَخْدُوعُ بِأَبَاطِيلِهَا أَ تَغْتَرُّ بِالدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ تَذُمُّهَا أَنْتَ الْمُتَجَرِّمُ عَلَيْهَا أَمْ هِيَ الْمُتَجَرِّمَةُ عَلَيْكَ مَتَى اسْتَهْوَتْكَ أَمْ مَتَى غَرَّتْكَ أَ بِمَصَارِعِ آبَائِكَ مِنَ الْبِلَى أَمْ بِمَضَاجِعِ أُمَّهَاتِكَ تَحْتَ الثَّرَى كَمْ عَلَّلْتَ بِكَفَّيْكَ وَ كَمْ مَرَّضْتَ بِيَدَيْكَ تَبْتَغِي لَهُمُ الشِّفَاءَ وَ تَسْتَوْصِفُ لَهُمُ الْأَطِبَّاءَ غَدَاةَ لَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُمْ دَوَاؤُكَ وَ لَا يُجْدِي عَلَيْهِمْ بُكَاؤُكَ لَمْ يَنْفَعْ أَحَدَهُمْ إِشْفَاقُكَ وَ لَمْ تُسْعَفْ فِيهِ بِطَلِبَتِكَ وَ لَمْ تَدْفَعْ عَنْهُ بِقُوَّتِكَ وَ قَدْ مَثَّلَتْ لَكَ بِهِ الدُّنْيَا نَفْسَكَ وَ بِمَصْرَعِهِ مَصْرَعَكَ.

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.

إِنَّ الدُّنْيَا دَارُ صِدْقٍ لِمَنْ صَدَقَهَا وَ دَارُ عَافِيَةٍ لِمَنْ فَهِمَ عَنْهَا وَ دَارُ غِنًى لِمَنْ تَزَوَّدَ مِنْهَا وَ دَارُ مَوْعِظَةٍ لِمَنِ اتَّعَظَ بِهَا مَسْجِدُ أَحِبَّاءِ اللَّهِ وَ مُصَلَّى مَلَائِكَةِ اللَّهِ وَ مَهْبِطُ وَحْيِ اللَّهِ وَ مَتْجَرُ أَوْلِيَاءِ اللَّهِ اكْتَسَبُوا فِيهَا الرَّحْمَةَ وَ رَبِحُوا فِيهَا الْجَنَّةَ.

Therefore, who can abuse it when it has announced its departure and called out that it would leave! It had given news of its own destruction and the death of its people. By its hardship it set an example of their hardships. By its pleasures it created eagerness for the pleasures (of the next world). It brings ease in the evening and grief in the morning by way of persuasion, dissuasion, alarm and warning. People abuse it on the morning of their repentance but there are others who will praise it on the Day of Judgement. The world recalled to them the next life and they bore it in mind. It related to them (things of the next life) and they acknowledged them. It preached to them and they took lesson therefrom. 33

فَمَنْ ذَا يَذُمُّهَا وَ قَدْ آذَنَتْ بِبَيْنِهَا وَ نَادَتْ بِفِرَاقِهَا وَ نَعَتْ نَفْسَهَا وَ أَهْلَهَا فَمَثَّلَتْ لَهُمْ بِبَلَائِهَا الْبَلَاءَ وَ شَوَّقَتْهُمْ بِسُرُورِهَا إِلَى السُّرُورِ رَاحَتْ بِعَافِيَةٍ وَ ابْتَكَرَتْ بِفَجِيعَةٍ تَرْغِيباً وَ تَرْهِيباً وَ تَخْوِيفاً وَ تَحْذِيراً فَذَمَّهَا رِجَالٌ غَدَاةَ النَّدَامَةِ وَ حَمِدَهَا آخَرُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ذَكَّرَتْهُمُ الدُّنْيَا فَتَذَكَّرُوا وَ حَدَّثَتْهُمْ فَصَدَّقُوا وَ وَعَظَتْهُمْ فَاتَّعَظُوا .

Hadith n. 132

132. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There is an angel of Allah who calls out every day, "Beget children for death, collect wealth for destruction, and raise construction for ruin."

132. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَلَكاً يُنَادِي فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ لِدُوا لِلْمَوْتِ وَ اجْمَعُوا لِلْفَنَاءِ وَ ابْنُوا لِلْخَرَابِ .

Hadith n. 133

133. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: This world is a place for transit, not a place for stay. The people herein are of two categories. One is the man who sold away his self (to his passions) and thus ruined it, and the other is the man who purchased his self (by control against his passions) and freed it.

133. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: الدُّنْيَا دَارُ مَمَرٍّ لَا دَارُ مَقَرٍّ وَ النَّاسُ فِيهَا رَجُلَانِ رَجُلٌ بَاعَ فِيهَا نَفْسَهُ فَأَوْبَقَهَا وَ رَجُلٌ ابْتَاعَ نَفْسَهُ فَأَعْتَقَهَا.

Hadith n. 134

134. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A friend is not a friend unless he affords protection to his comrade on three occasions: in his adversity, in his absence and at his death.

134. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: لَا يَكُونُ الصَّدِيقُ صَدِيقاً حَتَّى يَحْفَظَ أَخَاهُ فِي ثَلَاثٍ فِي نَكْبَتِهِ وَ غَيْبَتِهِ وَ وَفَاتِهِ .

Hadith n. 135

135. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who is bestowed four things is not disallowed four things: he who is allowed to pray is not deprived of the response to it; he who is allowed to offer repentance is not deprived of its acceptance; he who is allowed to seek forgiveness is not deprived of forgiveness; and he who is allowed to be grateful is not deprived of furtherance of favours.

135. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: مَنْ أُعْطِيَ أَرْبَعاً لَمْ يُحْرَمْ أَرْبَعاً مَنْ أُعْطِيَ الدُّعَاءَ لَمْ يُحْرَمِ الْإِجَابَةَ وَ مَنْ أُعْطِيَ التَّوْبَةَ لَمْ يُحْرَمِ الْقَبُولَ وَ مَنْ أُعْطِيَ الِاسْتِغْفَارَ لَمْ يُحْرَمِ الْمَغْفِرَةَ وَ مَنْ أُعْطِيَ الشُّكْرَ لَمْ يُحْرَمِ الزِّيَادَةَ .

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is confirmed by the Book of Allah. About praying, Allah says: "*Call you to Me, I will answer you"* (Qur'an, 4:60). About forgiveness Allah says: *"And whoever does evil, or wrongs his own self and thereafter seeks pardon of Allah, shall find Allah Oft-forgiving, Merciful"* (Qur'an, 4:110). About gratefulness He says: *"If you be grateful I will increase* (*my favours*) *to you"* (Qur'an, 14:7). About repentance He says: *"Verily, repentance* (*acceptable*) *with Allah is only for those who do evil ignorantly and then turn* (*to Allah*) *soon* (*after*)*; these* (*are those*) *Allah will turn* (*merciful*) *to them; and Allah is All-knowing, All-wise"* (Qur'an, 4: 17).

قال الرضى و تصديق ذلك كتاب الله قال الله فى الدعاء ادْعُونِى أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ و قال فى الاستغفار وَ مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءاً أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُوراً رَحِيماً و قال فى الشكر لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ و قال فى التوبة إِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ

عَلَى اللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السُّوءَ بِجَهالَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ فَأُولئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَ كانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيماً حَكِيماً.

Hadith n. 136

136. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: For the God-fearing prayers is a means of seeking nearness to Allah; and for the weak the hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) is as good as jihad (fighting in the way of Allah). For every thing there is a levy; and the levy of the body is fasting. The jihad of a woman is to afford pleasant company to her husband.

136. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: الصَّلَاةُ قُرْبَانُ كُلِّ تَقِيٍّ وَ الْحَجُّ جِهَادُ كُلِّ ضَعِيفٍ وَ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ زَكَاةٌ وَ زَكَاةُ الْبَدَنِ الصِّيَامُ وَ جِهَادُ الْمَرْأَةِ حُسْنُ التَّبَعُّلِ .

Hadith n. 137

137. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Seek livelihood by giving alms.

137. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: اسْتَنْزِلُوا الرِّزْقَ بِالصَّدَقَةِ .

Hadith n. 138

138. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who is sure of a good return is generous in giving.

138. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: مَنْ أَيْقَنَ بِالْخَلَفِ جَادَ بِالْعَطِيَّةِ .

Hadith n. 139

139. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Assistance is allowed according to need.

139. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: تَنْزِلُ الْمَعُونَةُ عَلَى قَدْرِ الْمَئُونَةِ .

Hadith n. 140

140. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who is moderate does not become destitute.

140. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: مَا عَالَ مَنِ اقْتَصَدَ .

Hadith n. 141

141. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A small family is one of the ways of (securing) ease.

141. وقال عليه السلام : قِلَّةُ الْعِيَالِ أَحَدُ الْيَسَارَيْنِ.

Hadith n. 142

142. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Loving one another is half of wisdom

142. وقال عليه السلام :اَلتَّوَدُّدُ نِصْفُ الْعَقْل

Hadith n. 143

143. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Grief is half of old age.

143. وقال عليه السلام :اَلْهَمُّ نِصْفُ الْهَرَم.

Hadith n. 144

144. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Endurance comes according to the affliction. He who beats his hand on the thigh in his affliction ruins all his good actions.

144. وقال عليه السلام : يَنْزِلُ الصَّبْرُ عَلَى قَدْرِ الْمُصِيبَةِ، وَمَنْ ضَرَبَ يَدَهُ عَلَى فَخِذِهِ عِنْدَ مُصِيبَتِهِ حَبِطَ أَجْرُهُ.

Hadith n. 145

145. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There is many a person who fasts whose fast is nothing but just hunger and thirst, and many an offerer of prayers whose prayer is no better than wakefulness and hardship. The sleep as well as the eating and drinking of the intelligent (God-knowing) person is far better.

145. وقال عليه السلام : كَمْ مِنْ صَائِمٍ لَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ صِيَامِهِ إِلاَّ الظَّمَأُ، وَكَمْ مِنْ قَائِمٍ لَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ قِيَامِهِ إِلاَّ الْعَنَاءُ،

حَبَّذَا نَوْمُ الأكْيَاسِ وَ إِفْطَارُهُمْ.

Hadith n. 146

146. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Protect your belief by charity; guard your wealth by paying Allah's share; and ward off the waves of calamity by praying.

146. وقال عليه السلام : سُوسُوا إِيمَانَكُمْ بِالصَّدَقَةِ، وَحَصِّنُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بِالزَّكَاةِ، وَادْفَعُوا أَمْوَاجَ الْبَلاَءِ بِالدُّعَاءِ.

Hadith n. 147: Amir Al-Mu'minin's Conversation With Kumayl Ibn Ziyad An-Nakha'i

ومن كلام له عليه السلام لكُمَيْل بن زياد النخعي

147. Kumayl ibn Ziyad An-Nakha'i [34] **has related: Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, caught hold of my hand and took me to the graveyard. When he had passed through the graveyard and left the city behind, he breathed a deep sigh and said:**

147. قال كُمَيْل بن زياد: أخذ بيدي أميرالمؤمنين علي بن أبي طالب عليه السلام ، فأخرجني إلى الجبّان فلمّا أصحر تنفّس الصّعَدَاء ثمّ قال:

O Kumayl, these hearts are containers. The best of them is that which preserves (its contents). So, preserve what I say to you.

يَا كُمَيْل بْن زِيَادٍ، إِنَّ هذهِ الْقُلُوبَ أَوْعِيَةٌ فَخَيْرُهَا أَوْعَاهَا فَاحْفَظْ عَنِّي مَا أَقُولُ لَكَ:

People are of three types: One is the scholar and divine; then the seeker of knowledge who is also on the way to deliverance. Then (lastly) the common rot who run after every caller and bend in the direction of every wind. They seek no light from the effulgence of knowledge and do not take protection of any reliable support.

النَّاسُ ثَلاَثَةٌ: فَعَالِمٌ رَبَّانِيٌّ وَمُتَعَلِّمٌ عَلَى سَبِيلِ نَجَاةٍ، وَهَمَجٌ رَعَاعٌ أَتْبَاعُ كُلِّ نَاعِقٍ يَمِيلُونَ مَعَ كُلِّ رِيحٍ، لَمْ يَسْتَضِيئُوا بِنُورِ الْعِلْمِ، وَلَمْ يَلْجَؤُوا إِلَى رُكْنٍ وَثِيقٍ.

O Kumayl, knowledge is better than wealth. Knowledge guards you, while you have to guard the wealth.

Wealth decreases by spending, while knowledge multiplies by spending, and the results of wealth die as wealth decays.

يَا كُمَيْلُ، الْعِلْمُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الْمَالِ: الْعِلْمُ يَحْرُسُكَ وَأَنْتَ تَحْرُسُ المَالَ، وَالْمَالُ تَنْقُصُهُ النَّفَقَةُ، وَالْعِلْمُ يَزْكُوعَلَى الاْنْفَاقِ، وَصَنِيعُ الْمَالِ يَزُولُ بِزَوَالِهِ.

O Kumayl, knowledge is belief which is acted upon. With it man acquires obedience during his life and a good name after his death. Knowledge is the ruler while wealth is ruled upon.

يَا كُمَيْلَ بْنَ زِيَادٍ مَعْرِفَةُ الْعِلْمِ دِينٌ يُدَانُ بِهِ بِهِ يَكْسِبُ الْإِنْسَانُ الطَّاعَةَ فِی حَيَاتِهِ وَ جَمِيلَ الْأُحْدُوثَةِ بَعْدَ وَفَاتِهِ وَ الْعِلْمُ حَاكِمٌ وَ الْمَالُ مَحْكُومٌ عَلَيْهِ.

O Kumayl, those who amass wealth are dead even though they may be living while those endowed with knowledge will remain as long as the world lives. Their bodies are not available but their figures exist in the hearts. Look, here is a heap of knowledge (and Amir al-mu'minin pointed to his bosom). I wish I could get someone to bear it. Yes, I did find (such a one); but either he was one who could not be relied upon. He would exploit the religion for worldly gains, and by virtue of Allah's favours on him he would domineer over the people and through Allah's pleas he would lord over His devotees. Or he was one who was obedient to the hearers of truth but {here was no intelligence in his bosom. At the first appearance of doubt he would entertain misgivings in his heart.

يَا كُمَيْلُ هَلَكَ خُزَّانُ الْأَمْوَالِ وَ هُمْ أَحْيَاءٌ وَ الْعُلَمَاءُ بَاقُونَ مَا بَقِيَ الدَّهْرُ أَعْيَانُهُمْ مَفْقُودَةٌ وَ أَمْثَالُهُمْ فِی الْقُلُوبِ مَوْجُودَةٌ هَا إِنَّ هَاهُنَا لَعِلْماً جَمّاً وَ أَشَارَ بِيَدِهِ إِلَی صَدْرِهِ لَوْ أَصَبْتُ لَهُ حَمَلَةً بَلَی أَصَبْتُ لَقِناً غَيْرَ مَأْمُونٍ عَلَيْهِ مُسْتَعْمِلًا آلَةَ الدِّينِ لِلدُّنْيَا وَ مُسْتَظْهِراً بِنِعَمِ اللَّهِ عَلَی عِبَادِهِ وَ بِحُجَجِهِ عَلَی أَوْلِيَائِهِ أَوْ مُنْقَاداً لِحَمَلَةِ الْحَقِّ لَا بَصِيرَةَ لَهُ فِی أَحْنَائِهِ يَنْقَدِحُ الشَّكُّ فِی قَلْبِهِ لِأَوَّلِ عَارِضٍ مِنْ شُبْهَةٍ.

So, neither this nor that was good enough. Either the man is eager for pleasures, easily led away by passions, or is covetous for collecting and hoarding wealth. Neither of them has any regard for religion in any matter. The nearest example of these is the loose cattle. This is the way that knowledge dies away with the death of its bearers.

أَلَا لَا ذَا وَ لَا ذَاكَ أَوْ مَنْهُوماً بِاللَّذَّةِ سَلِسَ الْقِيَادِ لِلشَّهْوَةِ أَوْ مُغْرَماً بِالْجَمْعِ وَ الِادِّخَارِ لَيْسَا مِنْ رُعَاةِ الدِّينِ فِی شَيْءٍ أَقْرَبُ شَيْءٍ شَبَهاً بِهِمَا الْأَنْعَامُ السَّائِمَةُ كَذَلِكَ يَمُوتُ الْعِلْمُ بِمَوْتِ حَامِلِيهِ.

O My God! Yes; but the earth is never devoid of those who maintain Allah's plea either openly and reputedly or, being afraid, as hidden in order that Allah's pleas and proofs should not be rebutted. How many are they and where are they? By Allah, they are few in number, but they are great in esteem

before Allah. Through them Allah guards His pleas and proofs till they entrust them to others like themselves and sow the seeds thereof in the hearts of those who are similar to them.

اللَّهُمَّ بَلَى! لاَ تَخْلُو الاَرْضُ مِنْ قَائِمٍ لله بِحُجَّةٍ، إِمَّا ظَاهِراً مَشْهُوراً، أَوْ خَائِفاً مَغْمُوراً لِئَلاَّ تَبْطُلَ حُجَجُ اللهِ وَبَيِّنَاتُهُ. وَكَمْ ذَا وَأَيْنَ أُولئِكَ؟ أُولئِكَ ـ وَاللَّهِ ـ الاَقَلُّونَ عَدَداً، وَالاَعْظَمُونَ قَدْراً، يَحْفَظُ اللهُ بِهِمْ حُجَجَهُ وَبَيِّنَاتِهِ، حَتَّى يُودِعُوهَا نُظَرَاءَهُمْ، وَيَزْرَعُوهَا فِي قُلُوبِ أَشْبَاهِهِمْ،

Knowledge has led them to real understanding and so they have associated themselves with the spirit of conviction. They take easy what the easygoing regard as hard. They endear what the ignorant take as strange. They live in this world with their bodies here but their spirits resting in the high above. They are the vicegerents of Allah on His earth and callers to His religion.

Oh, oh, how I yearn to see them! Go away now, O Kumayl, wherever you wish!

هَجَمَ بِهِمُ الْعِلْمُ عَلَى حَقِيقَةِ الْبَصِيرَةِ، وَبَاشَرُوا رُوحَ الْيَقِينِ، وَاسْتَلاَنُوامَا اسْتَوْعَرَهُ الْمُتْرَفُونَ وَأَنِسُوا بِمَا اسْتَوْحَشَ مِنْهُ الْجَاهِلُونَ، وَصَحِبُوا الدُّنْيَا بِأَبْدَانٍ أَرْوَاحُهَا مُعَلَّقَةٌ بِالْمَحَلِّ الاَعْلَى، أُولئِكَ خُلَفَاءُ اللهِ فِي أَرْضِهِ، وَالدُّعَاةُ إِلَى دِينِهِ،

آهِ آهِ شَوْقاً إِلَى رُؤْيَتِهِمْ! انْصَرِفْ إِذَا شِئْتَ!

Hadith n. 148

148. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Man is hidden under his tongue. 35

148. وقال عليه السلام : اَلْمَرْءُ مَخْبُوءٌ تَحْتَ لِسَانِهِ.

Hadith n. 149

149. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who does not know his own worth is ruined.

149. وقال عليه السلام : هَلَكَ امْرُؤٌ لَمْ يَعْرِفْ قَدْرَهُ.

Hadith n. 150: On Preaching

150. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to a man who had requested him to preach:

150. وقال عليه السلام لرجلٍ سأَله أَن يعظه:

Do not be like him who hopes for (bliss in) the next life without action, and delays repentance by lengthening desires, who utters words like ascetics in this world but acts like those who are eager for it; if he is allowed something from it he does not feel satisfied; if he is denied he is not content; he is not grateful for what he gets and covets for increase in whatever remains with him; he refrains others but not himself; he commands others for what he himself does not do; he loves the virtuous but does not behave like them; he hates the vicious but himself is one of them; he dislikes death because of the excess of his sins but adheres to that for which he is afraid of death.

لَا تَكُنْ مِمَّنْ يَرْجُو الْآخِرَةَ بِغَيْرِ عَمَلٍ وَ يُرَجِّي التَّوْبَةَ بِطُولِ الْأَمَلِ يَقُولُ فِي الدُّنْيَا بِقَوْلِ الزَّاهِدِينَ وَ يَعْمَلُ فِيهَا بِعَمَلِ الرَّاغِبِينَ إِنْ أُعْطِيَ مِنْهَا لَمْ يَشْبَعْ وَ إِنْ مُنِعَ مِنْهَا لَمْ يَقْنَعْ يَعْجِزُ عَنْ شُكْرِ مَا أُوتِيَ وَ يَبْتَغِي الزِّيَادَةَ فِيمَا بَقِيَ يَنْهَى وَ لَا يَنْتَهِي وَ يَأْمُرُ بِمَا لَا يَأْتِي يُحِبُّ الصَّالِحِينَ وَ لَا يَعْمَلُ عَمَلَهُمْ وَ يُبْغِضُ الْمُذْنِبِينَ وَ هُوَ أَحَدُهُمْ يَكْرَهُ الْمَوْتَ لِكَثْرَةِ ذُنُوبِهِ وَ يُقِيمُ عَلَى مَا يَكْرَهُ الْمَوْتَ مِنْ أَجْلِهِ .

If he falls ill he is remorseful; if he is healthy he feels secure and indulges in amusements; when he recovers from illness he feels vain about himself; when he is afflicted he loses hope; if distress befalls him he prays like a bewildered man; when he finds ease of life he falls into deceit and turns his face away; his heart overpowers him by means of imaginary things while he cannot control his heart by his conviction; for others he is afraid of small sins, but for himself he expects more reward than his performance; if he becomes wealthy he becomes self-conceited and falls into vice; if he becomes poor he despairs and becomes weak; he falls short when doing a good thing but goes too far when he is begging; when passion overtakes him he is quick in committing sin but delays repentance; if hardship befalls him he goes beyond the cannons of the (Islamic) community; he describes instructive events but does not take instruction himself; he preaches at length but does not accept any preaching for himself; he is tall in speaking but short in action; he aspires for things that will perish and ignores things that will last for good; he regards profit as loss and loss as profit; he fears death but does nothing in its anticipation.

إِنْ سَقِمَ ظَلَّ نَادِماً وَ إِنْ صَحَّ أَمِنَ، لَاهِياً يُعْجَبُ بِنَفْسِهِ إِذَا عُوفِيَ وَ يَقْنَطُ إِذَا ابْتُلِيَ، إِنْ أَصَابَهُ بَلَاءٌ دَعَا مُضْطَرّاً وَ إِنْ نَالَهُ رَخَاءٌ أَعْرَضَ مُغْتَرّاً، تَغْلِبُهُ نَفْسُهُ عَلَى مَا يَظُنُّ وَ لَا يَغْلِبُهَا عَلَى مَا يَسْتَيْقِنُ، يَخَافُ عَلَى غَيْرِهِ بِأَدْنَى مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ وَ يَرْجُو لِنَفْسِهِ بِأَكْثَرَ مِنْ عَمَلِهِ، إِنِ اسْتَغْنَى بَطِرَ وَ فُتِنَ وَ إِنِ افْتَقَرَ قَنِطَ وَ وَهَنَ، يُقَصِّرُ إِذَا عَمِلَ وَ يُبَالِغُ إِذَا سَأَلَ، إِنْ عَرَضَتْ لَهُ شَهْوَةٌ أَسْلَفَ الْمَعْصِيَةَ وَ سَوَّفَ التَّوْبَةَ وَ إِنْ عَرَتْهُ مِحْنَةٌ انْفَرَجَ عَنْ شَرَائِطِ الْمِلَّةِ، يَصِفُ الْعِبْرَةَ وَ لَا يَعْتَبِرُ وَ يُبَالِغُ فِي الْمَوْعِظَةِ وَ لَا يَتَّعِظُ، فَهُوَ بِالْقَوْلِ مُدِلٌّ وَ مِنَ الْعَمَلِ مُقِلٌّ يُنَافِسُ فِيمَا يَفْنَى وَ يُسَامِحُ فِيمَا يَبْقَى يَرَى الْغُنْمَ مَغْرَماً وَ الْغُرْمَ مَغْنَماً، يَخْشَى الْمَوْتَ وَ لَا يُبَادِرُ الْفَوْتَ.

He regards the sins of others as big but considers the same things for himself as small; if he does something in obedience to Allah he considers it much but if others do the same he considers it small; he

therefore rebukes others but flatters himself; entertainment in the company of the wealthy is dearer to him than remembrance (of Allah) with the poor; he passes verdicts against others for his own interests and does not do so against himself for others' interests; he guides others but misguides himself; he is obeyed by others but he himself disobeys (Allah); he seeks fulfilment (of obligations towards himself) but does not fulfil his obligations (towards others); he fears the people (and acts) for other than his Lord (Allah) and does not fear his Lord in his dealings with the people.

يَسْتَعْظِمُ مِنْ مَعْصِيَةِ غَيْرِهِ مَا يَسْتَقِلُّ أَكْثَرَ مِنْهُ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ، وَ يَسْتَكْثِرُ مِنْ طَاعَتِهِ مَا يَحْقِرُهُ مِنْ طَاعَةِ غَيْرِهِ، فَهُوَ عَلَى النَّاسِ طَاعِنٌ وَ لِنَفْسِهِ مُدَاهِنٌ، اللَّهْوُ مَعَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ أَحَبُّ إِلَيْهِ مِنَ الذِّكْرِ مَعَ الْفُقَرَاءِ، يَحْكُمُ عَلَى غَيْرِهِ لِنَفْسِهِ وَ لَا يَحْكُمُ عَلَيْهَا لِغَيْرِهِ يُرْشِدُ غَيْرَهُ وَ يُغْوِى نَفْسَهُ، فَهُوَ يُطَاعُ وَ يَعْصِى وَ يَسْتَوْفِى وَ لَا يُوفِى، وَ يَخْشَى الْخَلْقَ فِى غَيْرِ رَبِّهِ وَ لَا يَخْشَى رَبَّه فِى خَلْقِهِ .

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: If this book had contained nothing save this short utterance it would have sufficed as a successful piece of preaching, a specimen of high philosophy, an object of wisdom for the onlooker and a source of instruction for the meditative watcher.

قال الرضى و لو لم يكن فى هذا الكتاب إلا هذا الكلام لكفى به موعظة ناجعة و حكمة بالغة و بصيرة لمبصر و عبرة لناظر مفكر .

Hadith n. 151

151. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Every human being has to meet the end, sweet or bitter.

151. وقال عليه السلام : لِكُلِّ امْرِىءٍ عَاقِبَةٌ حُلْوَةٌ أَوْ مُرَّةٌ.

Hadith n. 152

152. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Every comer has to return and after returning it is as though he never existed.

152. وقال عليه السلام : لِكُلِّ مُقْبِلٍ إِدْبَارٌ، وَمَا أَدْبَرَ كَأَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ.

Hadith n. 153

153. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The endurer does not miss success although it may

take a long time.

153. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ يَعْدَمُ الصَّبُورُ الظَّفَرَ وَإِنْ طَالَ بِهِ الزَّمَانُ.

Hadith n. 154

154. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who agrees with the action of a group of persons is as though he joins them in that action. And every one who joins in wrong commits two sins; one sin for committing the wrong and the other for agreeing with it.

154. وقال عليه السلام : الرَّاضِي بِفِعْلِ قَوْمٍ كَالدَّاخِلِ فِيهِ مَعَهُمْ، وَعَلَى كُلِّ دَاخِلٍ فِي بَاطِلٍ إِثْمَانِ: إِثْمُ الْعَمَلِ بِهِ، وَإِثْمُ الرِّضَى بِهِ.

Hadith n. 155

155. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Adhere to contracts and entrust their fulfilment to steadfast persons.

155. وقال عليه السلام : اعْتَصِمُوابِالذِّمَمِ فِي أَوْتَادِهَا.

Hadith n. 156

156. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: On you lies (the obligation of) obedience to the person about whom you cannot plead the excuse of ignorance. 36

156. وقال عليه السلام : عَلَيْكُمْ بِطَاعَةِ مَنْ لاَ تُعْذَرُونَ بِجَهَالَتِهِ.

Hadith n. 157

157. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Surely, you have been made to see if (only) you care to see; surely, you have been guided if (only) you care to take guidance; and surely, you have been made to hear if (only) you care to lend your ears.

157. وقال عليه السلام : قَدْ بُصِّرْتُمْ إِنْ أَبْصَرْتُمْ وَقَدْ هُدِيتُمْ إِنِ اهْتَدَيْتُمْ، وأُسْمِعْتُمْ إِنِ اسْتَمَعْتُمْ

Hadith n. 158

158. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Admonish your brother (comrade) by good behaviour towards him, and ward off his evil by favouring him. 37

158. وقال عليه السلام : عَاتِبْ أَخَاكَ بِالاْحْسَانِ إِلَيْهِ، وَارْدُدْ شَرَّهُ بِالاْنْعَامِ عَلَيْهِ.

Hadith n. 159

159. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who puts himself in conditions of ill-repute should not blame those who entertain bad ideas about him.

159. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ وَضَعَ نَفْسَهُ مَوَاضِعَ التُّهَمَةِ فَلاَ يَلُومَنَّ مَنْ أَسَاءَ بِهِ الظَّنَّ.

Hadith n. 160

160. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever obtains authority (usually) adopts partiality.

160. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ مَلَكَ اسْتَأْثَرَ .

Hadith n. 161

161. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who acts solely according to his own opinion gets ruined, and he who consults other people shares in their understanding.

161. وقال عليه السلام : وَمَنِ اسْتَبَدَّ بِرَأْيِهِ هَلَكَ، وَمَنْ شَاوَرَ الرِّجَالَ شَارَكَهَا فِي عُقُولِهَا.

Hadith n. 162

162. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who guards his secrets retains control in his own hands.

162. وقال عليه السلام: وَمَنْ كَتَمَ سِرَّهُ كَانَتِ الْخِيرَةُ بِيَدِهِ.

Hadith n. 163

163. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Destitution is the greatest death.

163. وقال عليه السلام : الْفَقْرُ الْمَوْتُ الأكْبَرُ.

Hadith n. 164

164. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who fulfils the right of a man who does not fulfil his right, (is as though he) worships him.

164. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ قَضَى حَقَّ مَنْ لاَ يَقْضِي حَقَّهُ فَقَدْ عَبَدَهُ.

Hadith n. 165

165. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There should be no obeying anyone against Allah's commands.

165. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ طَاعَةَ لِمخْلُوقٍ فِي مَعْصِيَةِ الْخَالِقِ.

Hadith n. 166

166. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: No person is to be blamed for delay in (securing) his own right but blame lies on him who takes what he is not entitled to.

166. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ يُعَابُ الْمَرْءُ بِتَأْخِيرِ حَقِّهِ، إِنَّمَا يُعَابُ مَنْ أَخَذَ مَا لَيْسَ لَهُ.

Hadith n. 167

167. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Vanity prevents progress. 38

167. وقال عليه السلام : الاعْجَابُ يَمْنَعُ مِنَ الازْدِيَادَ.

Hadith n. 168

168. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The Day of Judgement is near and our mutual company is short.

168. وقال عليه السلام : الأَمْرُ قَرِيبٌ وَالاْصْطِحَابُ قَلِيلٌ.

Hadith n. 169

169. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: For the man who has eyes the dawn has already appeared.

169. وقال عليه السلام : قَدْ أَضَاءَ الصُّبْحُ لِذِي عَيْنَيْنِ.

Hadith n. 170

170. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Abstention from sin is easier than seeking forgiveness afterwards. 39

170. وقال عليه السلام : تَرْكُ الذَّنْبِ أَهْوَنُ مِنْ طَلَبِ التَّوْبَةِ.

Hadith n. 171

171. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Many a single eating prevents several eatings. 40

171. وقال عليه السلام : كَمْ مِنْ أَكْلَةٍ مَنَعَتْ أَكَلاَتٍ.

Hadith n. 172

172. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: People are enemies of what they do not know. 41

172. وقال عليه السلام : النَّاسُ أَعْدَاءُ مَا جَهِلُوا.

Hadith n. 173

173. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who has several opinions understands the pitfalls.

173. وقال عليه السلام : مَنِ اسْتَقْبَلَ وُجُوهَ الْاٰرَاءِ عَرَفَ مَوَاقِعَ الْخَطَاَ.

Hadith n. 174

174. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who sharpens the teeth of anger for the sake of Allah acquires the strength to kill the stalwarts of wrong. 42

174. وقال عليه السلام : مَن أَحَدَّ سِنَانَ الْغَضَبِ لله قَوِيَ عَلَى قَتْلِ أَشِدَّاءِ الْبَاطِلِ.

Hadith n. 175

175. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When you are afraid of something dive straight into it, because the intensity of abstaining from it is greater (worse) than what you are afraid of.

175. وقال عليه السلام : إِذَا هِبْتَ أَمْرًافَقَعْ فِيهِ، فَإِنَّ شِدَّةَ تَوَقِّيهِأَعْظَمُ مِمَّا تَخَافُ مِنْهُ.

Hadith n. 176

176. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The means to secure high authority is breadth of chest (i.e., generosity).

176. وقال عليه السلام : آلَةُ الرِّيَاسَةِ سَعَةُ الصَّدْرِ

Hadith n. 177

177. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Rebuke the evil-doer by rewarding the good-doer. 43

177. وقال عليه السلام : ازْجُرِ الْمُسِيءَ بِثوَابِ الْمُحْسِنِ.

Hadith n. 178

178. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Cut away evil from the chest of others by snatching (it) away from your own chest. 44

178. وقال عليه السلام : احْصُدِ الشَّرَّ مِنْ صَدْرِ غَيْرِكَ بِقَلْعِهِ مِنْ صَدْرِكَ.

Hadith n. 179

179. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Stubbornness destroys (good) advice.

179. وقال عليه السلام : اللَّجَاجَةُ تَسُلُّ الرَّأْيَ

Hadith n. 180

180. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him said: Greed is a lasting slavery.

180. وقال عليه السلام : الطَّمَعُ رِقٌّ مُؤَبَّدٌ.

Hadith n. 181

181. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The result of neglect is shame, while the result of far-sightedness is safety.

181. وقال عليه السلام : ثَمَرَةُ التَّفْرِيطِ النَّدَامَةُ، وَثَمَرَةُ الْحَزْمِ السَّلاَمَةُ

Hadith n. 182

182. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There is no advantage ill keeping quiet about an issue of wisdom, just as there is no good in speaking out an unintelligent thing.

182. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ خَيْرَ فِي الصَّمْتِ عَنِ الْحُكْمِ، كَمَا أَنَّهُ لاَ خَيْرَ فِي الْقوْلِ بِالْجَهْلِ.

Hadith n. 183

183. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If there are two different calls then one (of them) must be towards misguidance.

183. وقال عليه السلام : مَا اخْتَلَفَتْ دَعْوَتَانِ إِلاَّ كَانَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا ضَلاَلَةً.

Hadith n. 184

184. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I have never entertained doubt about right since I was shown it.

184. وقال عليه السلام : مَا شَكَكْتُ فِي الْحَقِّ مُذْ أُرِيتُهُ.

Hadith n. 185

185. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I have neither spoken a lie nor have I been told a lie. I have neither deviated nor have I been made to deviate (others).

185. وقال عليه السلام : مَا كَذَبْتُ وَلاَ كُذِّبْتُ، وَلاَ ضَلَلْتُ وَلاَ ضُلَّ بِي

Hadith n. 186

186. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who takes the lead in oppression has to bite his hand (in repentance) tomorrow.

186. وقال عليه السلام : لِلظَّالِمِ الْبَادِي غَداً بِكَفِّهِ عَضَّةٌ.

Hadith n. 187

187. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The departure (from this world) is imminent.

187. وقال عليه السلام : الرَّحِيلُ وَشِيكٌ.

Hadith n. 188

188. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever turned away from right was ruined.

188. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ أَبْدى صَفْحَتَهُ لِلْحَقِّ هَلَكَ.

Hadith n. 189

189. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If patience does not give relief to a man impatience kills him.

189. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ لَمْ يُنْجِهِ الصَّبْرُ أَهْلَكَهُ الْجَزَعُ.

Hadith n. 190

190. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: How strange? Could the caliphate be through the (Prophet's) companionship but not through (his) companionship and (his) kinship?

190. وقال عليه السلام : وَاعَجَبَاهُ! أَتَكُونُ الْخِلاَفَةُ بِالصَّحَابَةِ وَلاَتَكُونُ بِالصَّحَابةِ وَالْقَرَابَةِ؟

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Verses have also been related from Amir al-mu'minin on the same matter. They are:--

If you claim to have secured authority by consultation, how did it happen when those to be consulted were absent! If you have scored over your opponents by kinship then someone else has greater right for being nearer to the Holy Prophet. 45

قال الرضي: و روي له شعر في هذا المعنى، وهو:

فَإِنْ كُنْتَ بِالشُّورَى مَلَكْتَ أُمُورَهُمْ * فَكَيْفَ بِهذَا وَالْمُشِيرُونَ غُيَّبُ

وَإِنْ كنْتَ بِالْقُرْبَى حَجَجْتَ خَصِيمَهُمْ * فَغَيْرُكَ أَوْلَى بِالنَّبِيِّ وَأَقْرَبُ

Hadith n. 191

191. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: In this world man is the target towards which the arrows of death fly, and is like that wealth whose destruction is quickened by hard ships. (In this world) with every drink there is suffocation and with every morsel there is choking. Here no one gets anything unless he loses something else, and not a day of his age advances till a day passes out from his life. Thus, we are helpers of death and our lives are the targets of mortality. How then can we expect everlasting life since the night and day do not raise anything high without quickly arranging for the destruction of whatever they have built and for the splitting asunder of whatever they have joined together.

191. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّمَا الْمَرْءُ فِی الدُّنْيَا غَرَضٌ تَنْتَضِلُ فِيهِ الْمَنَايَا وَ نَهْبٌ تُبَادِرُهُ الْمَصَائِبُ وَ مَعَ كُلِّ جُرْعَةٍ شَرَقٌ وَ فِی كُلِّ أَكْلَةٍ غَصَصٌ وَ لَا يَنَالُ الْعَبْدُ نِعْمَةً إِلَّا بِفِرَاقِ أُخْرَی وَ لَا يَسْتَقْبِلُ يَوْماً مِنْ عُمُرِهِ إِلَّا بِفِرَاقِ آخَرَ مِنْ أَجَلِهِ فَنَحْنُ أَعْوَانُ الْمَنُونِ وَ أَنْفُسُنَا نَصْبُ الْحُتُوفِ فَمِنْ أَيْنَ نَرْجُو الْبَقَاءَ وَ هَذَا اللَّيْلُ وَ النَّهَارُ لَمْ يَرْفَعَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ شَرَفاً إِلَّا أَسْرَعَا الْكَرَّةَ فِی هَدْمِ مَا بَنَيَا وَ تَفْرِيقِ مَا جَمَعَا .

Hadith n. 192

192. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O son of Adam, whatever you earn beyond your basic needs you are only a treasurer of it for others.

192. وقال عليه السلام : يَابْنَ آدَمَ مَا كَسَبْتَ فَوْقَ قُوتِكَ، فَأَنْتَ فِيهِ خَازِنٌ لِغَيْرِكَ.

Hadith n. 193

193. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Hearts are imbued with passion and the power of advancing and retreating. Therefore, approach them for action at the time of their psssionateness and when they are in a mood for advancing, because if hearts are forced (to do a thing) they will be blinded.

193. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ لِلْقُلُوبِ شَهْوَةً وَإِقْبَالاً وَإِدْبَاراً، فَأْتُوهَا مِنْ قِبَلِ شَهْوَتِهَا وَإِقْبَالِهَا، فَإِنَّ الْقَلْبَ إِذَا أُكْرِهَ عَمِيَ.

Hadith n. 194

194. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, used to say: If I am angry when shall I vent my anger – when I am unable to take revenge and it be said to me, "better you endure" or when I have power to take revenge and it be said to me, "better forgive"?

194. وكان عليه السلام يقول: مَتَى أَشْفِي غَيْظِي إِذَا غَضِبْتُ؟ أَحِينَ أَعْجِزُ عَنِ الاْنْتِقَامِ فَيُقَالُ لِي: لَوْ صَبَرْتَ؟ أَمْ حِينَ أَقْدِرُ عَلَيْهِ فَيُقَالُ لي: لَوْ عَفَوْتَ.

Hadith n. 195

195. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, passed beside a dump of rubbish full of filth and remarked: This is what the misers used to be niggardly about.

195. وقال عليه السلام وقد مرّ بقذر على مزبلة: هذا مَا بَخِلَ بِهِ الْبَاخِلُونَ.

In another tradition it is related that he said: This is what you used to dispute with each other about until yesterday!

و روي في خبر آخر أَنه قال: هذَا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَتَنَافَسُونَ فِيهِ بِالاْمْسِ!

Hadith n. 196

196. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The wealth that teaches you lesson does not go waste. 46

196. وقال عليه السلام : لَمْ يَذْهَبْ مِنْ مَالِكَ مَا وَعَظَكَ.

Hadith n. 197

197. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The hearts become tired as the bodies become tired. You should therefore search for beautiful sayings for them (to enjoy by way of refreshment).

197. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ هذِهِ الْقُلُوبَ تَمَلُّ كَمَا تَمَلُّ الاْبْدَانُ، فَابْتَغُوا لَهَا طَرَائِفَ الْحِكْمَةِ.

Hadith n. 198

198. When Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, heard the slogan of the Kharijites: There is no verdict save of Allah-, he said: This sentence is true but it is interpreted wrongly.

198. وقال عليه السلام لما سمع قول الخوارج ـ لا حكم إِلاَّ للهِ ـ : كَلِمَةُ حَقٍّ يُرَادُ بِهَا بَاطِلٌ.

Hadith n. 199

199. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said about the crowd of people: These are the people who, when they assemble together, are overwhelming but when they disperse they cannot be recognized.

199. وقال عليه السلام في صفة الْغوغاء هُمُ الَّذِينَ إِذَا اجْتَمَعُوا غَلَبُوا، وَإِذَا تَفَرَّقُوا لَمْ يُعْرَفُوا

It is related that instead of this Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: These are the people who when they assemble together cause harm but when they disperse are beneficial. It was pointed out to him: We know their harm at the time of their assembling but what is their benefit at the time of their dispersal?

Then he replied: The workers return to their work and people get benefit out of them, like the return of the mason to the building site, that of the weaver to his loom, and that of the baker to his bakery.

وقيل: بل قال: هُمُ الَّذِينَ إِذَا اجْتَمَعُوا ضَرُّوا، وَإِذَا تَفَرَّقُوا نَفَعُوا. فقيل: قد علمنا مضرة اجتماعهم، فما منفعة افتراقهم؟ فقال: يَرْجِعُ أَصْحَابُ الْمِهَنِ إِلَى مِهَنِهِمْ، فَيَنْتَفِعُ النَّاسُ بِهِمْ، كَرُجُوعِ الْبَنَّاءِ إِلَى بِنَائِهِ، وَالنَّسَّاجِ إِلَى مَنْسَجِهِ، وَالْخَبَّازِ إِلَى مَخْبَزِهِ.

Hadith n. 200

200. An offender was brought before Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, and there was a crowd of people with the man, so Amir al-mu'minin remarked: Woe to the faces who are seen only on foul occasions.

200. وقال عليه السلام وقد أُتي بجانٍ ومعه غوغاءُ: لاَ مَرْحَباً بِوُجُوهٍ لاَ تُرى إِلاَّ عِنْدَ كُلِّ سَوْأَةٍ.

Hadith n. 201

201. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: With every individual there are two angels who protect him; when destiny approaches they let it have its own way with him. Certainly, the appointed time is a protective shield (against the events which occur before it).

201. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ مَعَ كُلِّ إِنْسَانٍ مَلَكَيْنِ يَحْفَظَانِهِ، فَإِذَا جَاءَ الْقَدَرُ خَلَّيَا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَهُ، وَإِنَّ الاْجَلَ جُنَّةٌ حَصِينَةٌ.

Hadith n. 202

202. When Talhah and az-Zubayr said to him: We are prepared to swear allegiance to you on condition that we have a share with you in this matter (of caliphate), **Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said:** No, but you will have a share in strengthening (the caliphate) and in affording assistance and you will both be helping me at the time of need and hardship.

202. وقال عليه السلام ، وقد قال له طلحة والزبير: نبايعك على أَنّا شركاؤُكَ في هذا الاَمر. فقال: لاَ، وَلكِنَّكُمَا شَرِيكَانِ فِي الْقُوَّةَ وَالاْسْتَعَانَةِ، وَعَوْنَانِ عَلَى الْعَجْزِ وَالاْوَدِ.

Hadith n. 203

203. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O people, fear Allah Who is such that when you speak He hears and when you conceal (a secret) He knows it. Prepare yourself to meet death which will overtake you even if you run away, catch you even if you stay and remember you even if you forget it.

203. وقال عليه السلام : أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، اتّقُوا اللهَ الَّذِي إِنْ قُلْتُمْ سمِعَ، وَإِنْ أَضْمَرْتُمْ عَلِمَ، وَبَادِرُوا الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي إِنْ هَرَبْتُمْ أَدْرَكَكُمْ، وَإِنْ أَقَمْتُمْ أَخَذَكُمْ، وَإِنْ نَسِيتُمُوهُ ذَكَرَكُمْ.

Hadith n. 204

204. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If someone is not grateful to you, that should not prevent you from good actions, because (possibly) such a person will feel grateful about it who has not even drawn any benefit from it, and his gratefulness will be more than the ingratitude of the denier; ***And Allah loves those who do good***. **(Qur'an, 3:134,148; 5:93)**

204. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ يُزَهِّدَنَّكَ فِي الْمَعْرُوفِ مَنْ لاَ يَشْكُرُهُ لَكَ، فَقَدْ يَشْكُرُكَ عَلَيْهِ مَنْ لاَ يَسْتَمْتِعُ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْهُ، وَقَدْ تُدْرِكُ مِنْ شُكْرِ الشَّاكِرِ أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا أَضَاعَ الْكَافِرُ (وَ اللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ) .

Hadith n. 205

205. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Every container gets narrower according to what is placed in it except the container of knowledge which expands instead.

205. وقال عليه السلام : كُلُّ وِعَاءٍ يَضِيقُ بِمَا جُعِلَ فِيهِ إِلاَّ وِعَاءَ الْعِلْمِ، فَإِنَّهُ يَتَّسِعُ.

Hadith n. 206

206. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The first reward the exerciser of forbearance gets is that people become his helpers against the ignorant.

206. وقال عليه السلام : أَوَّلُ عِوَضِ الْحَلِيمِ مِنْ حِلْمِهِ أَنَّ النَّاسَ أَنْصَارُهُ عَلَى الْجَاهِلِ.

Hadith n. 207

207. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If you cannot forbear, feign to do so because it is seldom that a man likens himself to a group and does not become as one of them.[47]

207. وقال عليه السلام : إِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ حَلِيماً فَتَحَلَّمْ، فَإِنَّهُ قَلَّ مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بَقَوْمٍ إِلاَّ أَوْشَكَ أَنْ يَكُونَ مِنْهُمْ.

Hadith n. 208

208. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever takes account of his self is benefited, and whoever remains neglectful of it suffers. Whoever fears remains safe; whoever takes instruction (from things around) perceives; and whoever perceives gains understanding, and whoever gains understanding secures knowledge.

208. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ حَاسَبَ نَفْسَهُ رَبِحَ، وَمَنْ غَفَلَ عَنْهَا خَسِرَ، وَمَنْ خَافَ أَمِنَ، وَمَنِ اعْتَبَرَ أَبْصَرَ،مَنْ أَبْصَرَ فَهِمَ، وَمَنْ فَهِمَ عَلِمَ.

Hadith n. 209

209. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him said: The world will bend towards us after having been refractory as the biting she-camel bends towards its young. **Then Amir al-mu'minin recited the verse:**

***And intend We to bestow* (*Our*) *favour upon those who were considered weak in the land, and to make them the Imams* (guides in faith)*, and to make them the heirs*. (Qur'an, 28:5)** [48]

209. وقال عليه السلام : لَتَعْطِفَنَّ الدُّنْيَا عَلَيْنَا بَعْدَ شِمَاسِهَا عَطْفَ الضَّرُوسِ عَلَى وَلَدِهَا. وَ تَلَا عَقِيبَ ذَلِكَ: (وَ نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا فِى الْأَرْضِ وَ نَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَ نَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوارِثِينَ) .

Hadith n. 210

210. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Fear Allah like the one who prepares himself after extracting himself (from worldly affairs) and after getting ready in this way makes effort; then he acts quickly during the period of this life, hastens in view of the dangers (of falling into error) and has his eye on proceeding towards the goal, on the end of his journey and on the place of his (eventual) return.

210. وقال عليه السلام : اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ تَقِيَّةَ مَنْ شَمَّرَ تَجْرِيداً وَ جَدَّ تَشْمِيراً وَ كَمَّشَ فِي مَهَلٍ وَ بَادَرَ عَنْ وَجَلٍ وَ نَظَرَ فِي كَرَّةِ الْمَوْئِلِ وَ عَاقِبَةِ الْمَصْدَرِ وَ مَغَبَّةِ الْمَرْجِعِ .

Hadith n. 211

211. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Generosity is the protector of honour; forbearance is the bridle of the fool; forgiveness is the levy of success; disregard is the punishment of him who betrays; and consultation is the chief way of guidance. He who is content with his own opinion faces danger. Endurance braves calamities while impatience is a helper of the hardships of the world. The best contentment is to give up desires. Many a slavish mind is subservient to overpowering longings. Capability helps preservation of experience. Love means well-utilized relationship. Do not trust one who is grieved.

211. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: الْجُودُ حَارِسُ الْأَعْرَاضِ وَ الْحِلْمُ فِدَامُ السَّفِيهِ وَ الْعَفْوُ زَكَاةُ الظَّفَرِ وَ السُّلُوُّ عِوَضُكَ مِمَّنْ غَدَرَ وَ الِاسْتِشَارَةُ عَيْنُ الْهِدَايَةِ وَ قَدْ خَاطَرَ مَنِ اسْتَغْنَى بِرَأْيِهِ وَ الصَّبْرُ يُنَاضِلُ الْحِدْثَانَ وَ الْجَزَعُ مِنْ أَعْوَانِ الزَّمَانِ وَ أَشْرَفُ الْغِنَى تَرْكُ الْمُنَى وَ كَمْ مِنْ عَقْلٍ أَسِيرٍ تَحْتَ هَوَى أَمِيرٍ وَ مِنَ التَّوْفِيقِ حِفْظُ التَّجْرِبَةِ وَ الْمَوَدَّةُ قَرَابَةٌ مُسْتَفَادَةٌ وَ لَا تَأْمَنَنَّ مَلُولًا .

Hadith n. 212

212. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A man's vanity for himself is one of the enemies of his intelligence. 49

212. وقال عليه السلام : عُجْبُ الْمَرْءِ بِنَفْسِهِ أَحَدُ حُسَّادِ عَقْلِهِ.

Hadith n. 213

213. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Ignore pain otherwise you will never be happy. (Or according to another reading): Ignore pain and grief; you will ever be happy. 50

213. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: أَغْضِ عَلَى الْقَذَى وَ الْأَلَمِ تَرْضَ أَبَداً .

Hadith n. 214

214. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The tree whose trunk is soft has thick branches. 51

214. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ لاَنَ عُودُهُ كَثُفَتْ أَغْصَانُهُ.

Hadith n. 215

215. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Opposition destroys good counsel.

215. وقال عليه السلام : الْخِلاَفُ يَهْدِمُ الرَّأْيَ.

Hadith n. 216

216. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who gives generously achieves position. (Or according to another interpretation): He who achieves position begins to make wrong use of it.

216. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: مَنْ نَالَ اسْتَطَالَ .

Hadith n. 217

217. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Through change of circumstances the mettle of men is known.

217. وقال عليه السلام : فِي تَقَلُّبِ الاَحْوَالِ عِلْمُ جَوَاهِرِ الرِّجَالِ.

Hadith n. 218

218. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Jealousy by a friend means defect in his love.

218. وقال عليه السلام : حَسَدُ الصَّدِيقِ مِنْ سُقْمِ الْمَوَدَّةِ.

Hadith n. 219

219. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Most of the deficiency of intelligence occurs due to the flash of greed. 52

219. وقال عليه السلام : أَكْثَرُ مَصَارِعِ الْعُقُولِ تَحْتَ بُرُوقِ الْمَطَامِعِ.

Hadith n. 220

220. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There is no justice in passing a verdict by relying on probability.

220. وقال عليه السلام : لَيْسَ مِنَ الْعَدْلِ الْقَضَاءُ عَلَى الثِّقَةِ بِالظَّنِّ.

Hadith n. 221

221. Amir a'-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The worst provision for the Day of Judgement is high-handedness over people.

221. وقال عليه السلام : بِئْسَ الزَّادُ إِلَى الْمَعَادِ الْعُدْوَانُ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ.

Hadith n. 222

222. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The highest act of a noble person is to ignore what he knows.

222. وقال عليه السلام : مِنْ أَشْرَفِ أَفْعَالِ الْكَرِيمِ غَفْلَتُهُ عَمَّا يَعْلَمُ.

Hadith n. 223

223. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whomever modesty clothes with its dress people cannot see his defects. 53

223. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ كَسَاهُ الْحَيَاءُ ثَوْبَهُ لَمْ يَرَ النَّاسُ عَيْبَهُ.

Hadith n. 224

224. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Excess of silence produces awe; justice results in more close friends; generosity heightens position; with humility blessings abound in plenty; by facing hardships leadership is achieved; by just behaviour the adversary is overpowered; and with forbearance against a fool there is increase of one's supporters against him.

224. وقال عليه السلام : بِكَثْرَةِ الصَّمْتِ تَكُونُ الْهَيْبَةُ وَ بِالنَّصَفَةِ يَكْثُرُ الْمُوَاصِلُونَ وَ بِالْإِفْضَالِ تَعْظُمُ الْأَقْدَارُ وَ بِالتَّوَاضُعِ تَتِمُّ النِّعْمَةُ وَ بِاحْتِمَالِ الْمُؤَنِ يَجِبُ السُّؤْدُدُ وَ بِالسِّيرَةِ الْعَادِلَةِ يُقْهَرُ الْمُنَاوِئُ وَ بِالْحِلْمِ عَنِ السَّفِيهِ تَكْثُرُ الْأَنْصَارُ عَلَيْهِ.

Hadith n. 225

225. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: It is strange that the jealous do not feel jealous about bodily health. 54

225. وقال عليه السلام : الْعَجَبُ لِغَفْلَةِ الْحُسَّادِ عَنْ سَلَامَةِ الْأَجْسَادِ.

Hadith n. 226

226. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The greedy is in the shackles of disgrace.

226. وقال عليه السلام : الطَّامِعُ فِي وِثَاقِ الذُّلِّ.

Hadith n. 227

227. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked about belief (iman) when he said: Belief means appreciation with the heart, acknowledgement with the tongue, and action with the limbs.

227. وقال عليه السلام وقد سئل عن الإيمان: الْإِيمَانُ مَعْرِفَةٌ بِالْقَلْبِ، وَإِقْرَارٌ بِاللِّسَانِ، وعَمَلٌ بِالْأَرْكَانِ.

Hadith n. 228

228. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who is sorrowful for this world is in fact displeased with the dispensation of Allah. He who complains of a calamity that befalls him complains of his Lord (Allah). He who approaches a rich man and bends before him on account of his riches then

two-third of his religion is gone. If a man reads the Qur'an and on dying goes to Hell then it means that he was among those who treated Divine verses with mockery. If a man's heart gets attached to the world, then it catches three things, namely worry that never leaves him, greed that does not abandon him and desire which he never fulfils.

228. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ أَصْبَحَ عَلَى الدُّنْيَا حَزِيناً فَقَدْ أَصْبَحَ لِقَضَاءِ اللهِ سَاخِطاً، وَمَنْ أَصْبَحَ يَشْكُو مُصِيبَةً نَزَلَتْ بِهِ فَقَدْ أَصْبَحَ يَشْكُو رَبَّهُ، وَمَنْ أَتى غَنِيّاً فَتَوَاضَعَ لِغِنَاهُ ذَهَبَ ثُلُثَا دِينِهِ، وَمَنْ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ فَمَاتَ فَدَخَلَ النَّارَ فَهُوَ مِمَّنْ كَانَ يَتَّخِذُ آيَاتِ اللهِ هُزُواً، وَمَنْ لَهِجَ قَلْبُهُ بِحُبِّ الدُّنْيَا الْتَاطَ قَلْبُهُ مِنْهَا بِثَلاَثٍ: هَمٍّ لاَ يُغِبُّهُ، وَحِرْصٍ لاَ يَتْرُكُهُ، وَأَمَلٍ لاَ يُدْرِكُهُ.

Hadith n. 229

229. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Contentment is as good as estate, and goodness of moral character is as good as a blessing.

229. وقال عليه السلام : كَفَى بِالْقَنَاعَةِ مُلْكاً، وَبِحُسْنِ الْخُلُقِ نَعِيماً.

Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked about Allah's saying: (Whosoever did good, whether male or female, and he be a believer, then); *We will certainly make him live a life good and pure* (and certainly We will give them their return with the best of what they were doing). (Qur'an, 16:97) **when he said:** that means (a life of) contentment. 55

. وَ سُئِلَ ع عَنْ قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى(فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَياةً طَيِّبَةً) قَالَ: هِيَ الْقَنَاعَةُ

Hadith n. 230

230. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Be a sharer with him who has an abundant livelihood because he is more probable to get more riches and likely to secure an increase of the share therein.

230. وقال عليه السلام : شَارِكُوا الَّذِي قَدْ أَقْبَلَ عَلَيْهِ الرِّزْقُ، فَإِنَّهُ أَخْلَقُ لِلْغِنَى، وَأَجْدَرُ بِإِقْبَالِ الْحَظِّ عَلَيْهِ.

Hadith n. 231

231. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said about Allah's saying: *Verily, Allah enjoins justice* (*'adl*) *and benevolence* (*ihsan*), (Qur'an, 16:90). Here 'adl means equidistribution and ihsan means

favour.

231. وقال عليه السلام في قول الله تعالى : (إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَ الْإِحْسانِ) : الْعَدْلُ الانْصَافُ، وَالاحْسَانُ التَّفَضُّلُ

Hadith n. 232

232. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who gives with his short hand is given by a long hand.

232. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ يُعْطِ بِالْيَدِ الْقَصِيرَةِ يُعْطَ بِالْيَدِ الطَّوِيلَةِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: The meaning of this saying is that even though what a man spends in charity from his possessions may be small, yet Allah, the Sublime, gives good reward for it. And the two hands referred to, here means two favours. Thus, Amir al-mu'minin has differentiated between the favour of man and the favour of the Lord (Allah) -- exalted be the mention of His name -- since he has described the first as small and the other as big. This is because the favours of Allah are ever multiplied manifold to the favours of man since Allah's favours are the basis of all favours in the sense that every other favour springs from it and turns to it.

قال الرضى و معنى ذلك أن ما ينفقه المرء من ماله فى سبيل الخير و البر و إن كان يسيرا فإن الله تعالى يجعل الجزاء عليه عظيما كثيرا و اليدان هاهنا عبارة عن النعمتين ففرق ع بين نعمة العبد و نعمة الرب تعالى ذكره بالقصيرة و الطويلة فجعل تلك قصيرة و هذه طويلة لأن نعم الله أبدا تضعف على نعم المخلوق أضعافا كثيرة إذ كانت نعم الله أصل النعم كلها فكل نعمة إليها ترجع و منها تنزع .

Hadith n. 233

233. Amir al-mu'minin said to his son al-Hasan, peace be upon them both: Do not call out for fighting, but if you are called to it do respond, because the caller to fighting is a rebel and the rebel deserves destruction. 56

233. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام لِابْنِهِ الْحَسَنِ ع: لَا تَدْعُوَنَّ إِلَى مُبَارَزَةٍ وَ إِنْ دُعِيتَ إِلَيْهَا فَأَجِبْ فَإِنَّ الدَّاعِيَ إِلَيْهَا بَاغٍ وَ الْبَاغِيَ مَصْرُوعٌ.

Hadith n. 234

234. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The best traits of women are those which are the worst traits of men, namely: vanity, cowardice and miserliness. Thus, since the woman is vain, she will not allow anyone access to herself; since she is miserly, she will preserve her own property and the property of her husband; and since she is weak-hearted, she will be frightened with everything that befalls her.

234. وقال عليه السلام : خِيَارُ خِصَالِ النِّسَاءِ شِرَارُ خِصَالِ الرِّجَالِ: الزَّهْوُ وَالْجُبْنُ وَالْبُخْلُ، فَإِذَا كَانَتِ الْمَرْأَةُ مَزْهُوَّةً لَمْ تُمَكِّنْ مِنْ نَفْسِهَا، وَإِذَا كَانَتْ بَخِيلَةً حَفِظَتْ مَالَهَا وَمَالَ بَعْلِهَا، وَإِذَا كَانَتْ جَبَانَةً فَرِقَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ يَعْرِضُ لَهَا.

Hadith n. 235

235. It was said to Amir a'-mu'minin, peace be upon him: Describe the wise to us; **and he said:** The wise is one who places things in their proper positions. **Then, he was asked:** Describe the ignorant to us; and he said: I have already done so.

235. وقيل له عليه السلام : صف لنا العاقل. فقال عليه السلام : هُوَ الَّذِي يَضَعُ الشَّيْءَ مَوَاضِعَهُ. قيل: فصف لنا الجاهل. قال: قَدْ فَعَلْتُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: The meaning is that the ignorant is one who does not place things in their proper positions. In this way, Amir al-mu'minin's abstention from describing was a way of describing him because the attributes of the ignorant are the opposite of the wise.

قال الرضى: يعنى أن الجاهل هو الذى لا يضع الشيء مواضعه فكأن ترك صفته صفة له إذ كان بخلاف وصف العاقل .

Hadith n. 236

236. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: By Allah, this world of yours is more lowly in my view than the (left over) bone of a pig in the hand of a leper.

236. وقال عليه السلام : وَاللهِ لَدُنْيَاكُمْ هذِهِ أَهْوَنُ فِي عَيْنِي مِنْ عِرَاقِ خِنْزِيرٍ فِي يَدِ مَجْذُومٍ.

Hadith n. 237

237. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A group of people worshipped Allah out of desire for reward surely, this is the worship of traders. Another group worshipped Allah out of fear; this is the worship of slaves. Still another group worshipped Allah out of gratefulness; this is the worship of free men.

237. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ قَوْماً عَبَدُوا اللهَ رَغْبَةً فَتِلْكَ عِبَادَةُ التُّجَّارِ، وَإِنَّ قَوْماً عَبَدُوا اللهَ رَهْبَةً فَتِلْكَ عِبَادَةُ الْعَبِيدِ، وَإِنَّ قَوْماً عَبَدُوا اللهَ شُكْراً فَتِلْكَ عِبَادَةُ الأَحْرَارِ.

Hadith n. 238

238. Amir a'-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Woman is evil, all in all; and the worst of it is that one cannot do without her.

238. وقال عليه السلام : الْمَرْأَةُ شَرٌّ كُلُّهَا، وَشَرُّ مَا فِيهَا أَنَّهُ لاَ بُدَّ مِنْهَا.

Hadith n. 239

239. Amir a'-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who is a sluggard loses his rights and he who believes in the backbiter loses his friend.

239. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ أَطَاعَ التَّوَانِيَ ضَيَّعَ الْحُقُوقَ، وَمَنْ أَطَاعَ الْوَاشِيَ ضَيَّعَ الصَّدِيقَ

Hadith n. 240

240. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be. upon him, said: One ill-gotten piece of stone in a house is a guarantee for its ruin.

240. وقال عليه السلام : الْحَجَرُ الْغَصِيبُ فِي الدَّارِ رَهْنٌ عَلَى خَرَابِهَا.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: In one tradition this saying is attributed to the Prophet. It is no wonder that the two sayings should resemble each other because they are driven from the same source and dispersed through the same means.

قال الرضى و يروى هذا الكلام عن النبى (ص) و لا عجب أن يشتبه الكلامان لأن مستقاهما من قليب و مفرغهما

من ذنوب .

Hadith n. 241

241. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The day of the oppressed over the oppressor will be severer than the day of the oppressor over the oppressed. 57

241. وقال عليه السلام : يَوْمُ الْمَظْلُومِ عَلَى الظَّالِمِ أَشدُّ مِنْ يَوْمِ الظَّالِمِ عَلَى الْمَظْلُومِ.

Hadith n. 242

242. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Fear Allah to some degree (even) though it be little; and set a curtain between you and Allah (even) though it be thin.

242. وقال عليه السلام : اتَّقِ اللهَ بَعْضَ التُّقَى وَإِنْ قَلَّ، وَاجْعَلْ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ اللهِ سِتْراً وَإِنْ رَقَّ.

Hadith n. 243

243. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When replies are numerous the correct point remains obscure. 58

243. وقال عليه السلام : إِذَا ازْدَحَمَ الْجَوَابُ خَفِيَ الصَّوَابُ.

Hadith n. 244

244. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Surely in every blessing there is a right of Allah. If one discharges that right Allah increases the blessing, and if one falls short of doing so one stands in danger of losing the blessing.

244. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ لله فِي كُلِّ نِعْمَةٍ حَقّاً، فَمَنْ أَدَّاهُ زَادَهُ مِنْهَا، وَمَنْ قَصَّرَ مِنْهُ خَاطَرَ بِزَوَالِ نِعْمَتِهِ.

Hadith n. 245

245. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When capability increases, desire decreases.

245. وقال عليه السلام : إِذَا كَثُرَتِ الْمَقْدِرَةُ قَلَّتِ الشَّهْوَةُ.

Hadith n. 246

246. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Keep on guard against the slipping away of blessings because not everything that runs away comes back.

246. وقال عليه السلام : احْذَرُوا نِفَارَ النِّعَمِ فَمَا كُلُّ شَارِدٍ بِمَرْدُودٍ.

Hadith n. 247

247. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Generosity is more prompting to good than regard for kinship.

247. وقال عليه السلام : الْكَرَمُ أَعْطَفُ مِنَ الرَّحِمِ.

Hadith n. 248

248. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If a person has a good idea about you make his idea be true.

248. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ ظَنَّ بِكَ خَيْراً فَصَدِّقْ ظَنَّهُ.

Hadith n. 249

249. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The best act is that which you have to force yourself to do.

249. وقال عليه السلام : أَفْضَلُ الاْعْمَالِ مَا أَكْرَهْتَ نَفْسَكَ عَلَيْهِ.

Hadith n. 250

250. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I came to know Allah, the Glorified, through the breaking of determinations, change of intentions and losing of courage. 59

250. وقال عليه السلام : عَرَفْتُ اللهَ سُبْحَانَهُ بِفَسْخِ الْعَزَائِمِ وَحَلِّ الْعُقُودِ.

Hadith n. 251

251. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The bitterness of this world is the sweetness of the next world while the sweetness of this world is the bitterness of the next one.

251. وقال عليه السلام : مَرَارَةُ الدُّنْيَا حَلاَوَةُ الاْخِرَةِ، وَحَلاَوَةُ الدُّنْيَا مَرَارَةُ الاْخِرَةِ.

Hadith n. 252

252. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Allah has laid down iman (belief) for purification from polytheism; salat (prayer) for purification from vanity; zakat (levy) as a means of livelihood; siyam (fasting) as a trial of the people; hajj (pilgrimage to the House of Allah in Mecca) as a support for religion; jihad (fighting in the way of Allah) for the honour of Islam; persuasion for good (al-amr bi'l-ma`ruf) for the good of the common people; dissuasion from evil (an-nahy 'ani'l-munkar) for the control of the mischievous; regard for kinship for increase of number; revenge for stoppage of bloodshed; the award of penalties for the realization of importance of the prohibitions; the abstinence from drinking wine for protection of the wit; the avoidance of theft for inculcating chastity; abstinence from adultery for safeguarding descent; abstinence from sodomy for increase of progeny; tendering evidence for furnishing proof against contentions; abstinence from the lie for increasing esteem for truth; maintenance of peace (salam) for protection from danger; imamah or Imamate (Divine Leadership) for the orderliness of the community and obedience (to Imams) as a mark of respect to the Imamate. 60

252. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: فَرَضَ اللَّهُ الْإِيمَانَ تَطْهِيراً مِنَ الشِّرْكِ وَ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْزِيهاً عَنِ الْكِبْرِ وَ الزَّكَاةَ تَسْبِيباً لِلرِّزْقِ وَ الصِّيَامَ ابْتِلَاءً لِإِخْلَاصِ الْخَلْقِ وَ الْحَجَّ تَقْرِبَةً لِلدِّينِ وَ الْجِهَادَ عِزّاً لِلْإِسْلَامِ وَ الْأَمْرَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ مَصْلَحَةً لِلْعَوَامِّ وَ النَّهْيَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ رَدْعاً لِلسُّفَهَاءِ وَ صِلَةَ الرَّحِمِ مَنْمَاةً لِلْعَدَدِ وَ الْقِصَاصَ حَقْناً لِلدِّمَاءِ وَ إِقَامَةَ الْحُدُودِ إِعْظَاماً لِلْمَحَارِمِ وَ تَرْكَ شُرْبِ الْخَمْرِ تَحْصِيناً لِلْعَقْلِ وَ مُجَانَبَةَ السَّرِقَةِ إِيجَاباً لِلْعِفَّةِ وَ تَرْكَ الزِّنَى تَحْصِيناً لِلنَّسَبِ وَ تَرْكَ اللِّوَاطِ تَكْثِيراً لِلنَّسْلِ وَ الشَّهَادَاتِ اسْتِظْهَاراً عَلَى الْمُجَاحَدَاتِ وَ تَرْكَ الْكَذِبِ تَشْرِيفاً لِلصِّدْقِ وَ السَّلَامَ أَمَاناً مِنَ الْمَخَاوِفِ وَ الْأَمَانَةَ نِظَاماً لِلْأُمَّةِ وَ الطَّاعَةَ تَعْظِيماً لِلْإِمَامَةِ .

Hadith n. 253

253. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, used to say: If you want an oppressor to take an oath ask him to swear like this that he is out of Allah's might and His power, because if he swears falsely in this way he will be quickly punished, while if he swears by Allah Who is such that there is no god but He, he will not be quickly punished since he is expressing the Unity of Allah, the Sublime. 61ciii

253. وَ كَانَ عليه السلام يَقُولُ: أَحْلِفُوا الظَّالِمَ إِذَا أَرَدْتُمْ يَمِينَهُ بِأَنَّهُ بَرِيءٌ مِنْ حَوْلِ اللَّهِ وَ قُوَّتِهِ فَإِنَّهُ إِذَا حَلَفَ بِهَا كَاذِباً عُوجِلَ الْعُقُوبَةَ وَ إِذَا حَلَفَ بِاللَّهِ الَّذِی لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ لَمْ يُعَاجَلْ لِأَنَّهُ قَدْ وَحَّدَ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى .

Hadith n. 254

254. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O son of Adam, be your own representative in the matter of your property and do about it whatever you want to be done with it after your death. 62

254. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ كُنْ وَصِيَّ نَفْسِكَ فِی مَالِكَ وَ اعْمَلْ فِيهِ مَا تُؤْثِرُ أَنْ يُعْمَلَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِكَ .

Hadith n. 255

255. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Anger is a kind of madness because the victim to it repents afterwards. If he does not repent his madness is confirmed.

255. وقال عليه السلام : الْحِدَّةُ ضَرْبٌ مِنَ الْجُنُونِ، لِانَّ صَاحِبَهَا يَنْدَمُ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَنْدَمْ فَجُنُونُهُ مُسْتَحْكِمٌ.

Hadith n. 256

256. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Health of body comes from paucity of envy. 63

256. وقال عليه السلام : صِحَّةُ الْجَسَدِ مِنْ قِلَّةِ الْحَسَدِ.

Hadith n. 257

257. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to Kumayl ibn Ziyad an-Nakha'i: O Kumayl, direct your people to go out in the day to achieve noble traits and to go out in the night to meet the needs of those who might be sleeping, for I swear by Him Whose hearing extends to all voices if ever someone pleases another's heart, Allah will create a special thing out of this pleasing so that whenever any hardship befalls him it will come running like flowing water and drive away the hardship as wild camels are driven away.

257. وقال عليه السلام لِكُمَيْل بن زياد النخعي: يَا كُمَيْلُ، مُرْ أَهْلَكَ أَنْ يَرُوحُوا فِي كَسْبِ الْمَكَارِمِ، وَيُدْلِجُوافِي حَاجَةِ مَنْ هُوَ نائِمٌ، فَوَالَّذِي وَسِعَ سَمْعُهُ الاصْوَاتَ مَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ أَوْدَعَ قَلْباً سُرُوراً إِلاَّ وَخَلَقَ اللهُ لَهُ مِنْ ذلِكَ السُّرُورِ لُطْفاً، فَإِذَا نَزَلَتْ بِهِ نَائِبَةٌجَرَى إِلَيْهَا كَالْمَاءِ فِي انْحِدَارِهِ حَتَّى يَطْرُدَهَا عَنْهُ كَمَا تُطْرَدُ غَرِيبَةُ الابِلِ.

Hadith n. 258

258. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When you fall into destitution, trade with Allah through charity.

258. وقال عليه السلام : إِذَا أَمْلَقْتُمْ فَتَاجِرِوا اللهَ بِالصَّدَقَةِ.

Hadith n. 259

259. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Faithfulness with faithless people is faithlessness with Allah, while faithlessness with faithless people is faithfulness with Allah.

259. وقال عليه السلام : الْوَفَاءُ لِاهْلِ الْغَدْرِ غَدْرٌ عِنْدَ اللهِ، وَالْغَدْرُ بَأَهْلِ الْغَدْرِ وَفَاءٌ عِنْدَ اللهِ.

Hadith n. 260

260. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There is many a man being gradually brought towards punishment by good treatment with him; many a man who remains in deceit because his evils are covered; and many a man who is in illusion because of good talk about him, while there is no greater ordeal by Allah, the Glorified, than the giving of time.

260. وقال عليه السلام : كَمْ مِنْ مُسْتَدْرَجٍ بِالاْحْسَانِ إِلَيْهِ، وَمَغْرُورٍ بِالسَّتْرِ عَلَيْهِ، وَمَفْتُونٍ بِحُسْنِ الْقَوْلِ فِيهِ،مَا ابْتَلَى اللهُ سُبْحَانَهُ أَحَداً بِمِثْلِ الاْمْلاَءِ لَهُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This saying has appeared earlier as well but here it contains a beautiful and useful addition.

قال الرضي: و قد مَضى هذا الكلام فيما تقدم، إلاّ أن فيه هاهنا زيادة مفيدة

*****

Section Wherein We Have Included Selections From Wonderful Sayings Of Amir Al-Mu'minin, Peace Be Upon Him, Which

Require Explanation

فصل نذكر فيه شيئاً من غريب كلامه، عليه السلام،

المحتاج الى التفسير

I. A tradition related from Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, says: When the situation is like this, then the head of the religion will rise and people will gather around him as pieces of rainless cloud collect during autumn.

I. في حديثه عليه السلام : فَإِذَا كَانَ ذلِكَ ضَرَبَ يَعْسُوبُ الدِّينِ بِذَنَبِهِ، فَيَجْتَمِعُونَ إِلَيْهِ كَمَا يَجْتَمِعُ قَزَعُ الْخَرِيفِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: "Ya'sub" 64 is the great chief who is in charge of the people's affairs, and "quza`" means the pieces of cloud which have no rain.

قال الرضي: يعسوب الدين: السيد العظيم المالك لاَمور الناس يومئذ، والقزع: قطع الغيم التي لا ماء فيها.

II. A tradition of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, says: He is a versatile speaker. 65

II. وفي حديثه عليه السلام : هذَا الْخَطِيبُ الشَّحْشَحُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: "shahshah" means one expert and free in speech, and every one who is free in speech or walking is called "shahshah", while in another sense this word means a miserly and niggardly person.

يريد: الماهر بالخطبة الماضي فيها، وكل ماض في كلام أو سير فهو شحشح، والشحشح في غير هذاالموضع: البخيل الممسك

III. A tradition from Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, says: Quarrels bring about ruin.

III. وفي حديثه عليه السلام : إِنَّ لِلْخُصُومَةِ قُحَماً.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: "quhm" means ruin because quarrels often drive men into ruin and grief. In the same way, it is said "quhmatu'l-A 'rab" which means the period (of drought) when the cattle owned

by the nomad desert Arabs are reduced to bones, and this is their being driven to it. Another argument is also advanced in this matter; namely that the situation drives them to green areas, in other words the hardship of the desert life drives them to hadar (a civilized region with town and villages and a settled population [as opposed to desert]).

يريد بالقحم المهالك، لاَنها تُقِحمُ أصحابَها في المهالك والمتالف في الاَكثر، ومن ذلك قُحْمَةُ الاَعراب،هو أن تصيبهم السَّنةُ فتتعرّق أموالهم فذلك تقحّمها فيهم. و قيل فيه وجهٌ آخر: وهو أنها تُقْحِمُهُمْ بلادَ الريف، أي تحوجهم إلى دخول الحضر عند مُحول البَدْوِ.

IV. A tradition of Amir al-mu'niinin, peace be upon him, says: When girls reach the stage of (realizing) realities, relations on the father's side are preferable.

IV. وفي حديثه عليه السلام : إِذَا بَلَغَ النِّسَاءُ نَصَّ الْحِقَاقِ فَالْعَصَبَةُ أَوْلَى.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Instead of "nassa'l-hiqaq "the combination "nassa'l-haqa'iq" has also been related. "nass" means the last end of things or their remotest limit, such as "an-nassi fi's sayr" means the maximum a beast can walk. Or you say "nasastu'r-rajula 'ani'l-amri" when you have questioned a man to the extreme to make him utter all he has. Thus, "nassu'l-haqa'iq" means prudence because it is the last limit of childhood and is the time when a child crosses childhood into majority, and this is a very eloquent reference to the point, and strange too. Amir al-mu'minin intends to say: When girls reach this stage their relations on father's side have a better right than their mother, provided they are those with whom marriage is prohibited like brothers and uncles, to arrange for their marriages if they so desire. "al-hiqaq" also means the quarrelling of the mother with a girl's paternal relations. This quarrel is that everyone of them says he has a better 'right for her. That is why it is said "haqatuhu hiqaqan" on the lines of "jadaltuhu jidalan". It has also been said that "nassu'l-hiqaq" means acquiring understanding and this is prudence, because Amir al-mu'minin refers to the stage when rights and duties become applicable. The person who has related the word as "haqa'iq" intends to signify the plural of "haqiqah" (reality).

قال: ويروى (نص الحقائق)، والنص منتهى الأشياء ومبلغ أقصاها كالنص في السير لأنه أقصى ما تقدر عليه الدابة، ويقال نصصت الرجل عن الامر إذا استقصيت مسألته لتستخرج ما عنده فيه، ونص الحقائق يريد به الادراك، لأنه منتهى الصغر، والوقت الذي يخرج منه الصغير إلى حد الكبر، وهو من أفصح الكنايات عن هذا الامر وأغربها، يقول فإذا بلغ النساء ذلك فالعصبة أولى بالمرأة من أمها إذا كانوا محرما مثل الاخوة والأعمام، وبتزويجها إن أرادوا ذلك.

والحقاق: محاقة الام للعصبة في المرأة، وهو الجدال، والخصومة، وقول كل واحد منهما للآخر: أنا أحق منك بهذا، يقال منه: حاققته حقاقا، مثل جادلته جدالا. قال: وقد قيل إن نص الحقاق بلوغ العقل وهو الادراك، لأنه عليه السلام إنما أراد منتهى الامر الذي تجب به الحقوق والاحكام. قال: ومن رواه (نص الحقائق) فإنما أراد جمع حقيقة،

The above is what Abu 'Ubayd al-Qasim ibn Sallam has stated (in Gharib al-hadith, vol.3, pp.456 -458); but I think that the intention here by the word "nassu'l-hiqaq " is a girl's reaching the stage when it is possible to marry her and to allow her to dispose of her rights herself on the analogy of "bil hiqaqi mina '1-ibili" (a camel's attaining majority) wherein "hiqaq is the plural of "hiqqah" or "hiqq " and it means completion of three years (of age) and entry into the fourth, which is the time when it reaches the age when it is possible to ride on its back and to exert it in walking. "haqa'iq" too is the plural of "hiqqah". Thus, both the versions point to the same meaning, and this interpretation is more in keeping with the way of the Arabs than the other one stated earlier.

هذا معنى ما ذكره أبو عبيد القاسم بن سلام. قال: والذي عندي أن المراد بنص الحقاق هاهنا بلوغ المرأة إلى الحد الذي يجوز فيه تزويجها وتصرفها في حقوقها، تشبيها بالحقاق من الإبل، وهي جمع حقة وحق، وهو الذي استكمل ثلاث سنين ودخل في الرابعة، وعند ذلك يبلغ إلى الحد الذي يمكن فيه من ركوب ظهره ونصه في سيره، والحقائق أيضا: جمع حقة، فالروايتان جميعا ترجعان إلى مسمى واحد، وهذا أشبه بطريقة العرب من المعنى المذكور أولا.

V. A tradition of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, says: Faith produces a "lumzah" in the heart. As faith develops, the "lumzah" also increases.

V. وفي حديثه عليه السلام : إنَّ الاْيمَانَ يَبْدُو لُمْظَةً فِي الْقَلْبِ، كُلَّمَا ازْدَاد الاْيمَانُ ازْدَادَتِ الُّلمْظَةُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: "lumzah" is a white spot or something like that. On that analogy if a horse has a white spot on its lower lip it is called "farusun almaz", that is, a white-spotted horse.

الُّلمْظَةُ مثل النكتة أو نحوها من البياض، ومنه قيل فرس ألمظ: إذا كان بجحفلته شيء من البياض.

VI. A tradition of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him) says: If a man has a "ad-daynu'z-zanun" (i.e. doubtful loan) it is his duty to pay zakat thereon for all the past years when he recovers it.

VI. وفي حديثه عليه السلام : إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ إِذَا كَانَ لَهُ الدَّيْنُ الظَّنُونُ يَجِبُ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يُزَكِّيَهُ لِمَا مَضَى إِذَا قَبَضَهُ.

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: "az-zanun" is the loan about which the lender does not know whether he will be able to recover it from the borrower. He is like the one who hopes as well as loses hope. This is the most eloquent way of expression. In this way everything about which you do not know where you stand would be zanun. In the same strain poet al-A' sha (Maymun ibn Qays al-Wa'ili [d. 7/629])says:

The az-zanun well (i.e., the one that may or may not have water) which is also deprived of the rain of the raining clouds cannot be compared to the Euphrates whose waves are rising high and which is pushing away the boat as well as the adept swimmer.

"Judd" means the well (situated in a wilderness), while zanun is that about which it is not known whether or not it has water.

فالظَّنُونُ: الذي لايَعْلَمُ صاحبُهُ أيقبضُه من الذي هو عليه أم لا، فكأنّه الذي يُظَنُّ به، فمرة يرجوه و مرة لا يرجوه. و هو من أفصح الكلام، وكذلك كلّ أمرٍ تطلبه ولا تدري على أي شيء أنت منه فهو ظَنون،

وعلى ذلك قول الأَعشى:

مَا يُجْعَلُ الْجُدُّ الظَّنُونُ الَّذِي * جُنِّبَ صَوْبَ اللَّجِبِ الْمَاطِرِ

مِثْلَ الْفُرَاتِيِّ إِذَا مَا طَمَا * يَقْذِفُ بِالْبُوصِيِّ وَالْمَاهِرِ

والجُدّ: البئر، والظنون: التي لا يُدرى هل فيها ماء أم لا.

VII. A tradition of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, relates that he arranged a force for advancing for jihad and said: i'dhibu (turn away) from women so far as you can.

VII. وفي حديثه عليه السلام أَنه شيّع جيشاً يغْزِيهِ فقال: اعْذِبُواعَنِ النِّسَاءِ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: It (i'dhibu) means that "keep off" from thoughts of women and from clinging your heart to them, and do not have union with them; because all this produces weakness in enthusiasm, affects the firmness of determination, weakens against the enemy and prevents from exerting in fighting. Whatever prevents from something is called " 'adhaba 'anhu" i.e., turned away from it. Thus, "al-'adhib" and "al-'adhub" mean one who gives up eating and drinking.

و معناه: اصدِفوا عن ذكر النساء وشُغُلِ القلب بهن، وامتنعُوا من المقاربة لهنّ، لأَن ذلك يَفُتُّ في عضُد الحميّة، ويقدح في معاقد العزيمة ويكسِر عن العَدْوِ، وَيلفِتُ عن الإبعاد في الغزو، وكلُّ من امتنع من شيء فقد أَعْذَبَ عنه، والعاذبُ والعَذُوب: الممتنع من الأَكل والشرب.

VIII. A tradition of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, says: Like the successful shooter (al-yasir al-falij) who looks forward to achieving success at his first shot.

VIII. وفي حديثه عليه السلام : كَالْيَاسِرِ الْفَالِجِ يَنْتَظِرُ أَوَّلَ فَوْزَةٍ مِنْ قِدَاحِهِ..

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: "al-ya~sirun' (pl. of al-yasir) means those who shoot with arrows on the slaughtered camel by way of gambling; while "al-falij" means successful or victorious. For example, it is said: 'falaja 'alayhim" or 'falajahum" (that is, he got victory over them or overpowered them). A poet has said by way of war recital:

When I noticed a successful person securing victory.

قال: الياسرون هم الذين يتضاربون بالقداح على الجزور، والفالج: القاهر الغالب، يقال: قد فلج عليهم وفلجهم، قال الراجز:

* لما رأيت فالجا قد فلجا *

IX. A tradition of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, runs: When the crisis became red-hot we sought refuge with the Messenger of Allah (peace-be upon him and his descendants), arid none of us was closer to the enemy than he himself.

IX. وفي حديثه عليه السلام : كُنَّا إِذَا احْمَرَّ الْبَأْسُ اتَّقَيْنَا بِرَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وآله ، فَلَمْ يَكُنْ أَحَدٌ مِنَّا أَقْرَبَ إِلَى الْعَدُوِّ مِنْهُ.

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This means that when fear of the enemy increased and fighting became serious, the Muslims would begin to think that since the Messenger of Allah had taken up fighting himself, Allah must give them victory through him and that therefore they would be safe from all the dangers because of his existence.

ومعنى ذلك: أنه إذا عَظُم الخوفُ من العدو واشتد عِضَاضُ الحربِ فَزِعَ المسلمون إلى قتال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله بنفسه، فيُنزِلُ الله تعالى النصر عليهم، ويأمنون ما كانوا يخافونه بمكانه.

And the words "idha'hmarra'l-ba'su" (when the crisis became red-hot) refers to the seriousness of the matter. For this purpose several expressions have been used out of which this is the best one, since Amir al-mu'minin has likened war with fire which combines heat and redness both in action as well as colour. This is confirmed by the words of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his descendants) when on the day of Hunayn he noticed people of Hawazin (tribe) fighting he said, "Now ‘watis’ has heated up" and ‘watis’ is the place where fire is lighted. In this way, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his descendants) likened the seriousness of fighting by men to the seriousness of the fire and its flames.

وقوله: (إذا احمر البأس): كناية عن اشتداد الامر، وقد قيل في ذلك أقوال، أحسنها أنه شبه حمى الحرب بالنار التي تجمع الحرارة والحمرة بفعلها ولونها، ومما يقوى ذلك قول الرسول صلى الله عليه وآله وقد رأى مجتلد الناس يوم حنين وهي حرب هوازن: (الان حمى الوطيس)، والوطيس: مستوقد النار، فشبه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله ما استحر من جلاد القوم باحتدام النار وشدة التهابها.

This section ends and we return to the original theme of the chapter.

انقضى هذا الفصل، ثم رجعنا إلى سنن الغرض الأول في هذا الباب.

*****

Hadith n. 261

261. When the news of the attack of Mu'awiyah's men on al-Anbar reached Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, he himself came out walking till he reached an-Nukhaylah, where people overtook him and said: "O' Amir al-mu'minin, we are enough for them**," then he said:**

261. وقال عليه السلام لما بلغه إغارةُ أصحاب معاويةَ على الأنبار، فخرج بنفسه ماشياً حتى أتى النُّخَيْلَةَ فأدركه الناسُ وقالوا: يا أميرالمؤمنين نحن نكفيكَهُمْ. فقال عليه السلام :

You cannot be enough for me against yourselves, so how can you be enough for me against others? Before me the people used to complain of the oppression of their rulers but now I have to complain of the wrongful actions of my people; as though I am led by them and they are the leaders or that I am the subject and they are the rulers.

وَاللهِ مَا تَكْفُونَنِي أَنْفُسَكُمْ، فَكَيْفَ تَكْفُونَنِي غَيْرَكُمْ؟ إِنْ كَانَتِ الرَّعَايَا قَبْلِي لَتَشْكُوا حَيْفَ رُعَاتِهَا، وَإِنَّنِي الْيَوْمَ لاَشْكُو حَيْفَ رَعِيَّتِي، كَأَنَّنِيَ الْمَقُودُوَهُمُ الْقَادَةُ، أَوِ الْمَوْزُوعُ وَهُمُ الْوَزَعَةُ.

The narrator says: When Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, uttered this during his long speech which we have included in the collection of sermons (No.27), two men from his companions advanced towards him and one of them said: *I rule no one except myself and my brother* (Qur'an, 5:25). So, order us with your command, O Amir al-mu'minin and we will accomplish it. **Thereupon, Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said:** How can you two accomplish what I aim at?

فلما قال عليه السلام هذا القول، في كلامٍ طويلٍ قد ذكرنا مختارَه في جملةِ الخُطَب، تقدّم إليه رجلان من أصحابه فقال أحدهما: إنّي لا أملك إلاّ نفسي وأخي، فَمُرْنا بأمرك يا أميرالمؤمنين نُنْفِذ له. فقال عليه السلام : وأَيْنَ تَقَعَانِ مِمَّا أُرِيدُ؟

Hadith n. 262

262- It is said that al-Harith ibn Hawt came to Amir al-mu'minin, and said: Do you believe I can ever imagine that the people of Jamal were in the wrong? **Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said:** O al-Harith! You have seen below yourself but not above yourself, and so you have been confused. Certainly, you have not known right, so that you can recognize the righteous. And you have not known wrong, so that you can recognize the people of wrong! **Then al-Harith said:** In that case, I shall withdraw along with Sa'd ibn Malik and 'Abdullah: ibn 'Umar; **whereupon Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said:** Verily, Sa'd and 'Umar have neither sided with Right nor forsaken Wrong. 66

262. وقيل: إنّ الحارث بن حَوْطٍ أتاه عليه السلام فقال: أتُراني أظنّ أصحابَ الجمل كانوا على ضلالة؟ فقال عليه السلام : يَا حَارِثِ، إِنَّكَ نَظَرْتَ تَحْتَكَ وَلَمْ تَنْظُرْ فَوْقَكَ فَحِرْتَ إِنَّكَ لَمْ تَعْرِفِ الْحَقَّ فَتَعْرِفَ مَنْ أَتَاهُ، وَلَمْ تَعْرِفِ الْبَاطِلَ فَتَعْرِفَ مَنْ أَتَاهُ. فقال الحارث: فإنّي أعتزل مع سعيد بن مالك وعبد الله بن عمر. فقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ سَعِيداً وَعَبْدَ اللهِ بْنَ عُمَرَ لَمْ يَنْصُرَا الْحَقَّ، وَلَمْ يَخْذُلاَ الْبَاطِلَ.

Hadith n. 263

263- Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The holder of authority is like the rider on a lion – he is envied for his position but he well knows his position. 67

263. وقال عليه السلام : صَاحِبُ السُّلْطَانِ كَرَاكِبِ الأَسَدِ : يُغْبَطُ بِمَوْقِعِهِ، وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَوْضِعِهِ.

Hadith n. 264

264. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do good with the bereaved ones of others so that good is done to your bereaved ones also.

264. وقال عليه السلام : أَحْسِنُوا فِي عَقِبِ غَيْرِكُمْ تُحْفَظُوا فِي عَقِبِكُمْ.

Hadith n. 265

265. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When the utterance of the wise is to the point it serves as a cure, but if it is wrong it proves like an illness. 68

265. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ كَلاَمَ الْحُكَمَاءِ إِذَا كَانَ صَوَاباً كَانَ دَوَاءً، وَإِذَا كَانَ خَطَأً كَانَ دَاءً.

Hadith n. 266

266. Someone asked Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, to define faith for him, so he said: Come to me tomorrow so that I enlighten you in the presence of all the people, so that if you forget what I say others might retain it, because an utterance is like a fluttering prey which may be grappled with by someone but missed by others.

266. وسأَله عليه السلام رجل أَن يعرّفه ما الإيمان. فقال: إِذَا كَانَ غَدٌ فَأْتِنِي حَتَّى أُخْبِرَكَ عَلَى أَسْمَاعِ النَّاسِ، فإِنْ نَسِيتَ مَقَالَتِي حَفِظَهَا عَلَيْكَ غَيْرُكَ، فَإِنَّ الْكَلاَمَ كَالشَّارِدَةِ، يَنْقُفُهَاهذَا وَيُخْطِئُهَاهذَا.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: We have already stated in the earlier chapter what Amir al-mu'minin replied to this man, namely his saying (no.31) "Faith stands on four supports."

وقد ذكرنا ما أجابه به عليه السلام فيما تقدم من هذا الباب، وهو قوله: الإيمان على أربع شعب.

Hadith n. 267

267. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O son of Adam, do not inflict the worry of the day that has not yet come on the day which has already come, because if that day be in your life Allah will bestow its livelihood also.

267. وقال عليه السلام : يَابْنَ آدَمَ، لاَ تَحْمِلْ هَمَّ يَوْمِكَ الَّذِي لَمْ يَأْتِكَ عَلَى يَوْمِكَ الَّذِي قَدْ أَتَاكَ، فَإِنَّهُ إِنْ يَكُ مِنْ عُمُرِكَ يَأْتِ اللهُ فِيهِ بِرِزْقِكَ.

Hadith n. 268

268. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Have love for your friend up to a limit, for it is possible that he may turn into your enemy some day; and hate your enemy up to a limit for it is possible that he may turn into your friend some day.

268. وقال عليه السلام : أَحْبِبْ حَبِيبَكَ هَوْناً مَا عَسَى أَنْ يَكُونَ بَغِيضَكَ يَوْماً مَا، وَأَبْغِضْ بَغِيضَكَ هَوْناً مَا عَسَى أَنْ يَكُونَ حَبِيبَكَ يَوْماً مَا.

Hadith n. 269

269. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There are two kinds of workers in the world. One is

a person who works in this world for this world and his work of this world keeps him unmindful of the next world. He is afraid of destitution for those he will leave behind but feels himself safe about it. So, he spends his life after the good of others. The other is one who works in this world for what is to come hereafter, and he secures his share of this world without effort. Thus, he gets both the benefits together and becomes the owner of both the houses together. In this way, he is prestigious before Allah. If he asks Allah anything He does not deny him.

269. وقال عليه السلام : النَّاسُ فِي الدُّنْيَا عَامِلاَنِ: عَامِلٌ عَمِلَ فِي الدُّنْيَا لِلدُّنْيَا، قَدْ شَغَلَتْهُ دُنْيَاهُ عَنْ آخِرَتِهِ، يَخْشَى عَلَى مَنْ يَخْلُفُهُ الْفَقْرَ، وَيأْمَنُهُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ، فَيُفْنِي عُمُرَهُ فِي مَنْفَعَةِ غَيْرِهِ. وَعَامِلٌ عَمِلَ فِي الدُّنْيَا لِمَا بَعْدَهَا، فَجَاءَهُ الَّذِي لَهُ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا بِغَيْرِ عَمَلٍ، فَأَحْرَزَ الْحَظَّيْنِ مَعاً، وَمَلَكَ الدَّارَيْنِ جَمِيعاً، فَأَصْبَحَ وَجِيهاً عِنْدَاللهِ، لاَ يَسْأَلُ اللهَ حَاجَةً فَيَمْنَعَهُ.

Hadith n. 270

270. It is related that during the days of (Caliph) 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, the question of the excess of the ornaments of the Ka'bah was mentioned to him and some people suggested: If you prepare with it an army of Muslims that will be a matter of great reward; and what would the Ka'bah do with the ornaments? **'Umar thought of doing so but asked Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, who said:**

270. وروي أنه ذكر عند عمر بن الخطاب في أيامه حَلْي الكعبةِ وكثرتُهُ، فقال قوم: لو أخذته فجهزتَ به جيوش المسلمين كان أَعظم للاَجر، وما تصنع الكعبةُ بالْحَلْي؟ فهمّ عمر بذلك، وسأل عنه أميرالمؤمنين عليه السلام .

When the Qur'an was descended on the Prophet, peace be upon him and his descendants, there were four kinds of property. One, the property of Muslim individuals which he distributed among the successors according to fixed shares. Second, the tax (fay') which he distributed to those for whom it was meant. Third, the one-fifth (khums) levy for which Allah had fixed the ways of disposal. Fourth, amounts of charity (sadaqat) whose disposal was also fixed by Allah. The ornaments of Ka'bah did exist in those days but Allah left them as they were, but did not leave them by omission, nor were they unknown to Him. Therefore, you retain them where Allah and His Prophet placed them.

فقال: إِنَّ القُرْآنَ أُنْزِلَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وآله وَالاَمْوَالُ أَرْبَعَةٌ: أَمْوَالُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فَقَسَّمَهَا بَيْنَ الْوَرَثَةِ فِي الْفَرَائِضِ، وَالْفَيْءُ فَقَسَّمَهُ عَلَى مُسْتَحِقِّيهِ، وَالْخُمُسُ فَوَضَعَهُ اللهُ حَيْثُ وَضَعَهُ، وَالصَّدَقَاتُ فَجَعَلَهَا اللهُ حَيْثُ جَعَلَهَا. وَكَانَ حَلْيُ الْكَعْبَةِ فِيهَا يَوْمَئِذٍ، فَتَرَكَهُ اللهُ عَلَى حَالِهِ، وَلَمْ يَتْرُكْهُ نِسْيَاناً، وَلَمْ يَخْفَ عَلَيْهِ مَكَاناً، فَأَقِرَّهُ حَيْثُ أَقَرَّهُ اللهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.

Thereupon, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab said: If you had not been here we would have been humiliated; **and he left the ornaments as they were**. 69

فقال له عمر: لولاك لافتضحنا. وترك الحَلْي بحاله.

Hadith n. 271

271. It is related that two persons were brought to Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him. They had committed theft of public property. One of them was a slave purchased from public money and the other had been purchased by someone among the people. Then Amir al-mu'minin said: As for this one who is the property of public money, there is no punishment for him for it means one property of Allah having taken another property of Allah. As for the other, he should get the punishment. **Consequently, his hand was cut.**

271. وروي أنه عليه السلام رُفع إليه رجلان سرقا من مال الله، أحدهما عبد من مال الله، والآخر من عُرُوضِ الناس. فقال عليه السلام : أَمَّا هذَا فَهُوَ مِنْ مَالِ اللهِ وَلاَ حَدَّ عَلَيْهِ، مَالُ اللهِ أَكَلَ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضاً، وَأَمَّا الاْخَرُ فَعَلَيْهِ الْحَدُّ، فقطع يده.

Hadith n. 272

272. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If my steps acquire firmness out of these slippery places, I will alter several things. 70

272. وقال عليه السلام : لَوْ قَدِ اسْتَوَتْ قَدَمَايَ مِنْ هذِهِ الْمَدَاحِضِ لَغَيَّرْتُ أَشْيَاءَ.

Hadith n. 273

273. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Know with full conviction that Allah has not fixed for any person more livelihood than what has been ordained in the Book of Destiny, even though his means (of seeking it) may be great, his craving for it intense and his efforts for it acute; nor does the weakness of a person or the paucity of his means stand in the way between what is ordained in the Book of Destiny and himself. He who realizes it and acts upon it is the best of them all in point of comfort and benefit; while he who disregards it arid doubts it exceeds all men in disadvantages. Very often a favoured person is being slowly driven (towards punishment) through those favours; and very often an afflicted person is being done good through his affliction. Therefore, O listener, increase your gratefulness, lessen your haste and stay within the bounds of your livelihood.

273. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: اعْلَمُوا عِلْماً يَقِيناً أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يَجْعَلْ لِلْعَبْدِ وَ إِنْ عَظُمَتْ حِيلَتُهُ وَ اشْتَدَّتْ طَلَبَتُهُ وَ قَوِيَتْ مَكِيدَتُهُ أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا سُمِّيَ لَهُ فِي الذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ وَ لَمْ يَحُلْ بَيْنَ الْعَبْدِ فِي ضَعْفِهِ وَ قِلَّةِ حِيلَتِهِ وَ بَيْنَ أَنْ يَبْلُغَ مَا سُمِّيَ لَهُ فِي الذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ وَ الْعَارِفُ لِهَذَا الْعَامِلُ بِهِ أَعْظَمُ النَّاسِ رَاحَةً فِي مَنْفَعَةٍ وَ التَّارِكُ لَهُ الشَّاكُّ فِيهِ أَعْظَمُ النَّاسِ شُغُلًا فِي

مَضَرَّةٍ وَ رُبَّ مُنْعَمٍ عَلَيْهِ مُسْتَدْرَجٌ بِالنُّعْمَى وَ رُبَّ مُبْتَلًى مَصْنُوعٌ لَهُ بِالْبَلْوَى فَزِدْ أَيُّهَا الْمُسْتَنْفِعُ فِى شُكْرِكَ وَ قَصِّرْ مِنْ عَجَلَتِكَ وَ قِفْ عِنْدَ مُنْتَهَى رِزْقِكَ .

Hadith n. 274

274. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do not turn your knowledge into ignorance or your conviction into doubt. When you gain knowledge act (upon it) and when you acquire conviction proceed (on its basis) .71

274. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: لَا تَجْعَلُوا عِلْمَكُمْ جَهْلًا وَ يَقِينَكُمْ شَكّاً إِذَا عَلِمْتُمْ فَاعْمَلُوا وَ إِذَا تَيَقَّنْتُمْ فَأَقْدِمُوا .

Hadith n. 275

275. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Greed takes a person to the watering place but gets him back without letting him drink. It undertakes responsibility but does not fulfil it. Often the drinker gets choked before the quenching of his thirst. The greater the worth of a thing yearned for the greater is the grief for its loss. Desires blind the eyes of understanding. The destined share will reach him who does not approach it.

275. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: إِنَّ الطَّمَعَ مُورِدٌ غَيْرُ مُصْدِرٍ وَ ضَامِنٌ غَيْرُ وَفِيٍّ وَ رُبَّمَا شَرِقَ شَارِبُ الْمَاءِ قَبْلَ رِيِّهِ وَ كُلَّمَا عَظُمَ قَدْرُ الشَّيْءِ الْمُتَنَافَسِ فِيهِ عَظُمَتِ الرَّزِيَّةُ لِفَقْدِهِ وَ الْأَمَانِيُّ تُعْمِى أَعْيُنَ الْبَصَائِرِ وَ الْحَظُّ يَأْتِى مَنْ لَا يَأْتِيهِ .

Hadith n. 276

276. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O My God, I seek Your protection from this that I may appear to be good in the eyes of the people whilst my inward self may be sinful before You, and that I may guard myself (from sins) only for show before the people although You are aware of all about me. Thus, I appear before the people in good shape although my evil deeds are placed before You. This means achieving nearness to Your creatures but remoteness from Your pleasure.

276. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّى أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ أَنْ تُحَسِّنَ فِى لَامِعَةِ الْعُيُونِ عَلَانِيَتِى وَ تُقَبِّحَ فِيمَا أُبْطِنُ لَكَ سَرِيرَتِى مُحَافِظاً عَلَى رِثَاءِ النَّاسِ مِنْ نَفْسِى بِجَمِيعِ مَا أَنْتَ مُطَّلِعٌ عَلَيْهِ مِنِّى فَأُبْدِيَ لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنَ ظَاهِرِى وَ أُفْضِيَ إِلَيْكَ بِسُوءِ عَمَلِى تَقَرُّباً إِلَى عِبَادِكَ وَ تَبَاعُداً مِنْ مَرْضَاتِكَ .

Hadith n. 277

277. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I swear by Him Who let us pass the dark night after which there was a bright day that such and such 72 did not happen.

277. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ وَالَّذِي أَمْسَيْنَا مِنْهُ فِي غُبْرِ لَيْلَةٍ دَهْمَاءَ تَكْشِرُعَنْ يَوْمٍ أَغَرَّ مَا كَان كَذَاكَذا.

Hadith n. 278

278. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A small action which is continued with regularity is more beneficial than a long one performed with disgust.

278. وقال عليه السلام : قَلِيلٌ تَدُومُ عَلَيْهِ أَرْجَى مِنْ كَثِيرٍ مَمْلُولٍ.

Hadith n. 279

279. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When optional issues stand in the way of obligatories, abandon them.

279. وقال عليه السلام : إذَا أَضَرَّتِ النَّوَافِلُ بالْفَرَائِضِ فَارْفُضُوهَا.

Hadith n. 280

280. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever keeps in view the distance of the journey remains prepared.

280. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ تَذَكَّرَ بُعْدَ السَّفَرِ اسْتَعَدَّ.

Hadith n. 281

281. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Perception by the eyes is not real observation because the eyes sometimes deceive people; but wisdom does not deceive whomsoever it counsels.

281. وقال عليه السلام : لَيْسَتِ الرَّوِيَّةُ كَالْمُعَايَنَةِ مَعَ الاَبْصَارِ، فَقَدْ تَكْذِبُ الْعُيُونُ أَهْلَهَا، وَلاَ يَغُشُّ الْعَقْلُ مَنِ اسْتَنْصَحَهُ.

Hadith n. 282

282. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Between you and the preaching there is a curtain of deception.

282. وقال عليه السلام : بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ الْمَوْعِظَةِ حِجَابٌ مِنَ الْغِرَّةِ.

Hadith n. 283

283. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The ignorant among you are excessive in their deeds (without knowledge) while your learned fall short (in their deeds).

283. وقال عليه السلام : جَاهِلُكُمْ مُزْدَادٌ وَعَالِمُكُمْ مُسَوِّفٌ.

Hadith n. 284

284. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Knowledge dispels the excuse of those who advance excuses.

284. وقال عليه السلام : قَطَعَ الْعِلْمُ عُذْرَ الْمُتَعَلِّلِينَ.

Hadith n. 285

285. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He whom death overtakes early seeks time while he whose death is deferred puts forth excuses for postponement (of doing good actions).

285. وقال عليه السلام : كُلُّ مُعَاجَلٍ يَسْأَلُ الانْظَارَ وَكُلُّ مُؤَجَّلٍ يَتَعَلَّلُ بالتَّسْويفِ.

Hadith n. 286

286. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: For every thing to which people say "how good!" there is an evil hidden in this world.

286. وقال عليه السلام : مَا قَالَ النَّاسُ لِشَيْءٍ: طُوبَى لَهُ، إِلاَّ وَقَدْ خَبَأَ لَهُ الدَّهْرُ يَوْمَ سَوْءٍ.

Hadith n. 287

287. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked about Destiny, when he said: It is a dark path -- do not tread upon it, it is a deep ocean – do not dive in it, and it is the secret of Allah -- do not take trouble about (knowing) it.

287. وسئل عن القدر، فقال: طَرِيقٌ مُظْلِمٌ فَلاَ تَسْلُكُوهُ، وَبَحْرٌعَمِيقٌ فَلاَ تَلِجُوهُ، وَسِرُّ اللهِ فَلاَ تَتَكَلَّفُوهُ.

Hadith n. 288

288. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When Allah intends to humiliate a person He denies him knowledge.

288. وقال عليه السلام : إِذَا أَرْذَلَ اللهُ عَبْداً حَظَرَعَلَيْهِ الْعِلْمَ.

Hadith n. 289

289. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: In the past I had a brother-in-faith 73 and he was prestigious in my view because the world was humble in his eyes, the needs of the stomach did not have sway over him, he did not long for what he did not get; if he got a thing he would not ask for more; most of his time he was silent, if he spoke he silenced the other speakers, he quenched the thirst of questioners, he was weak and feeble but at the time of fighting he was like the lion of the forest or the serpent of the valley, he would not put forth an argument unless it was decisive.

289. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: كَانَ لِی فِيمَا مَضَى أَخٌ فِی اللَّهِ وَ كَانَ يُعْظِمُهُ فِی عَيْنِی صِغَرُ الدُّنْيَا فِی عَيْنِهِ وَ كَانَ خَارِجاً مِنْ سُلْطَانِ بَطْنِهِ فَلَا يَشْتَهِی مَا لَا يَجِدُ وَ لَا يُكْثِرُ إِذَا وَجَدَ وَ كَانَ أَكْثَرَ دَهْرِهِ صَامِتاً فَإِنْ قَالَ بَذَّ الْقَائِلِينَ وَ نَقَعَ غَلِيلَ السَّائِلِينَ وَ كَانَ ضَعِيفاً مُسْتَضْعَفاً فَإِنْ جَاءَ الْجِدُّ فَهُوَ لَيْثُ غَابٍ وَ صِلُّ وَادٍ لَا يُدْلِی بِحُجَّةٍ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ قَاضِياً.

He would not reproach anyone in an excusable matter unless he had heard the excuse, he would not speak of any ailment except after its disappearance, he would say what he would do, and would not say what he would not do, even if he could be exceeded in speaking, he could not be excelled in silence; he was more eager to listen than to speak and if two things confronted him he would see which was more akin to the longing of the heart and he would oppose it.

وَ كَانَ لَا يَلُومُ أَحَداً عَلَى مَا يَجِدُ الْعُذْرَ فِی مِثْلِهِ حَتَّى يَسْمَعَ اعْتِذَارَهُ وَ كَانَ لَا يَشْكُو وَجَعاً إِلَّا عِنْدَ بُرْئِهِ وَ كَانَ يَقُولُ مَا يَفْعَلُ وَ لَا يَقُولُ مَا لَا يَفْعَلُ وَ كَانَ إِذَا غُلِبَ عَلَى الْكَلَامِ لَمْ يُغْلَبْ عَلَى السُّكُوتِ وَ كَانَ عَلَى مَا يَسْمَعُ أَحْرَصَ مِنْهُ عَلَى أَنْ يَتَكَلَّمَ وَ كَانَ إِذَا بَدَهَهُ أَمْرَانِ يَنْظُرُ أَيُّهُمَا أَقْرَبُ إِلَى الْهَوَى فَيُخَالِفُهُ.

These qualities are incumbent upon you. So, you should acquire them and excel each other in them. Even if you cannot acquire them you should know that acquiring a part is better than giving up the whole.

. فَعَلَيْكُمْ بِهَذِهِ الْخَلَائِقِ فَالْزَمُوهَا وَ تَنَافَسُوا فِيهَا فَإِنْ لَمْ تَسْتَطِيعُوهَا فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ أَخْذَ الْقَلِيلِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ تَرْكِ الْكَثِيرِ

Hadith n. 290

290. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Even if Allah had not warned of chastisement on those disobedient to Him, it would be obligatory by way of gratefulness for His favours that He should not be disobeyed.

290. وقال عليه السلام : لَوْ لَمْ يَتَوَعَّدِ اللهُ عَلَى مَعْصِيَةٍ لَكَانَ يَجِبُ أَنْ لاَ يُعْصَى شُكْراً لِنِعَمِهِ.

Hadith n. 291

291. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said in condoling Ash'ath ibn Qays about (the death of) his son: O Ash' ath, if you grieve over your son, certainly it is the consequence of the blood relationship; but if you endure, then Allah provides recompense for every affliction. O Ash'ath, if you endure even then matters will move on as ordained by Allah but in that case you will deserve reward; while if you lose patience, matters will again move as ordained by Allah, but in this case you will be bearing the burden (of sins). O Ash'ath, your son (when he lived) gave you happiness while, at the same time, he was a trial and hardship and (when he died) he grieved you while, at the same time, he has proved a source of reward and mercy for you.

291. وقال عليه السلام ، وقد عزّى الاَشعثَ بن قيسٍ عن ابن له: يَا أَشْعَثُ، إِنْ تَحْزَنْ عَلَى ابْنِكَ فَقَدِ اسْتَحَقَّتْ ذلِكَ مِنْكَ الرَّحِمُ، وَإِنْ تَصْبِرْ فَفِي اللهِ مِنْ كُلِّ مُصِيبَةٍ خَلَفٌ. يَا أَشْعَثُ، إِنْ صَبَرْتَ جَرَى عَلَيْكَ الْقَدَرُ وَأَنْتَ مَأْجُورٌ، وَإِنْ جَزِعْتَ جَرَى عَلَيْكَ الْقَدَرُ وَأَنْتَ مَأْزُورٌ ابْنُكَ سَرَّكَ وَهُوَ بَلاَءٌ وَفِتْنَةٌ، وَحَزَنَكَوَهُوَ ثَوَابٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ.

Hadith n. 292

292. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said on the grave of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his descendants, at the time of burial:

292. وقال عليه السلام على قبر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله ساعة دُفِنَ:

Certainly, endurance is good except about you; fretting is bad except over you; and the affliction about you is great while every other affliction before or after it is small.

إِنَّ الصَّبْرَ لَجَمِيلٌ إِلاَّ عَنْكَ، وَإِنَّ الْجَزَعَ لَقَبِيحٌ إِلاَّ عَلَيْكَ، وَإِنَّ الْمُصَابَ بِكَ لَجَلِيلٌ، وَإِنَّهُ قَبْلَكَ وَبَعْدَكَ لَجَلَلٌ.

Hadith n. 293

293. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do not associate with a fool because he will beautify his actions before you and long that you too be like him. 74

293. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ تَصْحَبِ الْمَائِقَ فَإِنَّهُ يُزَيِّنُ لَكَ فِعْلَهُ، وَيَوَدُّ أَنْ تَكُونَ مِثْلَهُ.

Hadith n. 294

294. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked about the distance between East and West when he replied: One day's travelling for the sun.

294. وقال عليه السلام وقد سئل عن مسافة ما بين المشرق والمغرب: مَسِيرَةُ يَوْمٍ لِلشَّمْسِ.

Hadith n. 295

295. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Your friends are three and your enemies are (also) three. Your friends are: your friend, your friend's friend and your enemy's enemy. And your enemies are: your enemy, your friend's enemy and your enemy's friend.

295. وقال عليه السلام : أَصْدِقَاؤُكَ ثَلاَثَةٌ، وَأَعْدَاؤُكَ ثَلاَثَةٌ: فَأَصْدِقَاؤُكَ: صَدِيقُكَ، وَصَدِيقُ صَدِيقِكَ، وَعَدُوُّ عَدُوِّكَ. وَأَعْدَاؤُكَ: عَدُوُّكَ، وَعَدُوُّ صَدِيقِكَ، وَصَدِيقُ عَدُوِّكَ.

Hadith n. 296

296. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, saw a man busy against his enemy with what was harmful to himself too, so he said: You are like one who pierces a spear through himself in order to kill the person sitting behind him.

296. وقال عليه السلام لرجل رآه يسعى على عدوٍّ له بما فيه إضرار بنفسه: إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ كَالطَّاعِنِ نَفْسَهُ لِيَقْتُلَ رِدْفَهُ.

Hadith n. 297

297. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: How many are the objects of lessons, but how few the taking of lessons. 75

297. وقال عليه السلام : مَا أَكْثَرَ الْعِبَرَ وأَقَلَّ الاْعْتِبَارَ.

Hadith n. 298

298. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who goes too far in quarrelling is a sinner, but if one falls short in it, one is oppressed and it is difficult for a quarreller to fear Allah.

298. وقال عليه السلام : مَن بَالَغَ فِي الْخُصوُمَةِ أَثِمَ، وَمَنْ قَصَّرَ فِيهَا ظُلِمَ، وَلاَ يَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ يَتَّقِيَ اللهَ مَنْ خَاصَمَ.

Hadith n. 299

299. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I am not worried by a sin after which I get time to offer prayer in two units (rak 'ah) and beg safety from Allah.

299. وقال عليه السلام : مَا أَهَمَّنِي ذَنْبٌ أُمْهِلْتُ بَعْدَهُ حَتَّى أُصَلِّيَ رَكْعَتَيْنِ وَأَسْأَلَ اللهَ الْعَافِيَة.

Hadith n. 300

300. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked: How Allah would conduct the accounting of all persons despite their large number. **He replied:** Just as He provides them livelihood despite their large number. **Then it was said to him:** How will He conduct their accounting without their seeing Him. **He replied:** Just as He provides them livelihood although they do not see Him.

300. وسئل عليه السلام : كيف يحاسب الله الخلق على كَثْرتهم؟ فقال عليه السلام : كَمَا يَرْزُقُهُمْ عَلَى كَثْرَتِهِمْ. فَقيل: كيف يُحاسِبُهُم ولا يَرَوْنَهُ؟ قال عليه السلام : كَمَا يَرْزُقُهُمْ وَلاَ يَرَوْنَهُ.

Hadith n. 301

301. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Your messenger is the interpreter of your intelligence while your letter is more eloquent in expressing your true self.

301 رَسُولُكَ تَرْجُمَانُ عَقْلِكَ، وَكِتَابُكَ أَبْلَغُ مَا يَنْطِقُ عَنْكَ :وقال عليه السلام.

Hadith n. 302

302. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The person who is afflicted with hardship is not in greater need of praying than the one who has been spared affliction but is not immune from it.

302. مَا الْمُبْتَلَى الَّذِي قَدِ اشْتَدَّ بِهِ الْبَلاَءُ، بِأَحْوَجَ إِلَى الدُّعَاءِ مِنَ المُعَافَى الَّذِي لاَ يَأْمَنُ البَلاَءَ :وقال عليه السلام.

Hadith n. 303

303. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: People are the progeny of the world and no one can be blamed for loving his mother.

303. النَّاسُ أَبْنَاءُ الدُّنْيَا، وَلاَ يُلاَمُ الرَّجُلُ عَلَى حُبِّ أُمِّهِ :وقال عليه السلام.

Hadith n. 304

304. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The destitute is the Messenger of Allah. Whoever denies him denies Allah and whoever gives him gives Allah.

304. إِنَّ الْمِسْكِينَ رَسُولُ اللهِ، فَمَنْ مَنَعَهُ فَقَدْ مَنَعَ اللهَ، وَمَنْ أَعْطَاهُ فَقَدْ أَعْطَى الله :وقال عليه السلام.

Hadith n. 305

305. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A self- respecting man never commits adultery.

305. مَا زَنَى غَيُورٌ قَطُّ :وقال عليه السلام.

Hadith n. 306

306. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The fixed limit of life is enough to remain watchful.[76]

306. كَفَى بِالاَجَلِ حَارِساً :وقال عليه السلام.

Hadith n. 307

307. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A man can sleep on the death of his child, but cannot sleep at loss of property.

307. وقال عليه السلام : يَنَامُ الرَّجُلُ عَلَى الثُّكْلِ وَلاَ يَنَامُ عَلَى الْحَرَبِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: It means that a man keeps patience on the death of his children but does not do so on the loss of property.

و قال الرضي: ومعنى ذلك: أنه يصبر على قتل الأَولاد، ولا يصبر على سلب الأَموال.

Hadith n. 308

308. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Mutual affection between fathers creates a relationship between the sons. Relationship is more in need of affection than affection is of relationship.

308. وقال عليه السلام : مَوَدَّةُ الاْبَاءِ قَرَابَةٌ بَيْنَ الاْبْنَاءِ، وَالْقَرَابَةُ إِلَى الْمَوَدَّةِ أَحْوَجُ مِنَ الْمَوَدَّةِ إِلَى الْقَرَابَةِ.

Hadith n. 309

309. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Be afraid of the ideas of believers, because Allah, the Sublime, has put truth on their tongues.

309. وقال عليه السلام : اتَّقُوا ظُنُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، فَإِنَّ اللهَ تَعَالَى جَعَلَ الْحَقَّ عَلَى أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ.

Hadith n. 310

310. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The belief of a person cannot be regarded as true unless his trust in what is with Allah is more than his trust in what he himself has.

310. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ يَصْدُقُ إِيمَانُ عَبْدٍ، حَتّى يَكُونَ بِمَا فِي يَدِ اللهِ سُبْحَانَهُ أَوْثَقَ مِنهُ بِمَا فِي يَدِهِ.

Hadith n. 311

311. When Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, came to Basrah he sent Anas ibn Malik to Talhah and az-Zubayr to make them recall what he (Anas) himself had heard the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his descendants, say concerning them both, but he avoided doing so and when he came back to Amir al-mu'minin, he said that he had forgotten that matter. Thereupon, Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If you are speaking a lie Allah may afflict you with white spots (leucoderma) which even the turban may not cover.

311. وقال عليه السلام لأنس بن مالك، وقد كان بعثه إلى طلحةَ والزبيرِ لما جاءا إلى البصرة يذكر هما شيئاً سمعه من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله في معناهما، فلوى عن ذلك، فرجع إليه، فقال: إِنّي أُنسيتُ ذلك الاَمرَ. فَقال عليه السلام : إِنْ كُنْتَ كَاذِباً فَضَرَبَكَ اللهُ بِهَا بَيْضَاءَ لاَمِعَةً لاَ تُوَارِيهَا الْعِمَامَةُ .

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: White spot means leucoderma. After sometime this disease did occur to Anas's face so much so that he was never seen without a veil. 77

قال الرضي: . يعني البرص، فأصاب أَنَساً هذا الداء فيما بعدُ في وجهه، فكان لا يُرى إلاّ مُبَرقعاً.

Hadith n. 312

312. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Sometimes the hearts move forward and sometimes they move backward. When they move forward get them to perform the optionals (as well), but when they move backward keep them confined to obligatories only.

312. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ لِلْقُلُوبِ إِقْبَالاً وَإِدْبَاراً فَإِذَا أَقْبَلَتْ فَاحْمِلُوهَا عَلَى النَّوَافِلِ، وَإِذَا أَدْبَرَتْ فَاقْتَصِرُوا بِهَا عَلَى الْفَرَائِضِ.

Hadith n. 313

313. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The Qur'an contains news about the past, foretellings about the future and commandments for the present.

313. وقال عليه السلام : وَفِي الْقرْآنِ نَبَأُ مَا قَبْلَكُمْ، وَخَبَرُ مَا بَعْدَكُمْ، وَحُكْمُ مَا بَيْنَكُمْ.

Hadith n. 314

314. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Throw a stone in return from where one comes to you because evil can be met only with evil.

314. وقال عليه السلام : رُدُّوا الْحَجَرَمِنْ حَيْثُ جَاءَ، فَإِنَّ الشَّرَّ لاَ يَدْفَعُهُ إِلاَّالشَّرُّ.

Hadith n. 315

315. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to his secretary 'Ubaydullah ibn Abi Rafi': Put cotton flake in the inkpot, keep the nib of your pen long, leave space between lines and close up the letters because this is good for the beauty of the writing.

315. وَ قَالَ عليه السلامة لِكَاتِبِهِ عُبَيْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِى رَافِعٍ: أَلِقْ دَوَاتَكَ وَ أَطِلْ جِلْفَةَ قَلَمِكَ وَ فَرِّجْ بَيْنَ السُّطُورِ وَ قَرْمِطْ بَيْنَ الْحُرُوفِ فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ أَجْدَرُ بِصَبَاحَةِ الْخَطِّ .

Hadith n. 316

316. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I am the ya'sub (leader) of the believers, while wealth is the leader of the wicked.

316. وقال عليه السلام : أَنا يَعْسُوبُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، وَالْمَالُ يَعْسُوبُ الْفُجَّارِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: It means that the believers follow me while the wicked follow wealth just as the bees follow their "ya'sub" who is their leader. 78

قال الرضي: ومعنى ذلك أن المؤمنين يتبعونني، والفجار يتبعون المال، كما تتبع النحل يعسوبها، وهو رئيسها.

Hadith n. 317

317. Some Jews said to Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him; You had not buried your Prophet when you picked up differences about him, **when Amir al-mu'minin replied:** We did not differ about him but we differed after him (i.e. about his succession); whereas your feet had not yet dried after coming out of the river (Nile) when you began asking your Prophet: *Make you for us a god as they have gods of their own. Said he; 'Verily you are a people behaving ignorantly.* ' 79 (Qur'an, 7:138)

317. قَالَ لَهُ بَعْضُ الْيَهُودِ: مَا دَفَنْتُمْ نَبِيَّكُمْ حَتَّى اخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِيهِ. فَقَالَ عليه السلام لَهُ: إِنَّمَا اخْتَلَفْنَا عَنْهُ لَا فِيهِ وَ لَكِنَّكُمْ مَا جَفَّتْ أَرْجُلُكُمْ مِنَ الْبَحْرِ حَتَّى قُلْتُمْ لِنَبِيِّكُمْ اجْعَلْ لَنا إِلهاً كَما لَهُمْ آلِهَةٌ قالَ إِنَّكُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُونَ .

Hadith n. 318

318. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked: With what did you overpower your adversaries? **He answered:** Whenever I confronted a person he helped me against himself.

318. وَ قِيلَ لَهُ: بِأَيِّ شَيْءٍ غَلَبْتَ الْأَقْرَانَ فَقَالَ عليه السلام: مَا لَقِيتُ رَجُلًا إِلَّا أَعَانَنِي عَلَى نَفْسِهِ .

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Amir al-mu'minin is pointing out his striking of awe in the hearts. 80

قال الرضى يومئ بذلك إلى تمكن هيبته فى القلوب.

Hadith n. 319

319. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to his son Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah: O my son, I fear lest destitution overtakes you. So, you should seek Allah's protection from it, because destitution is deficiency of religious belief, perplexity of intelligence, and it is conducive to hatred of obstinate people.

319. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام لِابْنِهِ مُحَمَّدِ ابْنِ الْحَنَفِيَّةِ: يَا بُنَيَّ إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكَ الْفَقْرَ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّ الْفَقْرَ مَنْقَصَةٌ لِلدِّينِ مَدْهَشَةٌ لِلْعَقْلِ دَاعِيَةٌ لِلْمَقْتِ .

Hadith n. 320

320. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, replied to a man who had asked him a difficult question: Ask me in order to gain understanding but do not ask me seeking to create confusion, because the ignorant person who tries to learn is like the learned man, but the learned man who tries to create confusion is like the ignorant.

320. قَالَ عليه السلام لِسَائِلٍ سَأَلَهُ عَنْ مُعْضِلَةٍ: سَلْ تَفَقُّهاً وَ لَا تَسْأَلْ تَعَنُّتاً فَإِنَّ الْجَاهِلَ الْمُتَعَلِّمَ شَبِيهٌ بِالْعَالِمِ وَ إِنَّ الْعَالِمَ الْمُتَعَسِّفَ شَبِيهٌ بِالْجَاهِلِ الْمُتَعَنِّتِ .

Hadith n. 321

321. 'Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas once advised Amir al-mu'minin peace be upon him, against his views, so he said: You have only to advise me but then I have to see (what to do); and if I act against your advice you have to follow me. 81

321. وقال عليه السلام لعبدالله بن العباس، وقد أشار عليه في شيء لم يوافق رأيه: لَكَ أَنْ تُشِيرَ عَلَيَّ وأَرَى، فَإِنْ عَصَيْتُكَ فَأَطِعْنِي.

Hadith n. 322

322. When Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, returned to Kufah from Siffin he passed by the residences of the Shibamites (who belonged to the tribe of Shibam) and heard the women weeping over those killed in Siffin. At that time a Shibamite, Harb ibn Shurahbil ash-Shibami, who was one of the nobles of those people, came to him, and Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to him: Do your women have control over you as regards the weeping that I hear? Do you not refrain them from this crying? **Harb began to walk with him while Amir al-mu'minin was on horseback, so Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to him:** Get back because the walking of a man like you with one like me is mischief for the ruler and disgrace for the believer.

322. وروي أنه عليه السلام لما ورد الكوفة قادماً من صفين مرّ بالشّباميين فسمع بكاء النساء على قتلى صفين، وخرج إليه حرب بن شُرَحْبِيل الشّبامي، وكان من وجوه قومه. فقال عليه السلام : أَتَغْلِبُكُمْ نِسَاؤُكُمْ عَلَى مَا أَسْمَعُ؟ أَلاَ تَنْهَوْنَهُنَّ عَنْ هذَا الرَّنِينِ و أقبل يمشي معه، وهو عليه السلام راكب. فقال عليه السلام له: ارْجِعْ، فَإِنَّ مَشْيَ مِثْلِكَ مَعَ مِثْلِي فِتْنَةٌ لِلْوَالِي، وَمَذَلَّةٌ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ.

Hadith n. 323

323. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, passed by the dead bodies of the Kharijites on the day of the battle of Nahrawan and said : Woe unto you! You have been harmed by him who deceived you. **He was asked:** O Amir al-mu'minin, who deceived them? **Then, he replied:** Satan, the deceiver, and the inner spirit that leads one to evil deceived them through passions, made it easy for them to get into sins, promised them victory and eventually threw them into the Fire.

323. وقال عليه السلام وقد مرّ بقتلى الخوارج يوم النَّهْرَوَان: بُؤْساً لَكُمْ، لَقَدْ ضَرَّكُمْ مَنْ غَرَّكُمْ. فقيل له: مَن غرّهم يا أميرالمؤمنين؟ فقال: الشَّيْطَانُ الْمُضِلُّ، وَالأَنْفُسُ الأَمَّارَةُ بِالسُّوءِ، غَرَّتْهُمْ بالأَمَانِيِّ، وَفَسَحَتْ لَهُمْ فِي المَعَاصِي، وَعَدَتْهُمُ الأَظْهَارَ، فَاقْتَحَمَتْ بِهِمُ النَّارَ.

Hadith n. 324

324. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Beware of disobeying Allah in solitude, because the witness (of that situation) is also the judge.

324. وقال عليه السلام : اتَّقُوا مَعَاصِيَ اللهِ فِي الْخَلَوَاتِ، فَإِنَّ الشَّاهِدَ هُوَ الْحَاكِمُ.

Hadith n. 325

325. When the news of killing of Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr 82 **reached Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, he said:** Our grief over him is as great as their (i.e. the enemy's) joy for it, except that they have lost an enemy and we have lost a friend.

325. وقال عليه السلام ، لمّا بلغه قتل محمد بن أبي بكر: إِنَّ حُزْنَنَا عَلَيْهِ عَلَى قَدْرِ سُرُورِهِمْ بِهِ، إِلاَّ أَنَّهُمْ نَقَصُوا بَغِيضاً، وَنَقَصْنَا حَبِيباً

Hadith n. 326

326. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The age up to which Allah accepts any excuse for a human being is sixty years.

326. وقال عليه السلام : الْعُمْرُ الَّذِي أَعْذَرَ اللهُ فِيهِ إِلَى ابْنِ آدَمَ سِتُّونَ سَنَةً.

Hadith n. 327

327. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He whom sin overpowers is not victorious, and he who secures victory by evil is (in fact) vanquished.

327. وقال عليه السلام : مَا ظَفِرَ مَنْ ظَفِرَ الاْثْمُ بِهِ، وَالْغَالِبُ بِالشَّرِّ مَغْلُوبٌ.

Hadith n. 328

328. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Allah, the Glorified, has fixed the livelihood of the destitute in the wealth of the rich. Consequently, whenever a destitute remains hungry it is because some rich person has denied (him his share). Allah, the Sublime, will question them about it.

328. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ اللهَ سُبْحَانَهُ فَرَضَ فِي أَمْوَالِ الأَغْنِيَاءِ أَقْوَاتَ الْفُقَرَاءِ، فَمَا جَاعَ فَقِيرٌ إِلاَّ بِمَا مَنَعَ بِهِ غَنِي، وَاللهُ تَعَالَى سَائِلُهُمْ عَنْ ذلِكَ.

Hadith n. 329

329. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Not to be in need of putting forth an excuse is better than putting forth a true excuse. 83

329. وقال عليه السلام : الإِسْتِغْنَاءُ عَنِ الْعُذْرِ أَعَزُّ مِنَ الصِّدْقِ بِهِ.

Hadith n. 330

330. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The least right of Allah on you is that you should not make use of His favours in committing His sins. 84

330. وقال عليه السلام : أَقَلُّ مَا يَلْزَمُكُمْ لله أَلاَّ تَسْتَعِينُوا بِنِعَمِهِ عَلَى مَعَاصِيهِ.

Hadith n. 331

331. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When the disabled fall short in performing acts of obedience to Allah, the Glorified, it is a good opportunity given by Allah for the intelligent to perform such acts.

331. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ اللهَ سُبْحَانَهُ جَعَلَ الطَّاعَةَ غَنِيمَةَ الأَكْيَاسِ عِنْدَ تَفْرِيطِ الْعَجَزَةِ.

Hadith n. 332

332. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The sovereign is the watchman of Allah on earth.

332. وقال عليه السلام : السُّلْطَانُ وَزَعَةُ اللهِ فِي أَرْضِهِ.

Hadith n. 333

333. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said describing a believer: A believer has a cheerful face, a sorrowful heart, a very broad chest (full of generosity), and a very humble heart. He hates high position and dislikes renown. His grief is long, his courage is far-reaching, his silence is much and, his

time is occupied. He is grateful, enduring, buried in his thoughts, sparing in his friendship (with others), of bright demeanour and of soft temperament. He is stronger than stone but humbler than a slave.

333. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام فِی صِفَةِ الْمُؤْمِنِ: الْمُؤْمِنُ بِشْرُهُ فِی وَجْهِهِ وَ حُزْنُهُ فِی قَلْبِهِ أَوْسَعُ شَیْءٍ صَدْراً وَ أَذَلُّ شَیْءٍ نَفْساً یَکْرَهُ الرِّفْعَةَ وَ یَشْنَأُ السُّمْعَةَ طَوِیلٌ غَمُّهُ بَعِیدٌ هَمُّهُ کَثِیرٌ صَمْتُهُ مَشْغُولٌ وَقْتُهُ شَکُورٌ صَبُورٌ مَغْمُورٌ بِفِکْرَتِهِ ضَنِینٌ بِخَلَّتِهِ سَهْلُ الْخَلِیقَةِ لَیِّنُ الْعَرِیکَةِ نَفْسُهُ أَصْلَبُ مِنَ الصَّلْدِ وَ هُوَ أَذَلُّ مِنَ الْعَبْدِ .

Hadith n. 334

334. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If a man happens to see the end of (his) life and his final fate, he will begin hating desires and their deception.

334. وقال علیه السلام : لَوْرَأَی الْعَبْدُ الاْجَلَ وَمَسِیرَهُ لاَبْغَضَ الاْمَلَ وَغُرُورَهُ.

Hadith n. 335

335. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There are two sharers in the property of every person – successors and accidents.

335. وَ قَالَ علیه السلام: لِکُلِّ امْرِئٍ فِی مَالِهِ شَرِیکَانِ الْوَارِثُ وَ الْحَوَادِثُ .

Hadith n. 336

336. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The person who is approached with a request is free until he promises.

336. وقال علیه السلام : الْمَسْؤُولُ حُرٌّ حَتَّی یَعِدَ.

Hadith n. 337

337. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who prays but does not exert effort is like the one who shoots without a bow-string.

337. وقال علیه السلام : الدَّاعِي بِلاَ عَمَلٍ کَالرَّامِي بِلاَ وَتَرٍ.

Hadith n. 338

338. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Knowledge is of two kinds – that which is absorbed and that which is just heard. The one that is heard does not give benefit unless it is absorbed.

338. وقال عليه السلام : الْعِلْمُ عِلْمَانِ: مَطْبُوعٌ وَمَسْمُوعٌ وَلاَ يَنْفَعُ الْمَسْمُوعُ إِذَا لَمْ يَكُنِ الْمَطْبُوعُ.

Hadith n. 339

339. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Correctness of decision goes together with power. The one emerges with the other's emergence and disappears when the other disappears. 85

339. وقال عليه السلام : صَوَابُ الرَّأْيِ بِالدُّوَلِ: يُقْبِلُ بِإِقْبَالِهَا وَيَذْهَبُ بِذَهَابِهَا.

Hadith n. 340

340. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The beauty of destitution is chastity and the beauty of riches is gratefulness.

340. وقال عليه السلام : الْعَفَافُ زِينَةُ الْفَقْرِ، وَالشُّكْرُ زِينَةُ الْغِنَى.

Hadith n. 341

341. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The day of justice will be severer on the oppressor than the day of oppression on the oppressed.

341. وقال عليه السلام : يَوْمُ الْعَدْلِ عَلَى الظَّالِمِ أَشَدُّ مِنْ يَومِ الْجَوْرِ عَلَى الْمَظْلُومِ!

Hadith n. 342

342. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The biggest wealth is that one should not have an eye on what others possess.

342. الْغِنَى الأَكْبَرُ الْيَأْسُ عَمَّا فِي أَيْدِى النَّاسِ.

Hadith n. 343

343. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Utterances are preserved and actions are to be tried. *Every soul, for what it earned, is held in pledge!* (Qur'an, 74:38). People are to be made deficient (as regards their bodies) and meddled with (as regards their minds) except those whom Allah protects. The questioner among them aims at confusing and the answerer creates hardship. It is possible that the man who has the best views among them will be deviated from the soundness of his thinking by pleasure or displeasure, and it is possible that a single glance may affect even the man with the 'best wisdom among them or a single expression may transform him.

343. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: الْأَقَاوِيلُ مَحْفُوظَةٌ وَ السَّرَائِرُ مَبْلُوَّةٌ وَ (كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِما كَسَبَتْ رَهِينَةٌ) وَ النَّاسُ مَنْقُوصُونَ مَدْخُولُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ عَصَمَ اللَّهُ: سَائِلُهُمْ مُتَعَنِّتٌ وَ مُجِيبُهُمْ مُتَكَلِّفٌ يَكَادُ أَفْضَلُهُمْ رَأْياً يَرُدُّهُ عَنْ فَضْلِ رَأْيِهِ الرِّضَى وَ السُّخْطُ ، وَ يَكَادُ أَصْلَبُهُمْ عُوداً تَنْكَؤُهُ اللَّحْظَةُ وَ تَسْتَحِيلُهُ الْكَلِمَةُ الْوَاحِدَةُ .

Hadith n. 344

344. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O groups of people, fear Allah, for there is many a man who aspires for what he does not get, many a builder of a house who does not live in it, and many a collector of that which he shall just leave behind. Possibly he may have collected it wrongfully or by denying a right. He acquired it unlawfully and had to bear the weight of sins on account of it. Consequently, he returned (from this world) with that weight and came before Allah with sorrow and grief. ***Loses he both this world and* (*also*) *the hereafter; that is a loss* (*which is*) *manifest.*** **(Qur'an, 22:11)**

344. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: مَعَاشِرَ النَّاسِ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ فَكَمْ مِنْ مُؤَمِّلٍ مَا لَا يَبْلُغُهُ وَ بَانٍ مَا لَا يَسْكُنُهُ وَ جَامِعٍ مَا سَوْفَ يَتْرُكُهُ وَ لَعَلَّهُ مِنْ بَاطِلٍ جَمَعَهُ وَ مِنْ حَقٍّ مَنَعَهُ أَصَابَهُ حَرَاماً وَ احْتَمَلَ بِهِ آثَاماً فَبَاءَ بِوِزْرِهِ وَ قَدِمَ عَلَى رَبِّهِ آسِفاً لَاهِفاً قَدْ خَسِرَ الدُّنْيا وَ الْآخِرَةَ ذلِكَ هُوَ الْخُسْرانُ الْمُبِينُ).

Hadith n. 345

345. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Lack of access to sins is also a kind of chastity.

345. وقال عليه السلام : مِنَ الْعِصْمَةِ تَعَذُّرُ الْمَعَاصِي.

Hadith n. 346

346. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The dignity of your face is solid but begging dissolves it away: therefore, look carefully before whom you dissolve it.

346. وقال عليه السلام : مَاءُ وَجْهِكَ جَامِدٌ يُقْطِرُهُ السُّؤَالُ، فَانْظُرْ عِنْدَ مَنْ تُقْطِرُهُ.

Hadith n. 347

347. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: To praise more than what is due is sycophancy; to do it less is either because of inability to speak or of envy.

347. وقال عليه السلام : الثَّنَاءُ بِأَكْثَرَ مِنَ الاْسْتِحْقَاقِ مَلَقٌ وَالتَّقْصِيرُ عَنِ الاْسْتِحْقَاقِ عِيٌّ أَوْ حَسَدٌ.

Hadith n. 348

348. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The most serious sin is that which the doer considers light. 86

348. وقال عليه السلام : أَشَدُّ الذُّنُوبِ مَا اسْتَهَانَ بِهِ صَاحِبُهُ.

Hadith n. 349

349. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who sees his own shortcomings abstains from looking into other's shortcomings. He who feels happy with the livelihood with which Allah provides him does not grieve over what he misses. He who draws out the sword of revolt gets killed with it. He who strives without means perishes. He who enters the depths gets drowned. He who visits places of ill-repute receives blame.

349. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ نَظَرَ فِي عَيْبِ نَفْسِهِ اشْتَغَلَ عَنْ عَيْبِ غَيْرِهِ، وَمَنْ رَضِيَ بِرِزْقِ اللهِ لَمْ يَحْزَنْ عَلَى مَا فَاتَهُ، وَمَنْ سَلَّ سَيْفَ الْبَغْيِ قُتِلَ بِهِ، وَمَنْ كَابَدَ الاْمُورَعَطِبَ وَمَنِ اقْتَحَمَ اللُّجَجَ غَرِقَ، وَمَنْ دَخَلَ مَدَاخِلَ السُّوءِ اتُّهِمَ،

He who speaks more commits more errors. He who commits more errors becomes shameless. He who is shameless will have less fear of Allah. He whose fear of Allah is less, his heart dies. He whose heart dies enters the Fire.

وَمَنْ كَثُرَ كَلاَمُهُ كَثُرَ خَطَؤُهُ، وَمَنْ كَثُرَ خَطَؤُهُ قَلَّ حَيَاؤُهُ، وَمَنْ قَلَّ حَيَاؤُهُ قَلَّ وَرَعُهُ،مَنْ قَلَّ وَرَعُهُ مَاتَ قَلْبُهُ، وَمَنْ مَاتَ قَلْبُهُ دَخَلَ النَّارَ،

He who observes the shortcomings of others and disapproves of them and then accepts them for himself is definitely a fool. Contentment is a capital that does not dwindle. He who remembers death much is satisfied with small favours in this world. He who knows that his speech is also a part of his action speaks less except where he has some purpose.

وَمَنْ نَظَرَ فِي عُيُوبِ النَّاسِ فَأَنْكَرَهَا ثُمَّ رَضِيَهَا لِنَفْسِهِ فذَاك الاْحْمَقُ بِعَيْنِهِ. وَالْقَنَاعَةُ مَالٌ لاَ يَنْفَدُ، وَمَنْ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذِكْرِ الْمَوْتِ رَضِيَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْيَسيرِ، مَنْ عَلِمَ أَنَّ كَلاَمَهُ مِنْ عَمَلِهِ قَلَّ كَلاَمُهُ إِلاَّ فِيما يَعْنِيهِ.

Hadith n. 350

350. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The oppressor among the people has three signs: he oppresses his superior by disobeying him, and his junior by imposing his authority and he supports other oppressors.

350. وقال عليه السلام : لِلظَّالِمِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ ثَلاَثُ عَلاَمَاتٍ: يَظْلِمُ مَنْ فَوْقَهُ بِالْمَعْصِيَةِ، وَ مَنْ دُونَهُ بِالْغَلَبَةِ و يُظَاهِرُالْقَوْمَ الظَّلَمَةَ .

Hadith n. 351

351. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: At the extremity of hardship comes relief, and at the tightening of the chains of tribulation comes ease.

351. وقال عليه السلام : عِنْدَ تَنَاهِي الشِّدَّةِ تَكُونُ الْفَرْجَةُ، وَعِنْدَ تَضَايُقِ حَلَقِ الْبَلاَءِ يَكُونُ الرَّخَاءُ.

Hadith n. 352

352. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to one of his companions: Do not devote much of your activity to your wife and your children, because if your wife and children are lovers of Allah then He will not leave His lovers uncared for, and if they be enemies of Allah then why should you worry and keep yourself busy about the enemies of Allah.

352. وقال عليه السلام لبعض أصحابه: لاَ تَجْعَلَنَّ أَكْثَرَ شُغْلِكَ بِأَهْلِكَ وَوَلَدِكَ: فَإِنْ يَكُنْ أَهْلُكَ وَوَلَدُكَ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللهِ، فَإِنَّ اللهَ لاَ يُضِيعُ أَوْلِيَاءَهُ، وَإِنْ يَكُونُوا أَعْدَاءَ اللهِ، فَمَا هَمُّكَ وَشُغْلُكَ بِأَعْدَاءِ اللهِ؟

Hadith n. 353

353. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The greatest defect is to regard that defect (in others) which is present in yourself. 87

353. وقال عليه السلام : أَكْبَرُ الْعَيْبِ أَنْ تَعِيبَ مَا فِيكَ مِثْلُهُ.

Hadith n. 354

354. Someone congratulated another person in the presence of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, on the birth of a son saying: Congratulations for getting a rider of horses. **Then Amir al-mu'minin said:** Do not say so; but say: You have occasion to be grateful to Allah, the Giver, and be blessed with what you have been given. May he attain full life and may you be blessed with his devotion.

354. وهنَّأَ بحضرته عليه السلام رجل رجلاً بغلام ولد له فقال له: لِيَهْنِئْكَ الْفَارِسُ. فقال عليه السلام : لاَ تَقُلْ ذلِكَ، وَلكِنْ قُلْ: شَكَرْتَ الْوَاهِبَ، وَبُورِكَ لَكَ فِي الْمَوْهُوبِ، وَبَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ، وَرُزِقْتَ بِرَّهُ.

Hadith n. 355

355. One of the officers of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, built a stately house, about which Amir al-mu'minin said: This is silver coins showing forth their faces. Certainly, this house speaks of your riches.

355. وبنى رجل من عمّاله بناءً فخماً فقال عليه السلام : أَطْلَعَتِ الْوَرِقُ رُؤُوسَهَا! إِنَّ الْبِنَاءَ لَيَصِفُ عَنْكَ الْغِنَى.

Hadith n. 356

356. It was said to Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him: If a man is left in his house and the door is closed, from where will his livelihood reach him. And he replied: From whatever way his death reaches him. 88

356. وقيل له عليه السلام : لو سُدَّ على رجلٍ بَابُ بيته، وتُرِكَ فيه، من أَين كان يأتيه رزقُه؟ فقال عليه السلام : مِنْ حَيْثُ كَانَ يَأْتِيهِ أَجَلُهُ.

Hadith n. 357

357. Condoling with people among whom one had died, Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: This thing has not started with you nor does it end with you. This fellow of yours was used to journeying and therefore it is better to think him still to be journeying. Either he will rejoin you or else you will rejoin him.

357. وعَزّى عليه السلام قوماً عن ميّتٍ فقال: إنَّ هذَا الأمْرَلَيْسَ بِكُمْ بَدَأَ، وَلاَ إلَيْكُمُ انْتَهَى، وَقَدْ كَانَ صَاحِبُكُمْ هذَا يُسَافِرُ، فَعُدُّوهُ فِي بَعْضِ أَسْفَارِهِ، فَإنْ قَدِمَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَإلاَّ قَدِمْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ

Hadith n. 358

358. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O people, let Allah see you fearing at the time of happiness just as you fear Him at the time of distress. Certainly, he who is given ease (of life) and does not consider it as a means of slow approach towards tribulation (wrongly), considers himself safe against what is to be feared while he who is afflicted with straitened circumstances but does not perceive them to be a trial loses the coveted reward.

358. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ لِيَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ مِنَ النِّعْمَةِ وَجِلِينَ كَمَا يَرَاكُمْ مِنَ النِّقْمَةِ فَرِقِينَ إِنَّهُ مَنْ وُسِّعَ عَلَيْهِ فِى ذَاتِ يَدِهِ فَلَمْ يَرَ ذَلِكَ اسْتِدْرَاجاً فَقَدْ أَمِنَ مَخُوفاً وَ مَنْ ضُيِّقَ عَلَيْهِ فِى ذَاتِ يَدِهِ فَلَمْ يَرَ ذَلِكَ اخْتِبَاراً فَقَدْ ضَيَّعَ مَأْمُولًا.

Hadith n. 359

359. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O slaves of desires, cut them short because he who leans on the world gets nothing out of it except the pain of hardships. O people, take charge of the training of your own souls and turn them away from the addiction to their habits.

359. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: يَا أَسْرَى الرَّغْبَةِ أَقْصِرُوا فَإِنَّ الْمُعَرِّجَ عَلَى الدُّنْيَا لَا يَرُوعُهُ مِنْهَا إِلَّا صَرِيفُ أَنْيَابِ الْحِدْثَانِ . أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ تَوَلَّوْا مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ تَأْدِيبَهَا وَ اعْدِلُوا بِهَا عَنْ ضَرَاوَةِ عَادَاتِهَا

Hadith n. 360

360. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do not regard an expression uttered by any person as evil if you can find it capable of bearing some good.

360. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ تَظُنَّنَّ بِكَلِمَةٍ خَرَجَتْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ سَوءاً، وَأَنْتَ تَجِدُ لَهَا فِي الْخَيْرِ مُحْتَمَلاً.

Hadith n. 361

361. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If you have a need from Allah, the Glorified, then begin by seeking Allah's blessing on His Messenger, may Allah bless him and his descendants, then ask your need, because Allah is too generous to accept one (seeking His blessing on His Messenger) of the two requests made to Him and deny the other.

361. وقال عليه السلام : إِذَا كَانَتْ لَكَ إِلَى اللهِ سُبْحَانَهُ حَاجَةٌ فَابْدَأْ بِمَسْأَلَةِ الصَّلاَةِ عَلَى النَّبِيّ صلى الله عليه وآله ، ثُمَّ سَلْ حَاجَتَكَ، فَإِنَّ اللهَ أَكْرَمُ مِنْ أَنْ يُسْأَلَ حَاجَتَيْنِ فَيَقْضِيَ إِحْدَاهُمَا وَيَمْنَعَ الاْخْرَى.

Hadith n. 362

362. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who is jealous of his esteem should keep from quarrelling.

362. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ ضَنَّ بِعِرْضِهِ فَلْيَدَعِ الْمِرَاءَ.

Hadith n. 363

363. Amir a1-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: To make haste before the proper time or to delay after a proper opportunity, in either case is folly.

363. وقال عليه السلام : مِنَ الْخُرْقِ الْمُعَاجَلَةُ قَبْلَ الاْمْكَانِ، وَالاْنَاةُ بَعْدَ الْفُرْصَةِ.

Hadith n. 364

364. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do not ask about things which may not happen because you have enough to worry about with what happens.

364. وقال عليه السلام : لاَتَسْأَلْ عَمَّا لاَ يَكُونُ، فَفِي الَّذِي قَدْ كَانَ لَكَ شُغُلٌ.

Hadith n. 365

365. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Imagination is a clear mirror, and the taking of lessons (from things around) provides warning and counsel. It is enough for improving yourself that you should avoid what you consider bad in others.

365. وقال عليه السلام : الْفِكْرُ مرْآةٌ صَافِيَةٌ، وَالاْعْتِبَارُ مُنْذِرٌ نَاصِحٌ، وَكَفى أَدَباً لِنَفْسِكَ تَجَنُّبُكَ مَا كَرِهْتَهُ لِغَيْرِكَ.

Hadith n. 366

366. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Knowledge is associated with action. Therefore, he who knows should act, because knowledge calls for action; if there is a response well and good, otherwise it (i.e., knowledge) departs from him.

366. وقال عليه السلام : الْعِلْمُ مَقْرُونٌ بِالْعَمَلِ فَمَنْ عَلِمَ عَمِلَ، وَالْعِلْمُ يَهْتِفُ بِالْعَمَلِ فَإِنْ أَجَابَهُ وَإِلاَّ ارْتَحَلَ.

Hadith n. 367

367. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O people, the wealth of this world is broken orts that brings an epidemic; therefore keep off this grazing land, leaving it is a greater favour than peacefully staying in it, and its part enough for subsistence is more blissful than its riches. Destitution has been ordained for those who are rich here, while comfort has been destined for those who keep away from it. If a person is attracted by its dazzle, it blinds both his eyes; and if a person acquires eagerness towards it, then it fills his heart with griefs which keep alternating in the black part of his heart, some grief worrying him and another giving him pain. This goes on till the suffocation of death overtakes him. He is flung onto the open ground while both his arteries are severed. It is easy for Allah to cause him to die and for his comrades to put him in the grave.

367. وقال عليه السلام : يَا أَيُّها النَّاسُ، مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا حُطَامٌ مُوبِىءٌ فَتَجَنَّبُوا مَرْعَاهُ! قُلْعَتُهَا أَحْظَى مِنْ طُمَأْنِينَتِهَا وَبُلْغَتُهَا أَزْكَى مِنَ ثَرْوَتِهَا، حُكِمَ عَلَى مُكْثِرٍ مِنْهَا بِالْفَاقَةِ وَأُعِينَ مَنْ غَنِيَ عَنْهَا بِالرَّاحَة، مَنْ رَاقَهُ زِبْرِجُهَا أَعْقَبَتْ نَاظِرَيْهِ كَمَهاً وَمَنِ اسْتَشْعَرَالشَّغَفَ بِهَا مَلاَتْ ضَمِيرَهُ أَشْجاناً ، لَهُنَّ رَقْصٌ على سُوَيْدَاءِ قَلْبِهِ هَمٌّ يَشْغَلُهُ، وَغَمٌّ يَحْزُنُهُ، كَذلِكَ حَتَّى يُؤْخَذَ بِكَظَمِهِ فَيُلْقَى بِالْفَضاءِ، مُنْقَطِعاً أَبْهَرَاهُ ، هَيِّناً عَلى اللهِ فَناؤُهُ، وَعَلَى الاْخْوَانِ إِلْقَاؤُهُ.

The believer sees the world with eyes that derive instruction, and takes from it food enough for his barest needs. He hears in it with ears of hatred and enmity. If it is said (about someone) that he has become rich, it is also said that he has turned destitute; and if pleasure is felt on one's living, grief is felt over his death. This is the position, although the day has not yet approached when they will be disheartened.

وَإِنَّمَا يَنْظُرُ الْمُؤْمِنُ إِلَى الدُّنْيَا بَعَيْنِ الاْعْتِبَارِ وَيَقْتاتُ مِنْهَا بِبَطْنِ الاْضْطِرَارِ وَيَسْمَعُ فِيهَا بِأُذُنِ الْمَقْتِ وَالاْبْغَاضِ، إِنْ قِيلَ أَثْرِيقِيلَ أَكْدَى! وَإِنْ فُرِحَ لَهُ بِالْبَقَاءِ حُزِنَ لَهُ بِالْفَنَاءِ! هذَا وَلَمْ يَأْتِهِمْ يَوْمٌ فِيهِ يُبْلِسُونَ.

Hadith n. 368

368. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Allah, the Glorified, has laid down reward for obedience to Him and punishment for committing sins against Him in order to save men from His chastisement and to drive them towards Paradise.

368. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ اللهَ سُبْحَانَهُ وَضَعَ الثَّوَابَ عَلَى طَاعَتِهِ، وَالْعِقَابَ عَلَى مَعْصِيَتِهِ، ذِيَادَةً لِعِبَادِهِ عَنْ نِقْمَتِهِ، وَحِيَاشَةً لَهُمْ إِلَى جَنَّتِهِ.

Hadith n. 369

369. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A time will come when nothing will remain of the Qur'an except its writing, and nothing of Islam except its name. The mosques in those days will be busy with regards to construction but desolate with regard to guidance. Those staying in them and those visiting them will be the worst of all on earth. From them mischief will spring up and towards them all wrong will turn. If anyone isolates himself from it (mischief) they will fling him back to it and if anyone steps back from it they will push him towards it. Says Allah, the Glorified, (in hadith qudsi -- i.e., the tradition in which Allah- Himself speaks): I swear by Myself that I shall send upon them an evil wherein the endurer would be bewildered, and He would do so. We seek Allah's pardon from stumbling through neglect.

369. وقال عليه السلام : يَأْتِي عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ لاَ يَبْقى فِيهِمْ مِن الْقُرآنِ إِلاَّ رَسْمُهُ، وَمِنَ الاْسْلاَمِ إِلاَّ اسْمُهُ، مَسَاجِدُهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَامِرَةٌ مِنَ الْبُنَى، خَرَابٌ مِنَ الْهُدَى، سُكَّانُهَا وَعُمَّارُهَا شَرُّ أَهْلِ الاْرْضِ، مِنْهُمْ تَخْرُجُ الْفِتْنَةُ، وَإِلَيْهِمْ تَأْوِي الْخَطِيئَةُ، يَرُدُّونَ مَنْ شَذَّ عَنْهَا فِيهَا، وَيَسُوقُونَ مَن تَأَخَّرَ عَنْهَا إِلَيْهَا، يَقُولُ اللهُ تعالى: فَبِي حَلَفْتُ لاَبْعَثَنَّ عَلَى أُولئِكَ فِتْنَةً تترُكُ الْحَلِيمَ فِيهَا حَيْرَانَ، وَقَدْ فَعَلَ، وَنَحْنُ نَسْتَقِيلُ اللهَ عَثْرَةَ الْغَفْلَةِ.

Hadith n. 370

370. It is related that it was seldom that Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, ascended the pulpit and did not utter the following before his sermon: O people, fear Allah for man has not been created for naught so that he may waste himself, nor has he been left uncared for so that he may commit nonsensical acts. This world which appears beautiful to him cannot be the replacement of the next world which appears bad in his eyes, nor is the vain person who is successful in this world through his high courage like him who is successful in the next world even to a small extent.

370. وروي أنه عليه السلام قلما اعتدل به المنبر إلاّ قال أَمام خطبته: أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، اتَّقُوا اللهَ، فَمَا خُلِقَ امْرءٌ عَبَثاً فَيَلْهُوَ وَلاَ تُرِكَ سُدىً فَيَلْغُوَ وَمَا دُنْيَاهُ الَّتي تَحَسَّنَتْ لَهُ بِخَلَفٍ مِنَ الاْخِرَةِ الَّتي قَبَّحَها سُوءُ النَّظَرِ عِنْدَهُ، وَمَا الْمَغْرُورُ

الَّذِي ظَفِرَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا بِأَعْلَى هِمَّتِهِ كَالاْخَرِ الَّذِي ظَفِرَ مِنَ الاْخِرَةِ بِأَدْنَى سُهْمَتِهِ.

Hadith n. 371

371. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There is no distinction higher than Islam; no honour more honourable than fear of Allah; no asylum better than self restraint; no intercessor more effective than repentance; no treasure more precious than contentment; and no wealth is a bigger remover of destitution than being satisfied with mere sustenance. He who confines himself to what is just enough for maintenance achieves comfort and prepares abode in ease. Desire is the key of grief and the conveyance of distress. Greed, vanity and jealousy are incentives to falling into sins and evil-doing is the collection of all bad habits.

371. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ شَرَفَ أَعْلَى مِنَ الاْسْلاَمِ، وَلاَ عِزَّ أَعَزُّ مِنَ التَّقْوَى، وَلاَ مَعْقِلَ أَحْصَنَ مِنَ الْوَرَعِ،لاَ شَفِيعَ أَنْجَحُ مِنَ التَّوْبَةِ، وَلاَ كَنْزَ أَغْنَى مِنَ الْقَنَاعَةِ، وَلاَ مَالَ أَذْهَبُ لِلْفَاقَةِ مَنَ الرِّضَى بِالْقُوتِ، وَمَنِ اقْتَصَرَ عَلَى بُلْغَةِ الْكَفَافِ فَقَدِ انْتَظَمَ الرَّاحَةَ وَتَبَوَّأَ خَفْضَ الدَّعَةِ وَالرَّغْبَةُ مِفْتَاحُ النَّصَبِ، وَمَطِيَّةُ التَّعَبِ، وَالْحِرْصُ وَالْكِبْرُ وَالْحَسَدُ دَوَاعٍ إِلَى التَّقَحُّمِ فِي الذُّنُوبِ، وَالشَّرُّ جَامِعُ مَسَاوِىءِ الْعُيُوبِ.

Hadith n. 372

372. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to Jabir ibn 'Abdullah al-Ansari': O Jabir, the mainstay of religion and the world are four persons: The scholar who acts on his knowledge; the ignorant who does not feel ashamed of learning; the generous who is not niggardly in his favours; and the destitute who does not sell his next life for his worldly benefits. Consequently, when the scholar wastes his knowledge, the ignorant feels shame in learning; and when the generous is niggardly with his favours, the destitute sells his next life for the worldly benefits.

372. وقال عليه السلام لجابر بن عبدالله الاَنصاري: يَا جَابِرُ، قِوَامُ الدِّينِ وَ الدُّنْيَا بِأَرْبَعَةٍ: عَالِمٍ مُسْتَعْمِلٍ عِلْمَهُ، وَجَاهِلٍ لاَ يَسْتَنْكِفُ أَنْ يَتَعَلَّمَ، وَجَوَادٍ لاَ يَبْخَلُ بِمَعْرُوفِهِ، وَفَقِيرٍ لاَ يَبِيعُ آخِرَتَهُ بِدُنْيَاهُ؛ فَإِذَا ضَيَّعَ الْعَالِمُ عِلْمَهُ اسْتَنْكَفَ الْجَاهِلُ أَنْ يَتَعَلَّمَ، وَإِذَا بَخِلَ الْغَنِيُّ بِمَعْرُوفِهِ بَاعَ الْفَقِيرُ آخِرَتَهُ بِدُنْيَاهُ.

O Jabir, if favours of Allah abound on a person the people's needs towards him also abound. Therefore, he who fulfils for Allah all that is obligatory on him in this regard will preserve them (Allah's favours) in continuance and perpetuity, while he who does not fulfil those obligations will expose them to decay and destruction.

يَا جَابِرُ مَنْ كَثُرَتْ نِعَمُ اَللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ كَثُرَتْ حَوَائِجُ اَلنَّاسِ إِلَيْهِ فَمَنْ قَامَ لِلَّهِ فِيهَا بِمَا يَجِبُ فِيهَا عَرَّضَهَا لِلدَّوَامِ وَ اَلْبَقَاءِ وَ مَنْ لَمْ يَقُمْ فِيهَا بِمَا يَجِبُ عَرَّضَهَا لِلزَّوَالِ وَ اَلْفَنَاءِ.

Hadith n. 373

373. Ibn Jarir at-Tabari has, in his history (vol.2, p.1086; also Ibn al-Athir in his history, vol.4, p.478), related from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Abi Layla, al-faqih (the theologian), who was one of those who had risen with ('Abd' ar-Rahman ibn Muhammad) Ibn al-Ash'ath to fight al-Hajjaj (ibn Yusuf ath-Thaqafi), that he (Ibn Abi Layla) was exhorting people to jihad by recalling: On the occasion of encounter with the people of Syria I heard Amir al-mu'minin, may Allah exalt his degree of rank among the righteous and may He reward him the reward of martyrs and men of truth, saying:

373. وروى ابن جرير الطبري في تاريخه عن عبدالرحمن بن أبي ليلى الفقيه. وكان ممن خرج لقتال الحجاج مع ابن الاَشعث. أنه قال فيما كان يحضُّ به الناسَ على الجهاد: إني سمعتُ علياً رفع الله درجته في الصالحين، و أثابه ثواب الشهداء و الصديقين ، يقول يوم لقينا أهل الشام:

O believers, whoever observes excesses being committed and people being called towards evil and disapproves it with his heart is safe and free from responsibility for it, and whoever disapproves of it with his tongue would be rewarded and he is in a higher position than the former but whoever disapproves it with his sword in order that the word of Allah may remain superior and the word of the oppressors may remain inferior, catches hold of the path of guidance and stands on the right way, while his heart is lighted with conviction.

أَيُّهَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ، إِنَّهُ مَنْ رَأَى عُدْوَاناً يُعْمَلُ بِهِ وَمُنْكَراً يُدْعَى إِلَيْهِ، فَأَنْكَرَهُ بِقَلْبِهِ فَقَدْ سَلِمَ وَبَرِىءَ وَمَنْ أَنْكَرَهُ بِلِسَانِهِ فَقَدْ أُجِرَ وَهُوَ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ صَاحِبِهِ، وَمَنْ أَنْكَرَهُ بِالسَّيْفِ لِتَكُونَ كَلِمَةُ اللهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا وَكَلِمَةُ الظَّالِمِينَ السُّفْلَى، فَذلِكَ الَّذِي أَصَابَ سَبِيلَ الْهُدَى، وَقَامَ عَلَى الطَّرِيق، وَنَوَّرَ فِي قَلْبِهِ الْيَقِينُ.

Hadith n. 374

374. Another saying in the same strain runs as follows: So, among them (the Muslim community) there is he who disapproves evil with his hand, tongue and heart. This man has perfectly attained the virtuous habits. And among them there is he who disapproves evil with his tongue and heart but not with his hand. This man has attained only two virtuous habits but lacks one. And among them there is the third one who disapproves evil with his heart but not with his tongue and hand. This is the one who lacks the two better qualities out of three and holds only one. Then, among them there is also he who does not disapprove evil either with his tongue, heart or hand. He is just a dead man among the living.

374. وقد قال عليه السلام في كلام غير هذا يجري هذا المجرى: فَمِنْهُمُ الْمُنْكِرُ لِلْمُنْكَرِ بِيَدِهِ وَلِسَانِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ فَذَلِكَ الْمُسْتَكْمِلُ لِخِصَالِ الْخَيْرِ، وَمِنْهُمُ الْمُنْكِرُ بِلِسَانِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَالتَّارِكُ بِيَدِهِ فَذلِكَ مُتَمَسِّكٌ بِخَصْلَتَيْنِ مِنْ خِصَالِ الْخَيْرِ وَمُضَيِّعٌ خَصْلَةً، وَمِنْهُمُ الْمُنْكِرُ بِقَلْبِهِ وَالتَّارِكُ بِيَدِهِ وَلِسَانِهِ فَذلِكَ الَّذِي ضَيَّعَ أَشْرَفَ الْخَصْلَتَيْنِ مِنَ الثَّلاَثِ وَتَمَسَّكَ

بوَاحِدَةٍ، وَمِنْهُمْ تَارِكٌ لِإنْكَارِ الْمُنكَرِ بِلِسَانِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَيَدِهِ فَذلِكَ مَيِّتُ الاْحْيَاءِ.

All the virtuous deeds including war in the way of Allah as compared to the persuasion to good and dissuasion from evil are just like spitting in the deep ocean. The persuasion for good and dissuasion from evil do not bring death nearer nor do they lessen the livelihood. And better than all this is to utter a just expression before a tyrannical ruler.

وَمَا أَعْمَالُ الْبِرِّ كُلُّهَا وَالْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ، عِنْدَ الاْمْرِ بالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّهْيِ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ، إِلاَّ كَنَفْثَةٍ فِي بَحْرٍ لُجِّيٍّ وَإِنَّ الاْمْرَ بالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّهْيَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ لاَ يُقَرِّبَانِ مِنْ أَجَلٍ، وَلاَ يَنْقصَانِ مِنْ رِزْقٍ، وَأَفضَلُ مِنْ ذلِكَ كُلِّهِ كَلِمَةُ عَدْلٍ عِنْدَ إِمَامٍ جَائِرٍ.

Hadith n. 375

375. It is related from Abu Juhayfah who said: I heard Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, saying:

The first fighting with which you will be overpowered is the fighting with hands, thereafter with your tongues and then with your hearts. Consequently, he who does not recognize virtue with his heart or does not disapprove evil will be turned upside down. Thus, his upside will be turned downwards and his lowside will be turned upwards.

375. وعن أبي جُحَيْفَةَ قال: سمعت أميرالمؤمنين عليه السلام يقول: أَوَّلُ مَا تُغْلَبُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْجِهَادِ الْجِهَادُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ، ثُمَّ بِأَلْسِنَتِكُمْ، ثُمَّ بِقُلُوبِكُمْ؛ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَعْرِفْ بِقَلْبِهِ مَعْرُوفاً، وَلَمْ يُنْكِرْ مُنْكَراً، قُلِبَ فَجُعِلَ أَعْلاَهُ أَسْفَلَهُ، وَأَسْفَلُهُ أَعْلاَهُ.

Hadith n. 376

376. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Certainly, right is weighty and wholesome while wrong is light and unwholesome.

376. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ الْحَقَّ ثَقِيلٌ مَرِيءٌ وَإِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ خَفِيفٌ وَبِيءٌ.

Hadith n. 377

377. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him said: Do not feel safe from the punishment of Allah even about the best man in the whole community because Allah, the Sublime, says: *But no one feels secure against the plan of Allah save the people* (*who are the*) *losers*. (Qur'an, 7:99). Again, do not lose hope even for the worst man of the community because Allah-, the Sublime says: *Verily, despairs not of Allah's mercy but the disbelieving people.* (Qur'an, 12:87).

377. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ تَأْمَنَنَّ عَلَى خَيْرِ هذِهِ الاُمَّةِ عَذَابَ اللهِ، لِقَوْلِهِ تَعَالى: (فَلا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اَللَّهِ إِلاَّ اَلْقَوْمُ اَلْخاسِرُونَ) وَ لاَ تَيْأَسَنَّ لِشَرِّ هَذِهِ اَلْأُمَّةِ مِنْ رَوْحِ اَللَّهِ لِقَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى (إِنَّهُ لا يَيْأَسُ مِنْ رَوْحِ اَللَّهِ إِلاَّ اَلْقَوْمُ اَلْكافِرُونَ).

Hadith n. 378

378. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Miserliness contains all other evil vices and is the rein with which one can be led to every evil.

378. وقال عليه السلام : الْبُخْلُ جَامِعٌ لِمَسَاوِىءِ الْعُيُوبِ، وَهُوَ زِمَامٌ يُقَادُ بِهِ إِلَى كُلِّ سُوءٍ.

Hadith n. 379

379. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O son of Adam, livelihood is of two kinds: the livelihood which you seek and the livelihood which seeks you; if you do not reach it, it will come to you Therefore, do not turn your one day's worry into a year's worry. Whatever you get every day should be enough for you for the day. If you have a whole year of your life even then Allah, the Sublime, will give you every next day what He has destined as your share. If you do not have a year in your life then why should you worry for what is not for you. No seeker will reach your livelihood before you nor will anyone overpower you in the matter of livelihood. Similarly, whatever has been destined as your share will not be delayed for you.

379. وقال عليه السلام : الرِّزْقُ رِزْقَانِ: رِزْقٌ تَطْلُبُهُ، وَرِزْقٌ يَطْلُبُكَ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَأْتِهِ أَتَاكَ، فَلاَ تَحْمِلْ هَمَّ سَنَتِكَ عَلَى هَمِّ يَوْمِكَ! كَفَاكَ كُلُّ يَوْمٍ مَا فيهِ، فَإِنْ تَكُنِ السَّنَةُ مِنْ عُمُرِكَ فَإِنَّ اللهَ تَعَالَى سَيُؤْتِيكَ فِي كُلِّ غَدٍ جَدِيدٍ مَاقَسَمَ لَكَ، وَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنِ السَّنَةُ مِنْ عُمُرِكَ فَمَا تَصْنَعُ بِالْهَمِّ لِمَا لَيْسَ لَكَ، وَلَنْ يَسْبِقَكَ إِلَى رِزْقِكَ طَالِبٌ، وَلَنْ يَغْلِبَكَ عَلَيْهِ غَالِبٌ، وَلَنْ يُبْطِىءَ عَنْكَ مَا قَدْ قُدِّرَ لَكَ.

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This saying has already appeared elsewhere in this chapter except that here it is clearer and more detailed. This is why we have repeated it according to the principle laid down in the beginning of the book.

قال الرضي: وقد مضى هذا الكلام فيما تقدم من هذا الباب، إلاّ أنه ها هنا أوضح وأشرح، فلذلك كررناه على القاعدة المقررة في أول هذا الكتاب.

Hadith n. 380

380. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Many a man faces a day after which he finds no day and many a man is in an enviable position in the earlier part of the night but is wept over by

bewailing women in its later part.

380. وقال عليه السلام : رُبَّ مُسْتَقْبِلٍ يَوْماً لَيْسَ بِمُسْتَدْبِرِهِ وَمَغْبُوطٍ فِي أَوَّلِ لَيْلِهِ قَامَتْ بَوَاكِيهِ فِي آخِرِهِ.

Hadith n. 381

381. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Words are in your control until you have not uttered them; but when you have spoken them out you are under their control. Therefore, guard your tongue as you guard your gold and silver, for often one expression snatches away a blessing and invites punishment.

381. وقال عليه السلام : الْكَلاَمُ فِي وَثَاقِكَ مَا لَمْ تَتَكَلَّمْ بِهِ، فَإِذَا تَكَلَّمْتَ بِهِ صِرْتَ فِي وَثَاقِهِ، فَاخْزُنْلِسَانَكَ كَمَا تَخْزُنُ ذَهَبَكَ وَوَرِقَكَ فَرُبَّ كَلِمَةٍ سَلَبَتْ نِعْمَةً وَجَلَبَتْ نِقْمَةً.

Hadith n. 382

382. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do not say what you do not know; rather do not say all that you know, because Allah has laid down some obligations for all your limbs by means of which He will put forth arguments against you on the Day of Judgment.

382. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ تَقُلْ مَا لاَ تَعْلَمُ، بَلْ لاَ تَقُلْ كُلَّ مَا تَعْلَمُ، فَإِنَّ اللهَ سبحانه قد فَرَضَ عَلَى جَوَارِحِكَ كُلِّهَا فَرَائِضَ يَحْتَجُّ بِهَا عَلَيْكَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

Hadith n. 383

383. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Fear lest Allah sees you while committing His sins or misses you when it is time to obey Him and as a result thereof you become a loser. Therefore, when you are strong be strong in obeying Allah and when you are weak be weak in committing sins of Allah.

383. وقال عليه السلام : احْذَرْ أَنْ يَرَاكَ اللهُ عِنْدَ مَعْصِيَتِهِ، وَيَفْقِدَكَ عِنْدَ طَاعَتِهِ، فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ، وَإِذَا قَوِيتَ فَاقْوَ عَلَى طَاعَةِ اللهِ، وَإِذَا ضَعُفْتَ فاضْعُفْ عَنْ مَعْصِيَةِ اللهِ.

Hadith n. 384

384. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Leaning towards this world despite what you see of it, is folly, and lagging behind in good deeds when you are convinced of good reward for them is obvious

loss, while trusting in every one before trying is weakness.

384. وقال عليه السلام : الرُّكُونُ إِلَى الدُّنْيَا مَعَ مَا تُعَايِنُ مِنْهَا جَهْلٌ، وَالتَّقْصِيرُ فِي حُسْنِ الْعَمَلِ إِذَا وَثِقْتَ بِالثَّوَابِ عَلَيْهِ غَبْنٌ وَالطُّمَأْنِينَةُ إِلَى كُلِّ أَحَدٍ قَبْلَ الاخْتِبَار عَجْزٌ.

Hadith n. 385

385. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: It is (the proof of the) baseness of the world before Allah that He is disobeyed only herein and His favours cannot be achieved except by abandoning it.

385. وقال عليه السلام : مِنْ هَوَانِ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى اللهِ أَنَّهُ لاَ يُعْصَى إِلاَّ فِيهَا، وَلاَ يُنَالُ مَا عِنْدَهُ إِلاَّ بِتَرْكِهَا.

Hadith n. 386

386. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: One who is in search of something will obtain it, or at least a part of it.

386. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ طَلَبَ شَيْئاً نَالَهُ أَوْ بَعْضَهُ.

Hadith n. 387

387. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: That good is no good after which there is the Fire, and that hardship is no hardship after which there is Paradise. Every bliss other than Paradise is inferior and every calamity other than the Fire is comfort.

387. وقال عليه السلام : مَا خَيْرٌ بِخَيْرٍ بَعْدَهُ النَّارُ، وَمَا شَرٌّ بِشَرٍّ بَعْدَهُ الْجَنَّةُ، وَكُلُّ نَعِيمٍ دوُنَ الْجَنَّةِ مَحْقُورٌكُلُّ بَلاَءٍ دُونَ النَّارِ عَافِيَةٌ.

Hadith n. 388

388. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Beware that destitution is a calamity, but worse than destitution is ailment of the body, while worse than bodily ailment is the disease of the heart. Beware that plenty of wealth is a blessing, but better than plenty of wealth is the health of the body, while still better than the health of the body is the chastity of heart.

388. وقال عليه السلام : أَلاَ وإِنَّ مِنَ الْبَلاَءِ الْفَاقَةَ وَأَشَدُّ مِنَ الْفَاقَةِ مَرَضُ الْبَدَنِ، وَأَشدُّ مِنْ مَرَضِ الْبَدَنِ مَرَضُ

الْقَلْبِ. أَلاَ وإِنَّ مِنَ النِّعَمِ سَعَةَ الْمَالِ، وَأَفْضَلُ مِن سَعَةِ الْمَالِ صِحّةُ الْبَدَنِ، وَأَفْضَلُ مِنْ صِحَّةِ الْبَدَنِ تَقْوَى الْقَلْبِ.

Hadith n. 389

389. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whomever his action .detains behind, his lineage cannot put him forward. **In another version it is thus:** Whoever misses personal attainment cannot be benefited by his forefathers' attainments.

389. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ أَبْطَأَ بِهِ عَمَلُهُ لَمْ يُسْرِعْ بِهِ نَسَبُهُ. وفي رواية أُخْرى: مَنْ فَاتَهُ حَسَبُ نَفْسِهِ لَمْ يَنْفَعْهُ حَسَبُ آبَائِهِ.

Hadith n. 390

390. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The believer's time has three periods: The period when he is in communion with Allah; the period when he manages for his livelihood; and the period when he is free to enjoy what is lawful and pleasant. It does not behove a wise person to be away (from his house) save for three matters, namely for purposes of earning, or going for something for the next life or for enjoying what is not prohibited.

390. وقال عليه السلام : لِلْمُؤْمِنِ ثَلاَثُ سَاعَات: فَسَاعَةٌ يُنَاجِي فِيهَا رَبَّهُ، وَسَاعَةٌ يَرُمُّ مَعَاشَهُ، وَسَاعَةٌ يُخَلِّي بَيْنَ نَفْسِهِ وَبَيْنَ لَذَّتِهَا فِيمَا يَحِلُّ وَيَجْمُلُ. وَلَيْسَ لِلْعَاقِلِ أَنْ يَكُونَ شَاخِصاً إِلاَّ فِي ثَلاَث: مَرَمَّةٍ لِمَعَاشٍ، أَوْ خُطْوَةٍ فِي مَعَادٍ، أَوْ لَذَّةٍ فِي غَيْرِ مُحَرَّمٍ.

Hadith n. 391

391. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Abstain from the world so that Allah may show you its real evils and do not be neglectful because (in any case) you will not be neglected.

391. وقال عليه السلام : ازْهَدْ فِي الدُّنْيَا يُبَصِّرْكَ اللهُ عَوْرَاتِهَا، وَلاَ تَغْفُلْ فَلَسْتَ بِمَغْفُولٍ عَنْكَ.

Hadith n. 392

392. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Speak so that you may be known, since man is hidden under his tongue.

392. وقال عليه السلام : تَكَلَّمُوا تُعْرَفُوا، فَإِنَّ الْمَرْءَ مَخْبُوءٌ تَحْتَ لِسَانِهِ.

Hadith n. 393

393. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Take off the favours of the world whatever comes to you and keep away from what keeps away from you. If you cannot do so be moderate in your seeking.

393. وقال عليه السلام : خُذْ مِنَ الدُّنيْا مَا أَتَاكَ، وَتَوَلَّ عَمَّا تَوَلَّى عَنْكَ، فَإِنْ أَنْتَ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَأَجْمِلْ فِي الطَّلَبِ.

Hadith n. 394

394. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Many an expression is more effective than an attack.

394. وقال عليه السلام : رُبَّ قَوْلٍ أَنْفَذُ مِنْ صَوْلٍ.

Hadith n. 395

395. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Every small thing that is contented upon, suffices.

395. وقال عليه السلام : كُلُّ مُقْتَصَرٍعَلَيْهِ كَافٍ.

Hadith n. 396

396. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Let it be death but not humiliation. Let it be little but not through others. He who does not get while sitting will not get by standing either. The world has two days one for you and the other against you. When the day is for you, do not feel proud but when it is against you endure it.

396. وقال عليه السلام : الْمَنِيَّةُ وَلاَ الدَّنِيَّةُ وَالتَّقَلُّلُ وَلاَ التَّوَسُّلُ وَمَنْ لَمْ يُعْطَ قَاعِداً لَمْ يُعْطَ قَائِماً وَالدَّهْرُ يَوْمَانِ: يَوْمٌ لَكَ، وَيَوْمٌ عَلَيْكَ؛ فَإِذَا كَانَ لَكَ فَلاَ تَبْطَرْ، وَإِذَا كَانَ عَلَيْكَ فَاصْبِرْ!

Hadith n. 397

397. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The best scent is musk; its weight is light while its odour is fragrant.

397. وقال عليه السلام : نِعْمَ الطِّيبُ الْمِسْكُ، خَفِيفٌ مَحْمِلُهُ، عَطِرٌ رِيحُهُ.

Hadith n. 398

398. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Put off boasting, give up self-conceit and remember your grave.

398. وقال عليه السلام : ضَعْ فَخْرَكَ، وَاحْطُطْ كِبْرَكَ، وَاذْكُرْ قَبْرَكَ.

Hadith n. 399

399. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The child has a right on the .father while the father too has a right on the child. The right of the father on the child is that the latter should obey the former in every matter save in committing sins of Allah, the Glorified, while the right of the child on the father is that he should give him a beautiful name, give him good training and teach him the Qur'an.

399. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ لِلْوَلَدِ عَلَى الْوَالِدِ حَقّاً، وَإِنَّ لِلْوَالِدِ عَلَى الْوَلَدِ حَقّاً: فَحَقُّ الْوَالِدِ عَلَى الْوَلَدِ أَنْ يُطِيعَهُ فِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ إِلاَّ فِي مَعْصِيَةِ اللهِ سُبْحَانَهُ، وَحَقُّ الْوَلَدِ عَلَى الْوَالِدِ أَنْ يُحَسِّنَ اسْمَهُ وَيُحَسِّنَ أَدَبَهُ وَيُعَلِّمَهُ الْقُرْآنَ.

Hadith n. 400

400. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Evil effect of sight is right; charm is right; sorcery is right, and fa'l (auguring good) is right, while tiyarah (auguring evil) 89 is not right, and spreading of a disease from one to the other is not right. Scent gives pleasure, honey gives pleasure, riding gives pleasure and looking at greenery gives pleasure.

400. وقال عليه السلام : الْعَيْنُ حَقٌّ، وَالرُّقَى حَقٌّ، وَالسِّحْرُ حَقٌّ، وَالْفَأْلُ حَقٌّ، وَالطِيَرَةُ لَيْسَتْ بِحَقٍّ، وَالْعَدْوَى لَيْسَتْ بِحَقٍّ، والطِّيبُ نُشْرَةٌ وَالْعَسَلُ نُشْرَةٌ، وَالرُّكُوبُ نُشْرَةٌ، وَالنَّظَرُ إِلَى الْخُضْرَةِ نُشْرَةٌ.

Hadith n. 401

401. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Nearness with people in their manners brings about safety from their evil.

401. وقال عليه السلام : مُقَارَبَةُ النَّاسِ فِي أَخْلاَقِهِمْ أَمْنٌ مِنْ غَوَائِلِهِمْ.

Hadith n. 402

402. Someone uttered an expression above his position, then Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to him: You have started flying soon after growing feathers (*shakir*) and commenced grumbling before attaining youth (*saqb*).

402. وقال عليه السلام لبعض مخاطبيه، وقد تكلم بكلمة يُسْتَصْغَرُ مثلُه عن قول مثلها: لَقَدْ طِرْتَ شَكِيراً،و هَدَرْتَ سَقْباً.

Sayyid ar-Razi says: Here, "*shakir*" [in the original Arabic text] means the first feathers that grow on a bird before it is strong enough to fly. And "*saqb*" means the young camel who does not grumble unless it becomes mature.

قال الرضي: والشكير هاهنا: أول ما ينبت من ريش الطائر قبل أن يقوى ويستحصف، والسقب: الصغير من الإبل ولا يهدر إلا بعد أن يستفحل.

Hadith n. 403

403. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever hankers after contraries gets no means of success.

403. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ أَوْمَأَ إِلَى مُتَفَاوِتٍ خَذَلَتْهُ الْحِيَلُ.

Hadith n. 404

404. On being asked the meaning of the expression: "*la hawla wala quwwata illa bi'llah* " (there is no strength nor power but by means of Allah) . **Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said :** We are not master of anything along with Allah, and we are not master of anything save what He makes us master of. So, when He makes us master of anything of which He is a superior Master over us, He also assigns some duties to us; and when He takes it away He will take away those duties as well. 90

404. وقال عليه السلام وَقَدْ سُئِلَ عن معنى قولهم: لاَ حَوْلَ وَلاَ قُوَّةَ إِلاَّ باللهِ: إِنَّا لاَ نَمْلِكُ مَعَ اللهِ شَيْئاً، وَلاَ نَمْلِكُ إِلاَّ مَا مَلَّكَنَا، فَمَتَى مَلَّكَنَا مَا هُوَ أَمْلَكُ بِهِ مِنَّاكَلَّفَنَا، وَمَتى أَخَذَهُ مِنَّا وَضَعَ تَكْلِيفَهُ عَنَّا.

Hadith n. 405

405. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, heard Ammar ibn Yasir (may Allah have mercy on him) conversing with al- Mughirah ibn Shu'bah and said: Let him alone O Ammar, for he has entered religion only to the extent of his deriving advantage of the world, and he has wilfully involved himself in misgivings in order to adopt them as cover for his shortcomings.

405. وقال عليه السلام لعمار بن ياسر رحمه الله، وقد سمعه يراجع المغيرة بن شعبة كلاماً: دَعْهُ يَا عَمَّارُ، فَإِنَّهُ لَمْ يَأْخُذْ مِنَ الدّينِ إِلاَّ مَا قَارَبَتْهُ الدُّنْيَا، وَعَلَى عَمدٍ لَبَّسَ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ لِيَجْعَلَ الشُّبُهَاتِ عَاذِراً لِسَقَطَاتِهِ

Hadith n. 406

406. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: How good it is for the rich to show humility before the poor to seek reward from Allah, but better than that is the haughtiness of the poor towards the rich with trust in Allah.

406. وقال عليه السلام : مَا أَحْسَنَ تَوَاضُعَ الأَغْنِيَاءِ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ طَلَباً لِمَا عِنْدَ اللهِ! وأَحْسَنُ مِنْهُ تِيهُ الْفُقَرَاءِ عَلَى الأَغْنِيَاءِ اتِّكَالاً عَلَى الله.

Hadith n. 407

407. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Allah does not grant wisdom to a person except that some day He will save him from ruin with its help.

407. وقال عليه السلام : مَا اسْتَوْدَعَ اللهُ امْرَأً عَقْلاً إِلاَّ اسْتَنْقَذَهُ بِهِ يَوْماً مَا.

Hadith n. 408

408. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever clashes with Truth would be knocked down by it.

408. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ صَارَعَ الْحَقَّ صَرَعَهُ.

Hadith n. 409

409. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The heart is the book of the eye.

409. وقال عليه السلام : الْقَلْبُ مُصْحَفُ الْبَصَرِ.

Hadith n. 410

410. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Fear of Allah is the chief trait of human character.

410. وقال عليه السلام : التُّقَى رَئِيسُ الأَخْلاَقِ.

Hadith n. 411

411. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do not try the sharpness of your tongue against Him Who gave you the power to speak, nor the eloquence of your speaking against Him Who set you on the right path.

411. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ تَجْعَلَنَّ ذَرَبَلِسَانِكَ عَلَى مَنْ أَنْطَقَكَ، وَبَلاَغَةَ قَوْلِكَ عَلَى مَنْ سَدَّدَكَ.

Hadith n. 412

412. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: It is enough for your own discipline that you abstain from what you dislike from others.

412. وقال عليه السلام : كَفَاكَ أَدَباً لِنَفْسِكَ اجْتِنَابُ مَا تَكْرَهُهُ مِنْ غَيْرِكَ.

Hadith n. 413

413. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: One should endure like free people, otherwise one should keep quiet like the ignorant.

413. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ صَبَرَ صَبْرَ الأَحْرَارِ، وَإِلاَّ سَلاَ سُلُوَّ الأَغْمَارِ.

Hadith n. 414

414. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: In another tradition it is related that Imam (A.S.) said to al-Ash'ath ibn Qays by way of condolence on the death of his son: Either endure like great people or else you will forget like animals.

414. وفي خبرٍ آخر أنّه عليه السلام قال للاَشعث بن قيس معزياً: إِنْ صَبَرْتَ صَبْرَ الاْكَارِمِ، وَإِلاَّ سَلَوْتَ سُلُوَّ الْبَهَائِمِ.

Hadith n. 415

415. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said about the world: It deceives, it harms and it passes away. Allah, the Sublime, did not approve it as a reward for His lovers nor as a punishment for His enemies. In fact, the people of this world are like those riders that as soon as they alighted the driver called out to them and they marched off.

415. وقال عليه السلام في صفة الدنيا: تَغُرُّ وَتَضُرُّ وَتَمُرُّ، إِنَّ اللهَ تَعَالَى لَمْ يَرْضَهَا ثَوَاباً لاِوْلِيَائِهِ، وَلاَ عِقَاباً لاِعْدَائِهِ، وَإِنَّ أَهْلَ الدُّنْيَا كَرَكْبٍ بَيْنَا هُمْ حَلُّوا إِذْ صَاحَ بِهِمْ سَائِقُهُمْ فَارْتَحَلُوا.

Hadith n. 416

416. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to his son al-Hasan (peace be upon him): O my son, do not leave anything of this world behind you, because you will be leaving it for either of two sorts of persons: Either a person who uses it in obeying Allah, in this case he will acquire virtue through what was evil for you, or it will be a person who uses it in disobeying Allah and in that case he will be earning evil with what you collected for him, and so you will be assisting him in his sinfulness; and neither of these two deserves to be preferred by you over yourself.

416. وقال لابنه الحسن: يا بُنَيَّ لاَ تُخَلِّفَنَّ وَرَاءَكَ شَيْئاً مِنَ الدُّنْيَا، فَإِنَّكَ تُخَلِّفُهُ لاِحَدِ رَجُلَيْنِ: إِمَّا رَجُلٍ عَمِلَ فِيهِ بِطَاعَةِ اللهِ فَسَعِدَ بِمَا شَقِيتَ بِهِ، وَإِمَّا رَجُلٍ عَمِلَ فِيهِ بِمَعْصِيَةِ اللهِ فَشَقِيَ بِمَا جَمَعْتَ لَهُ فَكُنْتَ عَوْناً لَهُ عَلى مَعْصِيَتِهِ، وَلَيْسَ أَحَدُ هذَيْنِ حَقِيقاً أَنْ تُؤْثِرَهُ عَلَىُ نَفْسِكَ.

Sayyid ar-Razi says: This saying is also related in another version thus:

Whatever of this world is now with you was with others before you, and it will pass to some others after you. Thus, you are collecting things for either of two sorts of men: a man who uses whatever you collected in obedience of Allah and thus acquired virtues with what was evil for you, or a man who uses

it in disobeying Allah, so you will be getting evil for what you collected. Neither of these two is such that you should prefer him over your own self, or you may burden yourself for his own sake. Therefore, hope for the mercy of Allah for him who has passed away and for Divine livelihood for him who survives.

و يروى هذا الكلام على وجه آخر، وهو: أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ الَّذِي فِي يَدِكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا قَدْ كَانَ لَهُ أَهْلٌ قَبْلَكَ، وَهُوَ صَائِرٌ إِلَى أَهْلٍ بَعْدَكَ، وَإِنَّمَا أَنْتَ جَامِعٌ لِاحَدِ رَجُلَيْنِ: رَجُلٍ عَمِلَ فِيمَا جَمَعْتَهُ بِطَاعَةِ اللهِ فَسَعِدَ بِمَا شَقِيتَ بِهِ، أَوْ رَجُلٍ عَمِلَ فِيهِ بِمَعْصِيَةِ اللهِ فَشَقِيَ بِمَا جَمَعْتَ لَهُ، وَلَيْسَ أَحَدُ هذَيْنِ أَهْلاً أَنْ تُؤْثِرَهُ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ تَحْمِلَ لَهُ عَلَى ظَهْرِكَ، فارْجُ لِمَنْ مَضَى رَحْمَةَ اللهِ، و لِمَنْ بَقِيَ رِزْقَ الله.

Hadith n. 417

417. Someone said before Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him: "*Astaghfiru'llah*" (I ask Allah's forgiveness), **then Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said:** Your mother may lose you! Do you know what "*istighfar*" (asking Allah's forgiveness) is? "*Istighfar*" is meant for people of a high position. It is a word that stands on six supports. The first is to repent over the past; the second is to make a firm determination never to revert to it; the third is to discharge all the rights of people so that you may meet Allah quite clean with nothing to account for; the fourth is to fulfil every obligation which you ignored (in the past) so that you may now do justice with it; the fifth is to aim at the flesh grown as a result of unlawful earning, so that you may melt it by grief (of repentance) till the skin touches the bone and a new flesh grows between them; and the sixth is to make the body taste the pain of obedience as you (previously) made it taste the sweetness of disobedience. On such an occasion you may say "*astaghfiru'llah*".

417. وقال عليه السلام لقائل قال بحضرته: أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ. ثَكِلَتْكَ أُمُّكَ، أَتَدْرِي مَا الاسْتِغْفَارُ؟ إِنَّ الاسْتِغْفَارَ دَرَجَةُ الْعِلِّيِّينَ، وَهُوَ اسْمٌ وَاقِعٌ عَلَى سِتَّةِ مَعَانٍ: أَوَّلُهَا: النَّدَمُ عَلَى مَا مَضَى. وَالثَّانِي: الْعَزْمُ عَلَى تَرْكِ الْعَوْدِ إِلَيْهِ أَبَداً. وَالثَّالِثُ: أَنْ تُؤَدِّيَ إِلَى الْمَخْلُوقِينَ حُقُوقَهُمْ حَتَّى تَلْقَى اللهَ عزّوجلّ أَمْلَسَ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ تَبِعَةٌ. وَالرَّابِعُ: أَنْ تَعْمِدَ إِلَى كُلِّ فَرِيضَةٍ عَلَيْكَ ضَيَّعْتَهَا فَتُؤَدِّيَ حَقَّهَا. وَالْخَامِسُ: أَنْ تَعْمِدَ إِلَى اللَّحْمِ الَّذِي نَبَتَ عَلَى السُّحْتِ فَتُذِيبَهُ بِالاَحْزَانِ، حَتَّى يَلْصِقَ الْجِلْدُ بِالْعَظْمِ، وَيَنْشَأَ بَيْنَهُمَا لَحْمٌ جَدِيدٌ. وَالسَّادِسُ: أَنْ تُذِيقَ الْجِسْمَ أَلَمَ الطَّاعَةِ كَمَا أَذَقْتَهُ حَلاَوَةَ الْمَعْصِيَةِ. فَعِنْدَ ذلِكَ تَقُولُ: أَسْتَغْفِرُاللهَ

Hadith n. 418

418. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Clemency is (like) a kinsfolk.

418. وقال عليه السلام : الْحِلْمُ عَشِيرَةٌ.

Hadith n. 419

419. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: How wretched the son of Adam is! His death is hidden, his ailments are concealed, his actions are preserved, the bite of a mosquito pains him, choking causes his death and sweat gives him a bad smell.

419. وقال عليه السلام : مِسْكِينٌ ابْنُ آدَمَ: مَكْتُومُ الاْجَلِ، مَكْنُونُ الْعِلَلِ، مَحْفُوظُ الْعَمَلِ، تَؤْلِمُهُ الْبَقَّةُ، وَتَقْتُلُهُ الشَّرْقَةُ، وَتُنْتِنُهُ الْعَرْقَةُ.

Hadith n. 420

420. It is related that Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was sitting with his companions when a beautiful woman passed by them and they began to look at her whereupn Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The eyes of these men are covetous and this glancing is the cause of their becoming covetous. Whenever anyone of you sees a woman who attracts him, he should meet his wife because she is a woman like his wife.

420. وروي أنه عليه السلام كان جالساً في أصحابه، فمرّت بهم امرأة جميلة، فرمقها القوم بأبصارهم. فقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ أَبْصَارَ هذِهِ الْفُحُولِ طَوَامِحُ وَإِنَّ ذلِكَ سَبَبُ هَبَابِهَا فإِذَا نَظَرَ أَحَدُكُمْ إِلَى امْرَأَةٍ تُعْجِبُهُ فَلْيُلَامِسْ أَهْلَهُ، فَإِنَّمَا هِيَ امْرَأَةٌ كَامْرَأَةٍ.

Then one of the Kharijites said: "May Allah kill this heretic! How logical he is!" **People then leapt towards him to kill him, but Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said:** "Wait a bit. There should either be abuse [for an abuse] or else pardoning from the offence."

فقال رجل من الخوارج: قاتله الله كافراً ما أفقهه. فوثب القوم لِيقتلوه. فقال عليه السلام : رُوَيْداً إِنَّمَا هُوَ سَبٌّ بِسَبٍّ، أَوْ عَفْوٌ عَنْ ذَنْبٍ.

Hadith n. 421

421. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: It is enough if your wisdom distinguishes for you the path of your going astray from the path of your guidance.

421. وقال عليه السلام : كَفَاكَ مِنْ عَقْلِكَ مَا أَوْضَحَ لَكَ سَبِيلَ غَيِّكَ مِنْ رُشْدِكَ.

Hadith n. 422

422. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do good and do not regard any part of it small because its small is big and its little is much. No one of you should say that another person is more deserving than I in doing good. Otherwise, by Allah, it would really be so. There are people of good and evil. When you would leave either of the two, others will perform them.

422. وقال عليه السلام : افْعَلُوا الْخَيْرَ وَلاَ تَحْقِرُوا مِنْهُ شَيْئاً، فَإِنَّ صَغِيرَهُ كَبِيرٌ وَقَلِيلَهُ كَثِيرٌ، وَلا يَقُولَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ: إِنَّ أَحَداً أَوْلَى بِفِعْلِ الْخَيْرِ مِنِّي فَيَكُونَ وَاللهِ كَذلِكَ، إِنَّ لِلْخَيْرِ وَالشَّرِّ أَهْلاً، فَمَهْمَا تَرَكْتُمُوهُ مِنْهُمَا كَفَاكُمُوهُ أَهْلُهُ.

Hadith n. 423

423. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever set right his inward self, Allah sets right his outward self Whoever performs acts for his religion, Allah accomplishes his acts of this world. Whoever's dealings between himself and Allah are good, Allah turns the dealings between him and other people good.

423. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ أَصْلَحَ سَرِيرَتَهُ أَصْلَحَ اللهُ عَلاَنِيَتَهُ، وَمَنْ عَمِلَ لِدِينِهِ كَفَاهُ اللهُ أَمْرَ دُنْيَاهُ، وَمَنْ أَحْسَنَ فِيمَا بَيْنَهُ وبَيْنَ اللهِ كَفَاهُ اللهُ مَا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ النَّاسِ.

Hadith n. 424

424. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Forbearance is a curtain for covering, and wisdom is a sharp sword. Therefore, conceal the weaknesses in your conduct with forbearance and kill your desires with your wisdom.

424. وقال عليه السلام : الْحِلْمُ غِطَاءٌ سَاتِرٌ، وَالْعَقْلُ حُسَامٌ قَاطِعٌ، فَاسْتُرْ خَلَلَ خُلُقِكَ بِحِلْمِكَ، وَقَاتِلْ هَوَاكَ بِعَقْلِكَ.

Hadith n. 425

425. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There are some creatures of Allah whom Allah particularizes with favours for the benefit of the people, therefore He places them in their hands so long as they give them to others; but when they deny them to others He takes away the favours from them and sends them to others.

425. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ لِلَّهِ عِبَاداً يَخْتَصُّهُمْ بِالنِّعَمِ لِمَنَافِعِ الْعِبَادِ، فَيُقِرُّهَا فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ مَا بَذَلُوهَا، فَإِذَا مَنَعُوهَا نَزَعَهَا

مِنْهُمْ، ثُمَّ حَوَّلَهَا إِلَى غَيْرِهِمْ.

Hadith n. 426

426. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: It does not behove a man to have trust in two positions, health and riches, because there is many a man whom you see healthy but he soon falls sick and many a man whom you see rich but soon turns destitute.

426. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ يَنْبَغِي لِلْعَبْدِ أَنْ يَثِقَ بِخَصْلَتَيْنِ: الْعَافِيَةِ، وَالْغِنَى: بَيْنَا تَرَاهُ مُعَافىً إِذْ سَقِمَ، وَغَنِيّاً إِذِ افْتَقَرَ.

Hadith n. 427

427. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever complains about a need to a believer, it is as though he has complained about it to Allah; but whoever complains about it to an unbeliever it is as though he complained about Allah.

427. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ شَكَا الْحَاجَةَ إِلَى مُؤْمِنٍ فَكَأَنَّمَا شَكَاهَا إِلَى اللهِ، وَمَنْ شَكَاهَا إِلَى كَافِرٍ فَكَأَنَّمَا شَكَا اللهَ.

Hadith n. 428

428. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said on the occasion of an *'Id* (Muslim feast day): It is an *'Id* for him whose fasting Allah accepts and of whose prayers He is appreciative; and (in fact) every day wherein no sin of Allah is committed is an *'Id*. 91

428. وقال عليه السلام في بعض الاَعيَاد: إِنَّمَا هُوَ عِيدٌ لِمَنْ قَبِلَ اللهُ صِيَامَهُ وَشَكَرَ قِيَامَهُ، وَكُلُّ يَوْمٍ لاَ يُعْصَى اللهُ فِيهِ فَهُوَ يَوْمَ عِيدٍ.

Hadith n. 429

429. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: On Judgement Day the greatest regret will be felt by man who earned wealth through sinful ways, although inherited by a person who spends it in obeying Allah, the Glorified, and will be awarded Paradise on that account while first one will go into Fire on account of it.

429. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ أَعْظَمَ الْحَسَرَاتِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حَسْرَةُ رَجُلٍ كَسَبَ مَالاً فِي غَيْرِ طَاعَةِ اللهِ، فَوَرَّثَهُ رَجُلاً فَأَنْفَقَهُ فِي طَاعَةِ اللهِ سُبْحَانَهُ، فَدَخَلَ بِهِ الْجَنَّةَ، وَدَخَلَ الاْوَّلُ بِهِ النَّارَ.

Hadith n. 430

430. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The worst in (concluding a) transaction and the most unsuccessful in striving, is the man who exerts himself in seeking riches although fate does not help him in his aims and consequently he goes from this world in a sorrowful state while in the next world too he will face its ill consequences. 92

430. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ أَخْسَرَ النَّاسِ صَفْقَةً وَأَخْيَبَهُمْ سَعْياً، رَجُلٌ أَخْلَقَ بَدَنَهُ فِي طَلَبِ آمَالِهِ، وَلَمْ تُسَاعِدْهُ الْمَقَادِيرُ عَلَى إِرَادَتِهِ، فَخَرَجَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا بِحَسْرَتِهِ، وَقَدِمَ عَلَى الْآخِرَةِ بِتَبِعَتِهِ.

Hadith n. 431

431. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Livelihood is of two kinds: the seeker and the sought. Therefore, he who hankers after this world death traces him till it turns him out of it; but he who hankers after the next world, worldly ease itself seeks him till he receives his livelihood from it.

431. وقال عليه السلام : الرِّزْقُ رِزْقَانِ: طَالِبٌ، وَمَطْلُوبٌ، فَمَنْ طَلَبَ الدُّنْيَا طَلَبَهُ الْمَوْتُ حَتَّى يُخْرِجَهُ عَنْهَا،وَمَنْ طَلَبَ الْآخِرَةَ طَلَبَتْهُ الدُّنْيَا حَتَّى يَسْتَوْفِيَ رِزْقَهُ مِنْهَا.

Hadith n. 432

432. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Lovers of Allah are those who look at the inward side of the world while others look at its outward side, they busy themselves with remoter benefits while others busy themselves in immediate benefits. They kill those things which they feared would have killed them, and leave here in this world what they think would leave them. They took amassing of wealth by others as a small matter and regarded it like losing.

They are enemies of things others love while love things which others hate. Through them, Quran has been learnt and they have been given knowledge through Quran. Through them Quran is established while through the Quran they are established. They do not see any object of hope above what they hope and no object of fear above what they fear.

432. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللهِ هُمُ الَّذِينَ نَظَرُوا إِلَى بَاطِنِ الدُّنْيَا إِذَا نَظَرَ النَّاسُ إِلَى ظَاهِرِهَا، وَاشْتَغَلُوا بِآجِلِهَا إِذَا آشْتَغَلَ النَّاسُ بِعَاجِلِهَا، فَأَمَاتُوا مِنْهَا مَا خَشُوا أَنْ يُمِيتَهُمْ وَتَرَكُوا مِنْهَا مَا عَلِمُوا أَنَّهُ سَيَتْرُكُهُمْ، وَرَأَوُا اسْتِكْثَارَ غَيْرِهِمْ مِنْهَا اسْتِقْلالاً، وَدَرَكَهُمْ لَهَا فَوْتاً، أَعْدَاءُ مَا سَالَمَ النَّاسُ، وَسِلْمُ مَا عَادَى النَّاسُ! بِهِمْ عُلِمَ الْكِتَابُ وَبِهِ عُلِمُوا وَبِهِمْ قَامَ الْكِتَابُ وَبِهِ قَامُوا، لاَ يَرَوْنَ مَرْجُوّاً فَوْقَ مَا يَرْجُونَ، وَلاَ مَخُوفاً فَوْقَ مَا يَخَافُونَ.

Hadith n. 433

433. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Remember pleasures will pass away while the consequences will stay.

433. وقال عليه السلام : اذْكُرُوا انْقِطَاعَ الَّلذَّاتِ، وَبَقَاءَ التَّبِعَاتِ

Hadith n. 434

434. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Try (a man) and you will hate him.

434. وقال عليه السلام : اخْبُرْ تَقْلِهِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Razi says: Some people say that this saying is of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.), but what confirms that it is the saying of Amir al-mu'minin (p.b.u.h.) is the statement related by Tha'lab from Ibn al-Arabi, that (caliph) al-Ma'mun said, "If Ali had not said 'ukhbur taqlihi' (try a man and you will hate him)," I would have said: 'aqlihi takhbur' (hate a man in order to try him)."

قال الرضي: ومن الناس من يروي هذا لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله ، ومما يُقوّي أنه من كلام أميرالمؤمنين عليه السلام ما حكاه ثعلب قال: حدّثنا ابن الاَعرابي قال: قال المأمون: لو لا أنّ علياً عليه السلام قال: «اخبُر تَقْلِهِ» لقلت أنا: اقْلِهِ تَخْبُرْ.

Hadith n. 435

435. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: It is not such that Allah, to Whom belongs Might and Majesty, keeps open the door of gratitude for a person and closes the door of plenty upon him, or that He opens the door of prayer to a person and closes the door of acceptance upon him, or that He opens the door of repentance for a person and closes the door of forgiveness upon him.

435. وقال عليه السلام : مَا كَانَ اللهُ لِيَفْتَحَ عَلَى عَبْدٍ بَابَ الشُّكْرِ وَيُغْلِقَ عَنْهُ بَابَ الزِّيَادَةِ، وَلاَ لِيَفْتَحَ عَلَى عَبْدٍ بَابَ الدُّعَاءِ وَيُغْلِقَ عَنْهُ بَابَ الاْجَابَةِ، وَلاَ لِيَفْتَحَ عَلَى عَبْدٍ بَابَ التَّوْبَةِ وَيُغْلِقَ عَنْهُ بَابَ الْمَغْفِرَةِ.

Hadith n. 436

436. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The most appropriate person for an honourable position is he who descends from the people of honour.

436. وقال عليه السلام : أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِالْكَرَمِ مَنْ عَرَفتْ فيه الْكِرَامُ.

Hadith n. 437

437. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked: Which of the two is better; justice or generosity? **Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, replied:** Justice puts things in their places while generosity takes them out from their directions; justice is the general caretaker while generosity is a particular benefit. Consequently, justice is superior and more distinguished of the two.

437. وسئل عليه السلام أَيّما أَفضل: العدل، أَو الجود؟ فقال: الْعَدْلُ يَضَعُ الاُمُورَ مَوَاضِعَهَا، والْجُودُ يُخْرِجُهَا عَنْ جِهَتِهَا، وَالْعَدْلُ سَائِسٌ عَامٌّ، وَالْجُودُ عَارِضٌ خَاصٌّ، فَالْعَدْلُ أَشْرَفُهُمَا وَأَفْضَلُهُمَا.

Hadith n. 438

438. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: People are enemies of what they do not know.

438. وقال عليه السلام : النَّاسُ أَعْدَاءُ مَا جَهِلُوا.

Hadith n. 439

439. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The whole of asceticism is confined between two expressions of the Quran. Allah, the Glorified says:

Lest distress you yourselves for what escapes you, and be overjoyous for what He has granted you (***Quran, 57:23***).

Whoever does not grieve over what he misses and does not revel over what comes to him acquires asceticism from both its sides.

439. وقال عليه السلام : الزُّهْدُ كُلُّهُ بَيْنَ كَلِمَتَينِ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ: قَالَ اللهُ عزّوجلّ: (لكيلا تأسَوا عَلَى مَا فَاتَكُمْ ، وَ لا تَفْرَحُوا بِما آتَاكُمْ) ، فَمَنْ لَمْ يَأْسَ عَلَى الْمَاضِي، وَلَمْ يَفْرَحْ بِالاْتِي، فَقَدْ أَخَذَ الزُّهْدَ بِطَرَفَيْهِ

Hadith n. 440

440. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: What a breaker is sleep for resolutions of the day!

440. وقال عليه السلام : ما أَنْقَضَ النَّوْمَ لِعَزَائِمِ الْيَوْمِ.

Hadith n. 441

441. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Governing power is the proving ground for people.

441. وقال عليه السلام : الْوِلاَيَاتُ مَضَامِيرُ الرِّجَالِ .

Hadith n. 442

442. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: No town has greater right on you than the other. The best town for you is that which bears you.

442. وقال عليه السلام : لَيْسَ بَلَدٌ بِأَحَقَّ بِكَ مِنْ بَلَدٍ، خَيْرُ الْبِلاَدِ مَا حَمَلَكَ.

Hadith n. 443

443. When the news of the death of (Malik) al-Ashtar (may Allah have mercy on him), reached Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, he said: Malik, what a man Malik was! By Allah, if he had been a mountain he would have been a great one (*find*), and if he had been a stone he would have been hard; no horseman could have reached it and no bird could have flown over it.

443. وقال عليه السلام : وقد جاءه نعي الأشتر رحمه الله: مَالكٌ وَمَا مَالِكٌ! وَاللهِ لَوْ كَانَ جَبَلاً لَكَانَ فِنْداً، وَلَوْ كَانَ حَجَراً لَكَانَ صَلْداً، لاَ يَرْتَقِيهِ الْحَافِرُ، وَلاَ يُوفِي عَلَيْهِ الطَّائِرُ.

Sayyid ar-Razi says: "*Find*" means a lonely mountain (rising in height above the others in the range).

قال الرضي: الفند: المنفرد من الجبال.

Hadith n. 444

444. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A little that lasts is better than much that brings grief.

444. وقال عليه السلام : قَلِيلٌ مَدُومٌ عَلَيْهِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ كَثِيرٍ مَمْلُولٍ مِنْهُ.

Hadith n. 445

445. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If a man possesses a revealing quality wait and see his other qualities. 93

445. وقال عليه السلام : إذَا كَانَ في رَجُلٍ خَلَّةٌ رَائِعَةٌ فَانْتَظِرْ أَخَوَاتِهَا.

Hadith n. 446

446. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to Ghalib ibn Sa'sa'ah, father of Farazdaq (famous Arabic poet) during a conversation between them: What about the large number of your camels? **The man replied:** They have been swept away by (discharging of) obligations, O Amir al-mu'minin! **Whereupon Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said:** That is the most praiseworthy way of (losing) them.

446. وقال عليه السلام لغالب بن صعصعة أبي الفرزدق، في كلام دار بينهما: مَا فَعَلَتْ إِبِلُكَ الْكثِيرَةُ؟ قال: ذَعْذَعَتْها الحُقُوقُ يا أميرالمؤمنين. فَقال عليه السلام : ذَاكَ أَحْمَدُ سُبُلِهَا

Hadith n. 447

447. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever trades without knowing the rules of religious law will be involved in usury.

447. وقال عليه السلام : مَنِ اتَّجَرَ بِغَيْرِ فِقْهٍ ارْتَطَمَ فِي الرِّبَا.

Hadith n. 448

448. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever regards small distresses as big, Allah involves him in big ones.

448. وقال عليه السلام :مَنْ عَظَّمَ صِغَارَ الْمَصَائِبِ ابْتَلاَهُ اللهُ بِكِبَارِهَا.

Hadith n. 449

449. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever maintains his own respect in view, his desires appear light to him.

449. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْ كَرُمَتْ عَلَيْهِ نَفْسُهُ هَانَتْ عَلَيْهِ شَهْوَتُهُ.

Hadith n. 450

450. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whenever a man cuts a joke he separates away a bit from his wit.

450. وقال عليه السلام : مَا مَزَحَ امْرُؤٌ مَزْحَةً إِلاَّ مَجَّ مِنْ عَقْلِهِ مَجَّةً.

Hadith n. 451

451. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Your turning away from him who inclines towards you is a loss of your share of advantage while your inclining towards him who turns away from you is humiliation for yourself.

451. وقال عليه السلام : زُهْدُكَ فِي رَاغِبٍ فِيكَ نُقْصَانُ حَظٍّ، وَرَغْبَتُكَ فِي زَاهِدٍ فِيكَ ذُلُّ نَفْسٍ.

Hadith n. 452

452. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Riches and destitution will follow presentation before Allah.

452. وقال عليه السلام : الغِنَى والْفَقْرُ بَعْدَ الْعَرْضِ عَلَى اللهِ.

Hadith n. 453

453. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Az-Zubayr remained a man from our house till his wretched son ‘Abdullah came forth. 94

453. وقال عليه السلام : مَا زَالَ الزُّبَيْرُ رَجُلاً مِنَّا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ حَتَّى نَشَأَ ابْنُهُ الْمَشْؤُومُ عَبْدُ اللهِ.

Hadith n. 454

454. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: What has a man to do with vanity. His origin is semen and his end is a carcass while he cannot feed himself nor ward off death.95

454. وقال عليه السلام : مَا لِابْنِ آدَمَ وَالْفَخْرِ: أَوَّلُهُ نُطْفَةٌ، وَآخِرُهُ جِيفَةٌ، وَ لاَ يَرْزُقُ نَفْسَهُ، وَلاَ يَدفَعُ حَتْفَهُ.

Hadith n. 455

455. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked about the greatest poet and he said: The whole group of them did not proceed on the same lines in such a way that we can know the height of their glory; but if it has to be done then it is the "*al-Malik ad-dillil*" (the mislead king).

455. وسئل عليه السلام : من أشعر الشعراء؟ فقال: إِنَّ الْقَوْمَ لَمْ يَجْرُوا فِي حَلبةٍ تُعْرَفُ الْغَايَةُ عِنْدَ قَصَبَتِهَا فَإِنْ كَانَ وَلاَ بُدَّ فَالْمَلِكُ الضِلِّيلُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Razi says: Amir al-mu'minin means Imru'l Qays.[96]

قال الرضي: يريد امرأ القيس

Hadith n. 456

456. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Is there no free man who can leave this chewed morsel (of the world) to those who like it? Certainly, the only price for yourselves is Paradise. Therefore, do not sell yourself except for Paradise.

456. وقال عليه السلام : أَلاَ حُرٌّ يَدَعُ هذِهِ اللُّمَاظَةَ لاِهْلِهَا؟ إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لاِنْفُسِكُمْ ثَمَنٌ إِلاَّ الْجَنَّةَ، فَلاَ تَبِيعُوهَا إِلاَّ بِهَا.

Hadith n. 457

457. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Two greedy persons never get satiated, the seeker of knowledge and the seeker of this world.

457. وقال عليه السلام : مَنْهُومَانِ لاَ يَشْبَعَانِ: طَالِبُ عِلْمٍ، وَطَالِبُ دُنْيَا.

Hadith n. 458

458. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Belief means you should prefer truth when it harms you rather than falsehood when it benefits you; your words should not be more than your action and you should fear Allah when speaking about others.

458. وقال عليه السلام : عَلامةُ الايْمَانِ أَنْ تُؤثِرَ الصِّدْقَ حَيْثُ يَضرُّكَ عَلَى الْكَذِبِ حَيْثُ يَنْفَعُكَ، أَنْ يَكُونَ فِي حَدِيثِكَ فَضْلٌ عَنْ عِلْمِكَ وَأَنْ تَتَّقِيَ اللهَ فِي حَدِيثِ غَيْرِكَ.

Hadith n. 459

459. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Destiny holds sway over (our) predetermination till effort itself brings about ruin.

459. وقال عليه السلام : يَغْلِبُ الْمِقْدَارُعَلَى التَّقْدِيرِ حَتَّى تَكُونَ الاْفَةُ فِي التَّدْبِيرِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Something of this meaning has already appeared earlier though in words different from these.

قال الرضي: وقد مضى هذا المعنى فيما تقدم برواية تخالف بعض هذه الالفاظ.

Hadith n. 460

460. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Forbearance and endurance are twins and they are the product of high courage.

460. وقال عليه السلام : الْحِلْمُ وَالاْنَاةُ تَوْأَمَانِ يُنْتِجُهُمَا عُلُوُّ الْهِمَّةِ.

Hadith n. 461

461. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Backbiting is the tool of the helpless.

461. وقال عليه السلام : الْغِيبَةُ جُهْدُ الْعَاجِزِ.

Hadith n. 462

462. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Many a man gets into mischief because of being spoken well about.

462. وقال عليه السلام : رُبَّ مَفْتُونٍ بِحُسْنِ الْقَوْلِ فِيهِ.

Hadith n. 463

463. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: This world has been created for other than itself and has not been created for itself.

463. وقال عليه السلام : الدُّنْيَا خُلِقَتْ لِغَيْرِهَا، ولَمْ تُخْلَقْ لِنَفْسِهَا.

Hadith n. 464

464. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The Banu Umayyah (Umayyids) have a fixed period (*mirwad*) wherein they are having their way. But when differences arise among them then even if the hyena attacks them it will overpower them.

464. وقال عليه السلام : إِنَّ لِبَنِي أُمَيَّةَ مِرْوَداً يَجْرُونَ فِيهِ، وَلَوْ قَدِ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيَما بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ كَادَتْهُمُ الضِّبَاعُ لَغَلَبَتْهُمْ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Herein *"mirward"* is a form derived from *"irwad"* which means to allow time, to wait for. It is an extremely eloquent and wonderful expression. It is as though Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, has likened the period of Banu Umayyah to a limited area meant for the training of horses for racing where they are running towards the limit, so that when they reach its extremity their organization will be destroyed. 97

قال الرضي : وَالْمِرْوَدُ هاهنا مفعَل من الإِرْوَاد، وهو الإمهال والإنظار، وهذا من أفصح الكلام وأغربه، فكأنه عليه السلام شبّه المهلة التي هم فيها بالمضمار الذى يجرون فيه إلى الغاية، فاذا بلغوا مُنقَطَعها انتقضَ نظامُهم بعدها.

Hadith n. 465

465. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said eulogizing the Ansar : By Allah, they nurtured Islam with their generous hands and eloquent tongues as a year old calf is nurtured.

465. وقال عليه السلام في مدح الاَنصار: هُمْ وَاللهِ رَبّواالاْسْلاَمَ كَمَا يُرَبَّى الْفَلُوُّخ مَعَ غَنَائِهِمْ بَأَيْدِيهِمُ السِّبَاطِ وَأَلْسِنَتِهِمُ السِّلاَطِ.

Hadith n. 466

466. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The eye is the strap of the rear.

466. وقال عليه السلام : الْعَيْنُ وِكَاءُ السَّهِ.

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is a wonderful metaphor, it is as though Amir al-mu'minin has likened the rear part of the body with a bag and the eye with a strap. When the strap is let loose the bag cannot retain anything. According to the well-known and reputed view it is the saying of the Prophet but some people have stated it to be of Amir al-mu'minin. Al-Mubarrad has mentioned it in his book *al-Muqtadab* under the chapter 'Words of single letters'. We too have discussed this metaphor in our book named *Majazat al-athar an-nabawiyyah.*

قال الرضي: و هذه من الاستعارات العجيبة، كأنه شبّه السّهَ بالوعاء، والعين بالوكاء، فإذا أُطلق الوكاءُ لم ينضبطِ الوعاءُ و هذا القول في الاَشهر الاَظهر من كلام النبي عليه السلام ، وقد رواه قوم لاَميرالمؤمنين عليه السلام ، ذكر ذلك المبرّد في كتاب المقتضب في باب اللفظ بالحروف. و قد تكلمنا على هذه الاستعارة في كتابنا الموسوم: بمجازات الآثار النبوية.

Hadith n. 467

467. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said in one of his speeches: A ruler came into position over them. He remained upright and made them upright till the entire religion put its bosom on the ground.

467. وقال عليه السلام في كلام له: وَوَلِيَهُمْ وَالٍ فأَقَامَ واسْتَقَامَ، حَتَّى ضَرَبَ الدِّينُ بِجِرَانِهِ.

Hadith n. 468

468. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A severe time will come upon people wherein the rich will seize possessions with their teeth although not commanded to do so. Allah the Glorified, says:

Forget not generosity among yourselves (***Quran, 2:237***).

During this time wicked will rise up while virtuous will remain low and purchases will be made from helpless although the Prophet (S) has prohibited purchasing from the helpless. 98

468. وقال عليه السلام : يَأتِي عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ عَضُوضٌ يَعَضُّ الْمُوسِرُ فِيهِ عَلَى مَا فِي يَدَيْهِ وَلَمْ يُؤْمَرْ بِذلِكَ، قَالَ اللهُ سُبْحَانَهُ: (و لا تَنْسَوُا الْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ) ، تَنْهَدُ فِيهِ الاَشْرَارُ، وَتُسْتَذَلُّ الاَخْيَارُ، ويُبَايِعُ الْمُضْطَرُّونَ، وَقَدْ نَهَى رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَى اللهُ عليه و آله و سلم عَنْ بَيعِ الْمُضْطَرِّينَ.

Hadith n. 469

469. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Two types of persons will fall into ruin over me: The one who loves exaggerates and the other who lays false and baseless blames.

469. وقال عليه السلام : يَهْلِكُ فِيَّ رَجُلاَنِ: مُحِبٌّ مُفْرِطٌ، وَبَاهِتٌ مُفْتَرٍ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is on the lines of Amir al-mu'minin's own saying which runs as: "Two categories of persons will be ruined over me: the one who loves exaggeratingly and the hater and malice-bearer." 99

Hadith n. 470

470. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked on the Unity of Allah and His justice, when he replied: Unity means that you do not subject Him to the limitations of your imagination and justice means that you do not lay any blame on Him. 100

470. وسئل عليه السلام عن التوحيد والعدل فقال: التَّوْحِيدُ أَنْ لا تَتَوَهَّمَهُ وَالْعَدْلُ أَلاَّ تَتَّهِمَهُ.

Hadith n. 471

471. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There is no good in silence over matters involving wisdom just as there is no good in speaking with ignorance.

471. وقال عليه السلام : لاَ خَيْرَ فِي الصَّمْتِ عَنِ الْحُكْمِ، كَمَا أَنَّهُ لاَ خَيْرَ فِي الْقَوْلِ بِالْجَهْلِ.

Hadith n. 472

472. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said in his prayer for seeking rain: O My God, send us rain by submissive clouds not by unruly ones.

472. وقال عليه السلام في دعاء استسقى به: اللَّهُمَّ اسْقِنَا ذُلُلَ السَّحَابِ دُونَ صِعَابِهَا.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is an expression of wonderful eloquence, because Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, has likened the cloud which is accompanied by thunder, lighting, wind and flashes with unruly camels who throw away their saddles and throw down their riders, and likened the clouds

free from these terrible things to the submissive camels which are easy to milk and obedient to ride.

قال الرضي: وهذا من الكلام العجيب الفصاحة، وذلك أنه عليه السلام شبّه السحاب ذوات الرُّعود والبوارق والرياح والصواعق بالإبل الصّعاب التي تَقْمُصُ برحالها وتقِصُّ بركبانها، وشبّه السحاب خاليةً من تلك الروائع بالإبل الذُّلُلِ التي تُحْتَلَبُ طَيِّعَةً وتُقْتَعَدُ مُسْمِحَةً.

Hadith n. 473

473. It was said to Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, : We wish you had changed your grey hair, O Amir al-Mu'minin. **Then he said:** Dye is a way of adornment while we are in a state of grief.

473. وقيل له عليه السلام : لو غيَّرتَ شيبك يا أميرالمؤمنين. فقال عليه السلام : الْخِضَابُ زِينَةٌ، وَنَحْنُ قَوْمٌ فِي مُصِيبَةٍ!

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, is referring to the death of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his descendants.

قال الرضي: يريد برسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله.

Hadith n. 474

474. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The fighter in the way of Allah who gets martyred would not get a greater reward than he who remains chaste despite means. It is possible that a chaste person may become one of the angels.

474. وقال عليه السلام : مَا الْمُجَاهِدُ الشَّهِيدُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ بِأَعْظَمَ أَجْراً مِمَّنْ قَدَرَ فَعَفَّ، لَكَادَ الْعَفِيفُ أَنْ يَكُونَ مَلَكاً مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ

Hadith n. 475

475. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Contentment is a wealth that does not exhaust.

475. وقال عليه السلام : الْقَنَاعَةُ مَالٌ لاَيَنْفَدُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Some people have related that this is the saying of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his descendants.

قال الرضي: وقد رَوى بعضُهم هذا الكلام عن النبي صلى الله عليه وآله.

Hadith n. 476

476. When Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, put Ziyad ibn Abih in place of Abdullah ibn Abbas over Fars (in Persia) and its revenues, he had a long conversation with him in which he prohibited him from advance recovery of revenue. Therein he said: Act on justice and keep aloof from violence and injustice because violence will lead them to forsake their abodes while injustice will prompt them to take up arms.

476. وقال عليه السلام لزياد بن أبيه. وقد استخلفَهُ لعبد الله بن العباس على فارس وأَعمالها، في كلامٍ طويلٍ كان بينهما، نهاه فيه عن تقدم الخَراج : اسْتَعْمِلِ الْعَدْلَ، وَاحْذَرِ الْعَسْفَ والْحَيْفَ فَإِنَّ الْعَسْفَ يَعُودُ بِالْجَلاَءِ، وَالْحَيْفَ يَدْعُو إِلَى السَّيْفِ.

Hadith n. 477

477. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The worst sin is that which the committer takes lightly.

477. وقال عليه السلام : أَشَدُّ الذُّنُوبِ مَا اسْتَخَفَّ بِهِ صَاحِبُهُ.

Hadith n. 478

478. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Allah has not made it obligatory on the ignorant to learn till He has made it obligatory on the learned to teach.

478. وقال عليه السلام : مَا أَخَذَ اللهُ عَلَى أَهْلِ الْجَهْلِ أَنْ يَتَعَلَّمُوا حَتَّى أَخَذَ عَلَى أَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ أَنْ يُعَلِّمُوا.

Hadith n. 479

479. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The worst comrade is he for whom formality has to be observed. 101

479. وقال عليه السلام : شَرُّ الاْخْوَانِ مَنْ تُكُلِّفَ لَهُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is because formality is inseparable from hardship and it is an evil that is

caused by a comrade for whom formality is observed. Consequently, he is the worst of all comrades.

قال الرضي: لاَن التكليف مستلزمٌ للمشقة، وهو شرٌ لازمٌ عن الاَخ المتَكلّفِ له، فهو شرُّ الإِخوان.

Hadith n. 480

480. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If a believer enrages his brother, it means that he leaves him.

480. وقال عليه السلام : إِذَا احْتَشَمَ الْمُؤْمِنُ أَخَاهُ فَقَدْ فَارَقَهُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: It is said *"hashamahu"* or *"ahshamahu"* to mean "He enraged him". According to another view it means "He humiliated him". While *"ihtashamahu"* means "He sought these for him", and that is most likely to cause him to separate.

قال الرضي: يقال: حشمه وأحشمه: إذا أغضبه، وقيل: أخجله، واحتشمه: طلب ذلك له، وهو مَظِنّة مفارقته.

*****

This is the end of our selection of the utterances of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, We are praiseful to Allah, the Glorified, for having enabled us to collect the scattered utterances from various sides and to bring together from different places the material that was lying far away. We intend, as we stipulated in the beginning, to leave some blank pages at the end of every chapter for the insertion of whatever we may get and the addition of whatever comes to us, for it is possible that some material which is not in our view at present or which is not available may become known to us and fall in our hands. We have no ability save through Allah. In Him we trust, and He is Sufficient for us. He is the best Supporter.

This book was completed in the month of *Rajab,* in the year 400 A.H.

May Allah send blessings on our master Muhammad the last of the prophets who guided us towards the best path, and his chaste descendants and his companions who are the stars of conviction.

و هذا حين انتهاء الغاية بنا إلى قطع المختار من كلام أمير المؤمنين عليه‌السلام ، حامدين للّه سبحانه على ما منّ به من توفيقنا لضم ما انتشر من أطرافه، و تقريب ما بعد من أقطاره. و تقرر العزم كما شرطنا أولا على تفضيل أوراق من البياض في آخر كل باب من الأبواب، ليكون لاقتناص الشارد، و استلحاق الوارد، و ما عسى أن يظهر لنا بعد الغموض، و يقع إلينا بعد الشذوذ، و ما توفيقنا إلا باللّه عليه توكلنا، و هو حسبنا و نعم الوكيل.

و ذلك في رجب سنة أربع مائة من الهجرة،

و صلى اللّه على سيدنا محمد خاتم الرسل، و الهادي إلى خير السبل، و آله الطاهرين، و أصحابه نجوم اليقين

1. Labun" means a milch camel and "ibnu'l-labun" means its two year old young. In this age the young is neither suitable for riding nor does it has udders which could be milked. It is called "ibnu'l-labun" because in this period of two years its mother bears another young and begins yielding milk again.
The intention is that during civil disturbance or trouble a man should behave in such a manner that lie may be regarded of no consequence and ignored. No need should be felt for his participation in either party". This is because during mischief only dissociation can save from molestation. Of course, when the clash is between right and wrong it is not permissible to keep aloof nor can it be called civil disturbance: but on such occasions it is obligatory to rise up for the support of right and suppression of wrong. For example, (luring the battles of jamal and Siffin it was obligatory to support the right and to fight against the wrong.
2. In the last phrase, Amir al-mu'minin has described the consequences and effects resulting from self-admiration namely that it creates the feeling of hatred and humiliation-against others. Thus, the man who manifests his greatness by every pretext in order to make himself conspicuous is never regarded with esteem. People begin to despise him because of his mental condition in seeking self-conspicuity and are not prepared to accord him the worth which he really has, much less to regard him as he himself thinks to be.
3. This saying comprises of two phrases:-
The first sentence relates to charity and Amir al-mu'minin has described it as an effective cure, because when a man helps the poor and the destitute by alms they pray for his health and recovery from the depth of their hearts and therefore their prayer is granted and brings him cure. In this connection, there is the saying of the Holy Prophet that, "Cure your sick by charity."
The second sentence relates to the disclosure of actions on the Day of Judgement, namely that the good and bad deeds which a person performs in this world cannot be perceived by human senses because of the veil of material elements but on the Day of Judgement when material curtains will be lifted they will so appear before the eyes that there will be no possibility of denial by anyone. Thus, Allah has said:
On that day shall come out people (from their graves) in (scattered) groups, to be shown their own deeds. Then he who has done an atom-weight of good shall see it. And he who has done an atom-weight of evil shall see it. (Qur'an, 99:6-8)
4. The meaning is that when a man's fortune is helpful and the world is favourable to him then people describe his performances with exaggeration and give credit to him for others' actions as well, while if a man loses the favour of the world and the clouds of ill-luck and misfortune engulf him, they ignore his virtues and do not at all tolerate even to recall his name.
They are friends of him whom the world favours and the foes of him whom the world hits.
5. To the person who behaves with others with benignity and manner-liness, people extend their hand of cooperation, they honour and respect him and shed tears after his death. Therefore, a person should lead such an agreeable life that no one should have any complaint against him, nor should any harm be caused by him to anyone so that during life he should attract others and after death too he should be remembered in good words
6. The occasion for pardon and forgiveness is when there is power to take revenge. But when there is no such power, then pardon is just the result of helplessness, for which there is no credit. However, to practise pardon despite having power and the ability to avenge is the essence of human distinction and an expression of thanks to Allah for bestowing this power, because the feeling of gratefulness necessitates that man should bow before. Allah in humbleness and humiliation by which the delicate feeling of pity and kindness will arise in his heart and the rising flames of rage and anger will cool down after which there will be no urge to take revenge under the effect of which he would use his power and capability to satisfy his anger instead of using it properly.
7. It is not difficult to attract others by good manners and cheerfulness and to befriend them by sweet speech because no

physical exertion or mental worry is required for this: and after making friends it is still easier to maintain the friendship and good relations because for making friends some effort or other is needed while for maintaining it no difficulty is to be surmounted. Therefore, no one can be more wretched than the man who cannot even retain a thing which could be retained just by keeping away a frown from the face.

The intention is that a man should meet everyone with good manners and cheerfulness so that people may like to associate with him and extend a hand of friendship towards him.

8. Amir al-mu'minin uttered this sentence when Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, Muhammad ibn Maslamah and 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar refused to support him against the people of Jamal. He means to say that these people are so against me that neither have my words any effect on them nor do I need to reprove, rebuke or correct them.

9. The intention is that since in the beginning of Islam the number of Muslims was limited it was necessary to keep them distinct from the Jews in order to maintain their collective entity, so the Prophet ordered the use of hair-dye which was not in use among the Jews. Besides, it was also the aim that when facing the enemy the people should not appear old in age and weak.

10. This saying is about those who claimed to be neutrals, such as 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, al-Ahnaf ibn Qays, Muhammad ibn Maslamah, Usamah ibn Zayd and Anas ibn Malik, etc. No doubt these people did not openly support wrong but not to support right is also a kind of support of wrong. Therefore, they will be counted among the opponents of right.

11. However had a thing may be regarded among the people and however it may be looked down upon, if it is not really bad then to feel bashful about it is quite foolish, because it will often cause deprival from things which are the source of successes and achievements in this as well as the next world. For example, if a man fears lest people may regard him to be ignorant and therefore feels bashful in asking an important and necessary issue then this misplaced bashfulness would result in his being deprived of knowledge. Therefore, no sane person should feel bashful about making enquiries. Thus, an old man who was learning despite old age was asked whether he did not feel ashamed of learning in old age and he replied: "I do not feel shame for ignorance during old age, then how can I feel shame for learning in old age." Of course, to feel shame in doing things which are really bad and mischievous is the essence of humanity and nobility; for instance, those immoral acts which are bad according to religion, intelligence and ethics. In any case, the first kind of bashfulness is bad and the second one is good. In this connection, the Holy Prophet's saying is that:

Bashfulness is of two kinds, bashfulness of intelligence and bashfulness of foolishness. The bashfulness of intelligence is knowledge whereas the bashfulness of foolishness is ignorance.

12. The sense of the interpretation written by as-Sayyid ar- Radi is that Amir al-mu'minin intends to say that if our right, that lies with others in our position, as with the Imam whom it is obligatory to obey, is acknowledged and we are given the chance of worldly rule well and good, otherwise, we will have to bear all sorts of hardships and ignominies and we shall be compelled to live this life of ignominy and humiliation for a long time.

Some commentators have stated a different meaning than this, namely that "If our position is belittled and put aside, and others are given precedence over us, we shall bear it patiently and agree to remain behind" and this is what is meant by riding on the hind part of the camel, because the person who rides on the hind part is on the rear while the person who sits on its back is in the fore. Some people take it to mean that if we are allowed our right we will accept it but if it is not given we shall not behave like the rider who gives over the rein of his animal into the hands of some other person who is free to take him wherever he likes but we shall stick to our right even though a long time may elapse and not surrender to the usurpers.

13. When a person goes on receiving favours despite sinfulness he develops the misunderstanding that Allah is pleased with him and that this is the result of His pleasure, because increase in favours arises out of gratefulness and in the event of ungratefulness the bestowal of favours stops, as Allah says:

And when declared your Lord: "If you be grateful I will increase (My favours) to you, and if you be ungrateful, verily My torment is indeed severe." (Qur'an, 14:7)

Nevertheless, continuous bestowal of favours, despite disobedience and ungratefulness, cannot be the result of Allah's pleasure, nor can it he said that in this way Allah has put him under the misconception that he should regard this exuberance of favours as the result of Allah's pleasure because when he knows that he is a sinner and disobedient and is

commiting sins and vices, knowing them to be sins and vices, then there are no grounds for misconception on his part by assuming Allah 's pleasure and consent. He should rather think that this is a sort of trial and respite for when his sinfulness and high-handedness reaches its zenith he will be caught all at once. Therefore, in such a case he should keep waiting as to when Allah 's favours are taken away from him and he is punished with deprival and discomfiture.

14. The things which a man wants to conceal from others do come out through his tongue sometime or another, and his effort at concealment is unsuccessful. This is because although the far-sighted mind desires to keep them concealed yet sometimes it gets entangled in some more important matter and becomes careless on this score when the concealed thing comes out in words through his tongue. When the mind becomes attentive, it is not possible to undo the matter just as an arrow cannot be got back after shooting. Even if this is not the case and mind is fully cautious and attentive, the thing cannot remain concealed because the lines of the face are indicative of mental feelings and reflect the heart's emotions, and consequently redness of face can easily point out to the sense of shame, and its yellowness fear.

15. The intention is that as long as sickness does not become serious do not give it importance, because by giving importance the feelings get affected and the illness increases. Therefore, continued activity and regarding oneself well dispels sickness and also prevents the power of resistance from getting weak, and keeps up its psychological power, while the psychological power curbs small ailments by itself, provided it is not forced to give up resistance by the surrendering the imagination to the ailment.

16. Khabbab ibn al-Aratt was a distinguished companion of the Holy Prophet and was one of the early muhajirun (immigrants). He suffered various sorts of hardships at the hands of the Quraysh. He was made to stand in the scorching sun, and to lie on fire but he did not for any reason abandon the side of the Holy Prophet. He accompanied the Holy Prophet in Badr and other battles. He supported Amir al-mu'minin in Siffin and Nahrawan. He had left Medina and settled in Kufah. Thus, he died here in 39 A.H. at the age of 73, Amir al-mu'minin led his funeral prayer and he was buried outside Kufah. Amir al-mu'minin uttered these mercy-invoking words standing on his grave.

17. This is one of the authentic traditions (ahadith) of the Holy Prophet whose authenticity the scholars of traditions had never doubted. It was narrated by certain companions of the Holy Prophet such as 'Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas, 'Imran ibn al-Husayn, Umm al-mu'minin Umm Salamah and others, such as Amir al-mu'minin himself, also narrated that:

By Him Who split the seed and created the soul, verily the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his progeny, gave me a promise that no one but a (true) believer will love me, and none but a hypocrite will hate me. (as-Sahih., Muslim, vol.1, p.60; [Muslim, in his book, regards the love of 'Ali as an ingredient of iman or faith and one of its signs; and the hatred of 'Ali as the sign of dissemblance] al-Jami' as-sahih, vol.5, pp.635,643; as-Sunan, Ibn Majah, VOl.1, p.55; as-Sunan, an-Nasa'i, vol.8, pp.115- 116,117; al-Musnad, Ah mad ibn Hanbal, vol.1, pp.84,95,128; vol.6, p.292; ' Ilal al-hadith, Abu Hatim, vol.2, p.400; Hilyah al-awlya', Abu Nu'aym, vol4, p.l85; Jami' al-usul, Ibn al-Athir, vol.9, p.473; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.9, p.133; Manaqib 'Ah ibn Abi Talib, Ibn al-Maghazili, pp.190-195; al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p.1100; Usd al-ghabah, vol.4, p.26; al-Isabah, vol.2, p.509: Tarikh Baghdad, vol.2, p.255; vol.8, p.417; vol.14, p.426; at-Tarikh, Ibn Kathir, vol.7, p.354)

It was in this way that the companions of the Holy Prophet used to test the faith (iman) or hypocrisy (nifaq) of the Muslims through their love or hatred towards Amir al-mu'minin, as is related from Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, Abu Sa`id al-Khudri, 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud and Jabir ibn 'Abdullah that:

We (the companions of the Holy prophet) used to distinguish the hypocrites by their hatred of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. (at-Tirmidhi, vol.5, p.635; al-Mustadrak, vol.3, p. 129; Hilyah al-awliya', vol.6, p.294; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.9, pp.132 133; Jami' al-usul, vol.9, p. p.473; ad-Durr al-manthur, vol.6, pp.66-67; Tarikh Baghdad, vol.13, p. 153; ar-Riyad an-nadirah, vol. 2, pp.214, 215; al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p. 1110; Usd al-ghabah, vol.4, pp.29-30)

18. The person who feels ashamed and repentant after committing sin and offers repentance before Allah remains safe from the penalty of that sin and deserves the reward of repentance: while the person who after doing a virtuous deed begins to feel superiority over others, and being proud of his virtues thinks that he has no apprehension whatever, destroys his virtue and remains deprived of the reward of the virtuous deed. Obviously, he who has erased the blot of his sin by repentance will be better than he who has ruined his action by being proud of it, and having not repented of it either.

19. The meaning is that a man of prestige and esteem never tolerates humiliation or disgrace. If his honour is assailed he will leap like a hungry lion and break away the shackles of humiliation. If a low and narrow minded person is raised beyond his name he would not be able to contain himself but, regarding himself very high, will assail other's position.

20. This saying confirms the theory that by nature human hearts love wildness and that the feeling of love and affection in them is an acquired attribute. Consequently, when the factors and causes of love and affection crop up they get tamed hut when these factors disappear or the feelings of hatred are created against them, the people return to wildness, and thereafter they return to the path of love and affection with great difficulty.

Do not tease the heart because it is a wild bird. If once it flies away from the roof it would come down with great difficulty.

21. A person who has wealth and riches will get friends and acquaintances wherever he may be and therefore he will not feel strange in a foreign land; but if he is poor and destitute he will have no friends even in his homeland because people do not like to make friends with the poor and the destitute, or to extend relations with them. He is therefore, a stranger even at home and has no friends or well-wishers.

He who has no worldly successor remains unknown as a stranger even in his homeland.

22. Contentment means that a man should remain satisfied with what he gets and should not complain if he gets less. if he is not so contented he will try to satisfy his greed by committing social crimes like misappropriation, cheating and deceiving others, because greed compels one to satisfy one's wants by any means whatever. Then the satisfaction 0f one's want opens the way for another want and as a man's wants get satisfied his craving increases and he can never get rid of his needs or of dissatisfaction. This increasing dissatisfaction can be stopped only by contentment which makes a man carefree from all wants except the most essential ones. This is that everlasting wealth that gives satisfaction for good.

23. The shame that is faced in putting a request before an inappropriate person gives more mental pain than the grief in not obtaining its fulfilment. That is why non-fulfilment of a request can be tolerated but the obligation to a low and base person is intolerable. Every self-respecting person would therefore prefer deprivation to being under obligation to an inappropriate man, and would not tolerate placing his request before a low and base person.

24. Talkativeness is the result of diffused thinking while diffusion of thought is the result of the unripeness of wisdom. When wisdom attains perfection and understanding ripens one's mind, and thoughts are balanced, and wisdom acquires power and control over the tongue, as over other parts of the body, the tongue does not act without thinking or outside the dictates of wisdom. Obviously, uttering after thinking is short and free from extras.

As a man's intelligence increases his speaking decreases and he does not speak save at the opportune moment.

25. That is just as each step makes way for the other and this exercise by steps is the means of nearing the goal, similarly every breath of life serves as, death-knell for the previous one and carries life towards death, as if the breath whose motion is regarded as a sign of life is in fact the sign of the passing away of one moment of life and a means of nearing the goal of death, because each breath is death for the previous one, and life is the name of those very death -carrying breaths.

Every breath is the dead body of the life that passed by. Life is the name of living by facing successive deaths.

26. By looking at a seed a cultivator can say what plant will come out of it, what fruits, flowers or leaves it will have and what will be its expanse. In the same way, a guess can be made about the success of a student by looking at his labour and effort or about the failure of some other student by looking at his leisureliness and idleness, because the beginning is indicative of the end and the premises of the conclusion. Therefore, if the end of any matter is not visible then its beginning should be looked at. If its beginning is bad the end too would be bad and if tile beginning is good the end too would be good.

An auspicious river begins from the very spring.

27. Dirar ibn Damrah was one of the companions of Amir al-mu'minin. After the death of Amir al-mu'minin, he went to Syria (ash-Shim) where he met Mu'awiyah. Mu'awiyah asked him, "Describe 'Ah to me." He replied, "Would you please excuse me from answering this?" But Mu'awiyah insisted, "You must describe him." Whereupon Dirar said:

If there is no alternative, then you should know that 'Ali was a man whose personality knew no limits, terrible in power, his speech was decisive, his judgements based on justice, his knowledge spread out in all directions and wisdom was manifest in all his behaviour. Among the food he liked most was the coarse kind and among the clothes, the short (and humble) ones. By Allah, he was among us as one of us. He used to respond to our questions and fulfil all our requests. By Allah, although be used to let us get close to him and he himself was close to us, we did not dare address him due to our feeling of awe towards him nor did we dare to speak first due to his greatness in our hearts. His smile displayed a row of pearls. He used to honour the pious; to be kind to the needy, to feed the orphan, the near of kin or the needy man in misery on the day of huuger; to clothe the bare ones and to help the undefended person. He used to detest the world and its flowering. I

stand witness that. . . (and so forth, as quoted above by as-Sayyid ar-Radi).

When Mu'awiyah heard this from Dirar his eyes filled with tears and he said, "May Allah have mercy on Abu'l-Hasan. He really was so." Then, turning to Dirar he said, "How do you feel in his absence, O' Dirar!" Dirar replied, "My grief is like that of a woman whose only child is butchered in her arms." (al Isti'ib, vol.3, pp.1107-1108; Hilyah al-awlya', vol.2, p.84; Sifatu's-Safwah, Ibn al-Jawzi, vol.1, p.121;al-Amali; Abu 'Ali al-Qali, vol.2. p.147: Zahr al-adab, al-Husri, vol.1, pp.40-41; Muruj adh-dhahab, vol.2, p.42l: ar-Riyad an-nadirah, al-Muhibb at-Tabari, vol.2, p.212; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.18, pp.225 -226)

28. The' end of this story is that after this the man enquired, "What kind of destiny it was by which we had to go?" and Amir al-mu'minin said, "qada' (destiny)" means command of Allah. For example, He has said, "wa qada rabbuka alla ta'budu illa iyyihu" (And commanded your Lord has that you shall worship not [any one] but Him" [Qur'an, 17: 23]). Here "qada' " stands for commanded.

29. The real value of a person is his knowledge (and perfection of attainments), his worth and position would be in accordance with the position of knowledge and attainment he holds. Eyes that are conscious of real values do not look at the face, features, tallness of stature, size or worldly pomp and position but look at the attainments of a person and assess his worth according to these attainments. The conclusion is that a man should strive to acquire distinction and knowledge. The worth of every person is according to the extent of his knowledge.

30. As Allah says:

. . ., Verily, Allah do accept (an offering only) from those who guard (themselves against evil). (Qur'an, 5:27)

31. Perhaps the other meaning of this saying is that: "Whoever loves us should not hanker after worldly matters even though in consequence he may have to face destitution and poverty; but he should rather remain content and avoid seeking worldly benefits."

32. During autumn, protection from cold is necessary because with the change of weather the temperature of the body also changes and ailments such as flue, catarrh, cough etc., occur. This is because bodies are accustomed to hot weather and when suddenly cold comes on tissues become contracted and cold dryness increases in the body. Thus, bathing with cold water soon after bathing with hot water is harmful for this very reason that with hot water the tissues expand and so they at once admit the effect of cold water, and in consequence the natural heat of the body is affected. On the other hand, there is no need of protection from cold during spring season nor is it harmful for the health, because the body is already accustomed to cold. Thus, the temperate cold of the spring is not unpleasant to the body. Rather, with the decline of cold there is an increase of heat and dampness in the body as a result of which growth gets impetus, natural heat rises, the body grows, the temperament feels pleasant and the spirit is joyful.

Similarly, there is the same effect in the plant world. Thus, during autumn due to the prevalence of coldness and dryness, the leaves wither, the vegetative power decreases, the freshness of the plants fades and there is a death-like effect on the green areas. Spring brings the message of life for them. Then with the blowing of healthy winds the blossoms begin to sprout, plants become fresh and healthy, and forests and wildernesses acquire a green hue.

33. Every speaker and preacher manifests the force of his speaking in subjects in which he is well-versed. If he has to change the subject neither will his mind move nor will his tongue be able to speak out. But he whose intellect has the capability of adaptation and whose mind has the power of imagination can turn round his utterances in whatever manner he likes, and can show the excellence of speaking on whatever subject he desires. Consequently, when the tongue which had for so long been abusing the world and unveiling its deceitfulness starts praising the world it shows the same mastery of speaking and power of arguing that had ever been its chief distinction And then, the use of commendatory words does not alter the principle and although the ways are different the object remains the same.

34. Kumayl ibn Ziyad an-Nakha`i was the holder of the secrets of the Imamate and one of the chief companions of Amir al-mu'minin. He held a great position in knowledge and attainment and a chief place in abstinence and Godliness. He was Amir al-mu'minin's Governor of Hit for sometime. He was killed by al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf ath-Thaqafi in the year 83 A.H. at the age of ninety years and was buried outside Kufah.

35. The meaning is that a man's worth can be known by his speech because the speech of every person is indicative of his mind and manners, and by virtue of it his feelings and temperament can be very easily assessed. Therefore, so long as he is silent his weaknesses as well as attainments are concealed but when he speaks his real self manifests itself.

A man is hidden under his tongue; unless he speaks you cannot know his worth and value.

36. Just as Allah sent down a series of prophets by way of His Justice and Mercy to guide and direct towards religion, in the same way He laid down the system of the Imamate to protect religion from alteration and change so that every Imam may in his time save the Divine teachings from the onslaught of personal desires and give directions about the correct precepts of Islam. And just as it is obligatory to know the originator of the religion (i.e., the Prophet) in the same way it is necessary to know the protector of the religion and lie who remains ignorant of him cannot be excused because tile issue of Imamate is supported by so many proofs and testimonies that no intelligent person can find any way to deny it. Thus, the holy Prophet has said:

Whoever dies without knowing the Imam of his time dies a pre-Islamic (jahiliyyah) death. (Sharh al-maqasid, at-Taftazini ash- Shafi'i, vol. 2, p.275; al-Jawahir al-mudiyyah, al-Khatib al-Hanafi, vol.2, pp. 457,509).

It has also been narrated by `Abdullah ibn 'Umar, Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan and `Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his descendants, said that:

One who dies without (knowing his) Imam and binding himself by an oath of allegiance to him will die the death of one belonging to the days of jahiliyyah, and one who withdraws his hand from obedience (to the Imam) will find no argument (in his Defence) when he stands before Allah on the L)ay of Judgement. (al-Musnad, at1'ayliisi, p.259; as-Sahih, Muslim, vol.6, p.22; al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.4, p.96; as-Sunan al-kubra, al-Bayhaqi, vol.8, p.156; at-Tafsir, Ibn Kathir, vol. 1, p.517; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.5, pp.218, 224, 225)

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid also agrees that the personality about whom no one's ignorance can be excused is that of Amir al-mu'minin. He also acknowledges the obligation to obey him and holds that he who does not believe in the issue of Imamate will not achieve deliverance. In this connection he writes:

He who is ignorant of the position of 'Ali, peace be upon him, as Imam and denies its veracity or obligatory character would, according to our associates, remain in Hell for ever, his fasting or prayers being of no avail to him, because the knowledge of this matter is among the basic principles which constitute the foundations of religion. However, we do not regard one who denies his Imamate as an unbeliever but only a sinner, a transgressor or a deviator, etc. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.18, p.373)

37. If evil is done in return for evil, and abuse in return for abuse, the door for animosity and quarrel is opened. But if an evil-doer is met with kindness and gentleness he too would be compelled to change his behaviour. Thus, once Imam Hasan was passing through the market place of Medina when a Syrian noticing his majestic personality enquired from the people who he was and on being told that he was Hasan son of 'Ali (peac0e be upon him) he was exasperated and coming close to him began to abuse him. The Imam heard him quietly. When he finished the Imam said, "You seem to be a stranger here". He acknowledged this and the Imam continued, "Then you had better come with me and stay with me. If you have any need I shall fulfil it, and if you need financial assistance I shall render it." When he saw this kindness and fine manners in return for his harsh and hard words he was extremely ashamed, and admitting his fault sought his forgiveness. When he left the Imam, he did not have better regard for anyone else on the surface of the globe. (al-Kamil, al-Mubarrad, v61. 1, p.235; vol.2, p.63; Nihayah al-irab, an-Nuwayri, vol.6, p.52; Matalib as-sa'ul, Ibn Talhah ash-Shafi'i, vol. 2, pp.11 -12; al-Manaqib, Ibn Shahrashub, vol.4, p.19; al-Bihar, al-Majlisi, vol.43, p.344)

If you are a proper human being do good to the evil-doer.

38. A person who seeks perfection and believes that he is still in need of it can be expected to attain the aim of perfection, but a person who is under the illusion that he has reached the zenith of progress and perfection will not feel the need to strive to attain it, but according to his own view he has already traversed all the stages of perfection and now he has no stage in sight to strive for. Thus, this vain and illusioned man ill always remain deprived of perfection and this vanity will end all possibility of his rise.

39. It is not as difficult to keep aloof from sin the first time as it is after becoming familiar with it and tasting it, because a man does not feel difficulty in doing a thing to which he has become habituated, but it is really hard to give it up. As habits become confirmed, the conscience becomes weaker and difficulties crop up in the way of repentance. To console the heart by postponing repentance is therefore usually with out avail. Surely, when there is difficulty in keeping off sin even in the beginning the lengthening of the period of sins will make repentance still more difficult.

40. This is a proverb which is used when a man runs after one advantage so vehemently that he has to give up several

other advantages, like the man who eats too much or against his appetite and has to go subsequently without several meals.

41. A man attaches great importance to the science and art which he knows and regards that science of no importance which he does not know, and belittles it. This is because whenever such a matter is discussed he is regarded not worthy of attention and is ignored, and thereby he feels slighted. This slight pains him, and a man naturally dislikes a thing that pains him and hates it. In this connection, Plato was asked, "What is the reason that he who does not know hates him who does know, but he who knows does not bear malice or hatred towards him who does not know?" Here plied, "He who does not know realizes that he suffers from a defect and thinks that he who knows must regard him low and humble on account of this defect, so he hates him. On the other hand he who knows does not have the idea that he who does not know should regard him low and so there Is no reason why he should hate him."

42. The person who rises to face wrong for the sake of Allah is afforded support and assistance from Allah and, despite lack of power and means, the forces of wrong cannot shake his determination or create a tremor in his steady feet. But if there is a tinge of personal benefit in his action he can be very easily prevented from his aim.

43. This means. that the giving of full reward to the virtuous for their good actions and appreciating them puts the evil–doers also on the right path. This is more effective than ethical preaching, warning and rebuke. This is because by temperament man inclines towards things from which benefits accrue to him, and his ears (yearn to) resound with eulogies in praise and admiration of him.

44. This sentence can be interpreted in two ways. One is that if you bear malice against anyone, he too will bear malice against you. Therefore, destroy the malice from his heart by removing it from your heart, since your heart is the index of other's heart. If your heart will have no malice there will remain no malice in his heart too. That is why a man assesses the purity of another person's heart by the purity of his own heart. Thus, a man asked his friend, "How much do you love me?" and the reply was: “your own heart." That is, "I love you as much as you love me."

The second interpretation is that if you want to dissuade another person from evil, first you should refrain yourself from that evil. In this way, your advice can be effective on others, otherwise it will remain ineffective.

45. Ibn Abi'l–Hadid ('Izzu'd–Din 'Abd al–Hamid ibn Hibatul'llah al–Mu'tazili [586/1190–655/1257]) says:

"The saying of Amir al–mu'minin in the form of prose and poetry was intended for Abu Bakr and 'Umar. In his prose he addressed 'Umar, because when Abu Bakr asked 'Umar (on the day of Saqifah): 'Give me your hand so that I may swear allegiance to you.' 'Umar replied, 'You are the companion of the Messenger of Allah in all circumstances –– comfort and hardship. So, give me your hand.'

'"Ali, peace be upon him, says (with regard to the claim of 'Umar) that:

If you give arguments in favour of the Abu Bakr's deserving the caliphate on the basis of his being the companion of the Holy Prophet in all circumstances, then why did you not hand over the caliphate to one (i.e., Amir al–mu'minin) who shares with him (Abu Bakr) in this matter, and who had superiority over him by having a relation of kinship with the Holy Prophet?

"In his poetry, Amir al–mu'minin addressed Abu Bakr, because he argued with the ansar at Saqifah saying; "We (the Quraysh) are the kin of the Messenger of Allah and the seed from which he sprung, (therefore, we are the most deserving people to succeed him).'

"After allegiance was sworn to Abu Bakr (by a small group at Saqifah) he used to argue with the Muslims that they must accept his caliphate since it had been accepted by the ahlu'1–halli Wa'1–'aqd (the group who can tie and untie a matter –– i.e., those who were present at Saqifah).

'"Ali, peace be upon him, says (with regard to the claim of Abu Bakr) that:

Regarding your argument with the ansar that you are from the seed from which the Messenger of Allah sprung, and one of his tribe, there is other one (i.e. Amir al–mu'minin himself) who ha" the nearest relation of kinship to the Holy Prophet. And concerning your argument that you have been accepted by the consultation of the com panions of the Holy Prophet (whom you mean by ahlu'l–halli wa'1–`agd), how did it happen that most of the companions were absent (on the day of Saqifah) and did not swear allegiance to you."(Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al–balaghah, vol. 18, p.416)

46. The person who gains a lesson and experience by spending money and wealth should not lament its loss but should deem the experience more valuable than the wealth because wealth is in any case wasted away while the experience will protect him against the dangers of the future. Thus, a scholar who had become destitute after having been wealthy was

asked what had happened to his wealth and he replied: "I have purchased experiences with it and they have proved more useful than the wealth. After losing all that I had, I have not been in the loss."

47. It means that if a person is not temperamentally forbearing he should try to be so in the sense that he should put up a show of forbearance against his temperament. Although he may feel some difficulty in curbing his temperament, the result will be that by and by forbearance will become his temperamental trait and then no need to feign will remain, because habit slowly develops into second nature.

48. This saying is about the awaited Imam who is the last of the series of Imams. On his emergence all states and governments will come to an end, and the complete picture referred to in the verse will appear before the eyes. Whoever wants to may rule in this world but in the end the rule will be in the hands of the descendants of 'Ali (peace be upon them).

49. It means that just as an envious person cannot appreciate any good in him whom he envies, similarly, vanity cannot tolerate the emergence of intelligence or the prominence of good qualities as a result of which the envious person remains devoid of those qualities which are deemed to be good by human intellect.

50. Every individual has some shortcomings or other. If a person keeps aloof from others because of their faults and weakness, he will, by and by, lose all his friends and become lonely and forlorn in this world and thus his life will become bitter and his worries will multiply. At such a moment he should realize that in this society he cannot get angels with whom he may never have any cause of complaint, that he has to live among these very people and to pass his life with them. Therefore, as far as possible he should ignore their shortcomings and pay no regard to the troubles inflicted by them.

51. The person who is haughty and ill-tempered can never succeed in making his surroundings pleasant. His acquaintances will feel wretched and sick of him. But if a person is good-tempered and sweet-tongued people will like to get close to him and befriend him. At the time of need they will prove to be his helpers and supporters whereby he can make his life a success.

52. When a man falls into greed and avarice, he gets entangled in evils like bribery, theft, misappropriation, usury and other immoral acts of this type, while the mind is so dazzled with the brilliance of the evil desires that it fails to see the ill effects and consequences of those bad deeds and to prevent him from them or awaken him from his slumber of unmindfulness. Nevertheless, when he prepares to depart from this world and finds that whatever he had amassed was for this world only and that he cannot take it with him, then, and only then his eyes get opened.

53. If a person adorns himself with the quality of modesty then it prevents him from committing evil acts. Therefore, he has no evil for the people to find in him. Even if a bad act is ever committed by him he does not commit it openly because of his feeling of modesty lest the people notice him.

54. A jealous person feels jealous of the property and position of others but not of their health and physical power, although this blessing is the best of all others. The reason is that the effects of wealth and riches remain before the eyes through external pageantry and means of ease and comfort, whereas health is the victim of disregard for being a routine matter, and it is regarded so unimportant that a jealous person does not consider it worth his feeling of jealousy.

Thus, if he sees a labourer carrying a burden on his head all day he does not feel envious, as if health and energy is not an object of envy. Nevertheless, when he himself falls ill he realizes the value and worth of healthiness. It is now that he realizes that it was this health which till now carried no importance in his eyes but was the most deserving of envy. The intention is that one should regard health as a highly valuable blessing and remain attentive towards its protection and care.

55. The reason for calling goodness of moral character a blessing is that just as blessing brings forth pleasure, in the same way a man can make his environment pleasant by endearing others' hearts through goodness of moral character and can thus succeed in procuring ways for his happiness and ease. And contentment has been regarded as capital and estate for the reason that just as the estate and area under sway dispels need in the same way when a man adopts contentment and feels happy over his livelihood he becomes free of turning to others in the time of need.

Whoever is contented with the morsel he gets, dry or wet, is the king of all the land and sea.

56. The meaning of this is that if the enemy aims at fighting and takes the initiative in it, then one should advance to face him, but one should not initiate the attack because this would be clear high-handedness and excess, and whoever commits high-handedness and excess will be disgracefully vanquished and thrown down. That is why Amir al-mu'minin always entered the battlefield on being challenged by the enemy. He never offered the challenge from his side. In this connection,

Ibn Abil'l-Hadid writes:

We have never heard that Amir al-mu'minin ever challenged anyone for confrontation. Rather, when either he was particularly challenged or the enemy flung a general challenge, then alone he would go out to meet the enemy and would kill him. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol. 19, p.60)

57. It is easy to bear oppression in this world hut it is not easy to face its punishment in the next world, because the period of hearing oppression even though life-long is after all limited; but the punishment for oppression is Hell whose most fearful aspect is that life there will last for ever and death will not save from punishment. That is why, if an oppressor kills someone then with that killing the oppression comes to an end, and there is no further scope for any further oppression on the same person; but its punishment is that he is thrown in Hell where he suffers his punishment.

The Persian couplet says:

The effect of the oppression on us has passed away, but it will ever remain on the oppressor.

58. If replies to a question begin to be given from all sides, every reply will raise another question and thus open the door for arguing, and as the number of replies will further necessitate search for the real truth, detection of the correct reply will become more and more arduous, because everyone will try to have his reply accepted as correct as a result of which he will try to collect arguments from here and there to have his reply accepted as correct as a result of which the whole matter will become confused and this dream will turn into an aimless one because of the multiplicity of interpretations.

59. The breaking of determinations and losing of courage can be argued to prove the existence of Allah in this way that, for example, a man determines to do a thing hut before the determination is transformed into action, it changes and some other idea takes its place. This alteration of ideas and determinations and the emergence of change therein is a proof that there is some higher controlling power over us which has the capacity to bring them from non-existence to existence and again from existence into non-existence, and this is what is beyond human power. Therefore, it is necessary to acknowledge a super authority who effects change and alteration in determinations.

60. Before describing some of the aims and good points of the commands of the shari'ah (i.e., religious law), Amir al-mu'minin has began with the aims and objects of Belief (iman), because iman serves as the basis of religious commands, and without it no need is felt for any religious code or jurisprudence. iman is the name of acknowledging the existence 6f the Creator and admission of His Singularity. When this iman takes root in the heart of a man then he does not agree to bow before any other being, nor is he over-awed or affected by any p9wer or authority. Rather, getting mentally freed of all ties he regards himself a devotee of Allah and the result of this adherence to the Unity is that he is saved from the pollution of polytheism.

Prayer (salat) is the most important of all forms of worship. It consists of standing, sitting, bending and prostration, and these postures are a successful way of destroying the feeling of vanity and pride, erasing self-conceit and egotism and creating humility and submissiveness, because the actions and movements of a vain person produce pride and haughtiness while humble actions engender the quality of submissiveness and humbleness in the mind. With the exercise of these acts a man, by and by, acquires a humble temperament. This is how the Arabs who were so vain that if their whip fell off during riding they would not bend down to pick it up or if the strap of the shoe gave way they thought it insulting to bend down to mend it, began to rub their faces on dust during prostration in prayers, and place their foreheads in the position of others' feet during the congregational prayer, and in this way acquired the true spirit of Islam after abandoning the pre-Islamic vanity and partisanship.

Zakat, namely that a person who is able to do so should pay annually out of his money or property a fixed share for those who are either destitute or do not have means of livelihood for a year, is an obligatory command of Islam, the purpose behind which is that no individual in the community should remain poor and they should remain safe from the evils that result from need and poverty. Besides, another objective is that wealth should keep rotating from one individual to another and should not be centred in a few persons.

Fasting (siyam) is a form of worship in which there is not an iota of show, and no motive is active in it except that of pure intention. As a result, even in seclusion when hunger perturbs a man or thirst makes him uneasy he does not extend his hand for eating, nor does the longing for water make him lose his control although if something is eaten or drunk no one is to peep into his stomach, but the purity of conscience prevents his will from deflecting. This is the greatest good of fasting that it engenders purity of will in action.

The purpose of hajj (pilgrimage to the House of Allah) is that Muslims from all corners of the globe should assemble at one place so that this world assembly should prove to be an occasion for the manifestation of Islam's greatness, the renewal of the passion for worship and the creation of bonds of mutual brotherhood.

The purpose of jihad (fighting in the way of Allah) is to fight with all possible 'flight those forces which oppose Islam, so that Islam may achieve stability and progress. Although there are dangers for life in this course and difficulties crop up at every step, yet the tidings for eternal ease and everlasting life produce the courage to bear all these hardships.

The persuasion for good and dissuasion from evil are effective ways of showing others the correct path and preventing them from wrong; If a community has no persons to perform these duties nothing can save it from ruin and it falls to an extreme depth morally and socially. That is why Islam has laid great stress on it as compared to other matters, and held disregard to it as an unpardonable sin.

Doing good for kinship means that a man should do favours to his relatives and at least should not stop mutual accosting and speaking with them so that spirits may become clean and family ties may develop, and the scattered individuals may render strength to one another.

Seeking vengeance is a right given to the survivors of the person killed. They can demand a life for a life so that for fear of punishment no one would dare kill any person, and at the same time the survivor's passion for revenge should not result in the killing of more than one person. No doubt forgiveness or pardon does carry weight in its own place but where it means trampling of an individual's right or a danger to world peace it cannot be regarded as good. Rather, on such an occasion revenge is the sole way of stopping bloodshed and killing for the safety of human life. Thus, Allah says:

And for you there is (security of) Retaliation O' you men of understanding, so that you may guard yourself (against evil). (Qur'an, 2:179)

The purpose behind the awarding of penalties is to make the offender appreciate the seriousness of violating the prohibitions of Allah so that he may keep off the prohibitions for fear of punishments.

Wine causes diffusion of thinking, dispersion of senses and weakness of understanding. As a result, a man commits such actions which would not be expected of him in the state of being in his senses. Besides, it ruins health and renders the body liable to catch infectious diseases while, sleeplessness, nervous weakness and rheumatism are its chief effects. The shari'ah has prohibited it in view of these ill-effects.

Theft, that is, taking over someone else's property is an evil habit which is produced by the sway of greed and evil passions and since bringing down evil passions from the position of excess to the bounds of moderation means chastity the abstinence from theft by curbing greed and evil passions would produce chastity.

Adultery and sodomy have been prohibited in order that lineage may be regulated and the human race may continue and prosper, because the issues by adultery are not regarded legitimate for the purposes of lineage and consequently they are not entitled to inheritance, while there is no question of issues in the case of unnatural practices. Besides, as a consequence of these evil practices one contracts such diseases which cause ruination of life in addition to discontinuity of progeny.

The law of evidence is needed because if one party denies the right of another party the latter may establish it through evidence and safeguard it thereby.

Abstention from lies and falsehood has been commanded so that the standing and importance of its contrary namely truth may become prominent and in observing the benefits and advantages of truth the moral weakness of falsehood may be avoided.

Salam means peace and peace-loving and it is obvious that peaceful attitude is a successful way of protection from dangers and prevention of war and fighting. Generally, commentators have taken the word salam to mean mutual greetings and well-wishing but the context and the fact that it has been mentioned in the series of obligations does not support this interpretation. However, according to this interpretation salam is a means of safety from dangers because it is regarded as a way of peace and peace-loving. When two Muslims meet each other they offer salam one to the other, it means that they announce the wishes of each for the welfare of the other whereafter each feels safe with the other.

Imamate (imamah): This word has appeared in the same form in the correct copies of Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah as well as in its commentaries like Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. 19, p.90; Ibn Maytham, vol.5, pp.367-368; Minhaj al-Bara'ah, vol.21, p.318; and other sources besides Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah such as Nihayah al-irab by an-Nuwayri ash-Shafi'i, vol.8, p.183

and al-Bihar by al-Majlisi, vol.6, p.111.

In fact, this word of "imamah" has been distorted to "amanah" (trust) or "amanat" (trusts) in some copies such as those printed in Egypt. It is very surprising to note that the. word has appeared as amanah in the text of Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah printed with the commentary of Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in Egypt in the. first edition vol.4, p.350 as well as in the second edition edited by Muhammad Abu'l-Fadl Ibrahim, vol.19, p.86; while he himself (Ibn Abi'l-Hadid) based his commentary on its correct reading namely imamah as did other commentators.

However, in explanation of this sentence, "Imamate for the orderliness of the community," as the theological scholars say: Whoever has known dark experiences and has examined political principles knows, of necessity, that whenever men have among them a chief and a guide whom they obey, who restrains the oppressor from his oppression and the unjust man from his injustice and avenges the oppressed of his oppressor, and along with that leads them to rational principles and religious duties, and restrains them from the corruptions which cause the destruction of order in their worldly affairs, and from the evils which result in wretchedness in the world to come, so that every individual might fear that punishment, then because of this they will draw near to soundness and depart from corruption. (al-Babu'l-hadi 'ashar, Engl. transl. p. 63)

The institution of Imamate is intended to cater for the unification of the nation and to protect the commandments of Islam from alteration and change, because if there is no head of the nation and no protector of religion neither can the order of the nation be maintained nor can the commandments of Islam remain safe from interference by others. This object can he achieved only when obedience to him is obligatory on the people, because if he is not obeyed and followed as an obligation he will neither be able to maintain justice and equity, nor secure the rights of the oppressed from the oppressor, nor issue and enforce the laws of the shari'ah and consequently the extinction of evil and mischief from the world cannot be expected.

61. It is narrated that someone levied some charges against Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq before the 'Abbaside Caliph 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Mansur. al-Mansur sent for the Imam and told him that such and such a person had told him such and such about him. The Imam said it was all wrong and there was not an iota of truth therein, and desired the man to he sent for and questioned before him. Consequently, he was sent for and questioned. He said that whatever he had said was true and correct. The Imam said to him, "if you are speaking the truth then you swear as I ask you to swear." Thereafter, the Imam made him swear by saying, "I am out of Allah's might and power and I rely on my own might and power." Soon after swearing like this he got an attack of paralysis and he became motionless. The Imam, returned with full honour and prestige. (al-Kafi, al-Kulayni, vol.6, pp. 445--446; al-Bihar, vol.47, pp.164 -- 165, 172-175, 203 -- 204; al-Fusul al-muhimmah, Ibn as-Sabbagh al-Maliki, pp.225 --226; as-sawa`iq al-muhriqah, Ibn Hajar ash-Shafi'i, p. 120; Jami' karamat al-awliya', an-Nabhani ash-Shafi'i, vol.2, p.4).

Such an event took place again during the reign of Harun ar-Rashid (149/766 - 193/809 - the grandson of al-Mansur) when 'Abdullah ibn Mus'ab (the grandson of 'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr -- the well-known enemy of Ahlu'1-bayt of the Holy Prophet) slandered Yahya ibn 'Abdillah ibn al-Hasan ibn (al-Imam) al-Hasan ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib before Harun ar-Rashid by saying that he was plotting a revolution against him (Harun). Then, Yahya made 'Abdullah swear before Harun in the same manner as the Imam had done. When 'Abdullah swore as he was required to, the symptom of leprosy soon appeared in him in the presence of Harun and he died after three days, while every part of his flesh cracked open and all the hair of his body fell out. After this, Harun used to say, "How soon Allah took revenge on 'Abdullah for Yahya!" (Maqatil at-talibiyyin, Abu'l-Faraj al-Isfahani, pp.472-478; Muruj adh-dhahab, al-Mas'udi, vol.3, pp.340-- 342; Tarikh Baghdad, al-Khatib, vol.14, pp.110-112; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.19, pp.91-94; at- Tarikh, Ibn Kathir, vol.10, pp.167-168; Tarikh al-khulafa', as-Suyuti:, p.287).

62. The meaning of it is that if a person desires that after his death a portion of his property should be spent on charity, he should not wait for his death but spend it wherever he desires even during his lifetime; for it is possible that after his death his successors may not act upon his will or he may not get an opportunity to will.

A Persian couplet says:

Give away money and property while you are living as after you it would be out of your control.

63. Envy produces such a poisonous matter in the body which destroys the natural heat of the body as a result of which the body weakens and the spirit withers. That is why an envious person never prospers and melts away in the heat of envy

64. "Ya'sub" is the name given to the queen bee, and the saying of Amir al-mu'minin is: "fa idha kana dhalika daraba ya'sub u'd-din bi dhanabihi". The word "daraba" means to beat, strike, hit, etc.; "ya'sub u'd-din" means "the head of religion and the

shari'ah", and "dhanab"means tail, end, adherent or flower. In this sentence "ya'subu'd-u 'd-din" stands for the present Imam (al-Imam al-Mahdi). Although this title was given by the Holy Prophet to Amir al-mu'minin specially, as he said:
O' `Ali, you are the ya'sub (bead) of the believers while wealth is the ya'sub of the hypocrites. (al-Isti`ab, vol. 4, p. 1744; Usd al-ghabah, vol.5, p.287; al-Isabah, vol.4, p.17l; ar-Riyad an-nadirah, vol.2, p.155; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.9, p.102; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.1, p. 12; vol.19, p.224).
Also the Holy Prophet said to 'Ali:
You are the ya'sub of the religion. (ar-Riyad an-nadirah, vol.2, p. 177; Taj al-'arus, vol.1, p.381; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.1, p. 12; vol.19, p.224)
Also the Holy Prophet said to 'Ali:
You are the ya'sub of the Muslims (Yanabi' al-mawaddah, al-Qunduzi, p.62)
Again the Holy Prophet said:
You are the ya'sub of the Quraysh (al-Maqasid al-hasanah, as-Sakhawi, p.94).
Therefore, the reason for giving the Imam this name is that just as the queen bee is pure alone and in the society of other bees, and she collects her nectar from the blossoms and flowers keeping away from pollution, in the same way the present Imam is free from all pollutions and is perfectly clean and pure. This saying has been interpreted in several ways:
Firstly, it means that "when the present Imam settles at his seat after his tour and rotation round the world people will gather around him."
Secondly, it means that "when the Imam moves about on the earth along with his friends and associates..." In this case the word "daraba" would mean moving about and the word "dhanab "would mean helpers and associates.
Thirdly, it means that "when the Imam rises with a sword in hand ." In this case the word "dhanab" would mean stinging by the bee.
Fourthly, it means that "when the Imam rises for the propagation of true faith with full fervour. . ." In this case the sentence is suggestive of the state of anger and the posture for attack.
65. The reference by the versatile speaker is to Sa'sa'ah ibn Suhan al-'Abdi who was among the chief companions of Amir al-mu'minin. This saying throws light on the greatness of his speaking quality and the force of his utterances. In this connection, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written:
It is enough for Sa'sa'ah's greatness that a personality like 'Ali, peace be upon him, has praised him for versatility and eloquence of speech. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.19, p.106)
66. Sa'd ibn Malik (i.e. Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, the father of 'Umar ibn Sa'd who killed Imam Husayn) and 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar were among those who were keeping themselves away from Amir al-mu'minin's help and support. As for Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, after the killing of 'Uthman he retired to some wilderness and passed his life there, but did not agree to swear allegiance to Amir al-mu'minin (as Caliph). But after the death of Amir al-mu'minin he used to express his repentance, saying, "I held an opinion but it was a wrong opinion." (al-Mustadrak, al-Hakim, vol.3, p. 116). And when Mu`awiyah blamed him for not supporting him in his fight with Amir al-mu'minin, Sa'd said:
I only repent for not having fought against the rebellious group (i.e. Mu'awiyah and his people). (Ahkam al-Qur'an, al-Jassas al-Hanafi, vol.2, pp.224,225; al-Furu', Ibn Muflih al-Hanbali, vol.3, p.542)
As for `Abdullah ibn 'Umar, although he had sworn allegiance, he refused to help Amir al-mu'minin in the battles putting forth the excuse: "I have sought seclusion to devote myself to worship and do not therefore want to involve myself in war and fighting."
A Persian couplet says: Intelligence regards such excuses worse than the offence itself.
Abdullah ibn 'Umar also frequently used to express his repentance, even up to the last moments of his life, saying:
I do not find anything in myself to be distressed about in this world, except my not having fought alongside Ali ibn Abi Talib against the rebellious group as Allah, to Whom belongs Might and Majesty, had commanded me. (al-Mustadrak, vol.3, pp.115 - 116; as-Sunan al-kubra, al-Bayhaqi, vol.8, p.172; at-Tabaqat, Ibn Sa'd, vol.4, part I, pp.136, 137; aljst1.'ab, vol.3, p.953; Usd al-ghabah, vol.3, p.229; vol.4, p.33; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.3, p.182; vol.7, p.242; al-Furu', vol.3, p.543; Ruh al-ma'ani; al-Alusi, vol.26, p.151).
67. The intention is that if a person holds high position in the royal court people look at his rank and position and honour and prestige with envy, but he himself has always the fear lest the royal pleasure turns against him and he falls in the pit of

disgrace and dishonour or death and destruction, like the rider on a lion with by whom people are awed, but he himself is ever facing the danger lest the lion devours him, or throws him in some fatal pit.

68. The group of the learned and reformers is responsible for improvement as well as deterioration because the common people are under their influence, and regard their words and action as correct and standard, rely on them and act upon them. In this way, If their teaching caters for improvement then thousands of individuals will acquire improvement and betterment thereby; but if there be evil in it then thousands of individuals will get involved in misguidance and get astrayed. That is why it is said: "When a scholar gets into evil the whole world gets into evil."

69. Among the first three Caliphs, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab often used to call upon Amir al-mu'minin for the solution of many unsolved problems and so as to benefit from his vast knowledge. But Abu Bakr, due to the short period of his caliphate, and 'Uthman, due to the special circumstances of his caliphate and his entourage, seldom used to call on Amir al-mu'minin and benefit from his advice. 'Umar used to praise Amir al-mu'minin very much for his vast knowledge, saying:

The most knowledgeable person among us in jurisprudence and judgement is 'Ali. (as-Sahih, al-Bukhari, vol.6, p.23; al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.5, p.113; al-Mustadrak, al-Hakim, vol.3, p.305; at- Tabaqat, Ibn Sa'd, vol.2, part 2, p.102; al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p.1102)

Certainly, there is no need for the evidence of 'Umar and others in this field when 'Umar himself and a group of the Companions confess that the Holy Prophet used to say:

'Ali is the most knowledgeable in jurisprudence and judgement among my ummah (Muslim community). (Akhbar al-qudat, Waki', vol.1, p.78; Masabih, as-sunnah, al-Baghawi, vol.2, p.203; al-Isti`ab, vol. 1, pp.16- 17: vol.3, p.1102; ar-Riyad-an-nadirah, vol.2, p.108; as-Sunan, Ibn Majah, vol.1, p.55)

In this connection, Ahmad ibn Hanbal narrates from Abu Hazim that a certain man approached Mu'awiyah and put to him some questions on religion. Mu'awiyah said, "Refer this question to 'All who possesses better knowledge." The man said, "But I would rather have your reply than that of `Ali." Mu'awiyah silenced him and said, "It is the worst thing I have heard from you. You have expressed hate towards the person whom the Messenger of Allah' used to coach and tutor as a mother bird feeds a nestling by putting grain after grain into the mouth of the nestling with its beak and to whom the Messenger of Allah said:

You hold the same position in relation to me as Harun held in relation to Musa except that there shall, in all certainty, be no prophet after me;

and to whom 'Umar used to turn for the solution of unsolved problems." (Fayd al-qadir, al-Munawi, vol.3, p.46; ar-Riyad, an-nadirah, vol.2, p.l95: as-Sawa`iq al-muhriqah, p. 107; Fath al-bari, vol.17, p.105)

Also 'Umar used to say frequently:

Women lack. the ability to give birth to such as 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. Had it not been for 'Ali, 'Umar would have been finished. (Ta'wil mukhtalaf al-hadith, Ibn Qutaybah, p.202; al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p.1103; Qudat al-Undulus, al-Maliqi, p.73; ar-Riyad an-nadirah, vol.2, p. 194; al-Manaqib, al-Khwarazmi, p.39; Yanabi' al-mawaddah, pp.75, 373: Fayd al-qadir, vol.4, p.356)

He also used to say:

I seek the protection of Allah from the problems in which Abu'l-Hasan ('Ali) is not present! (al-Isti'ab, vol.3, pp.1102-1103; a;-Tabaqat, vol.2, part 2, p.102; Sifatu 's-safwah, Ibn al-Jawzi, vol.1, p.121; Usd al-ghabah, vol.4, pp.22-23; al-Isabah, vol.2, p.509: at-Tarikh, Ibn Kathir, vol.7, p.360)

'Umar often addressed Amir al-mu'minin, thus:

O Abu'l-Hasan, I seek the protection of Allah from being in a community among which you are not found. (al-Mustadrak, vol.1, pp. 457-458; at-Tafsir, Fakhr ad-Din ar-Razi, vol.32, p.10; ad-Durr al-manthur, as-Suyuti, vol.3, p.144; ar-Riyad an-nadirah, vol.2, p. 197; Fayd al-qadir, vol.3, p.46; vol.4, p. 356; as-Sawa'iq al-muhriqah, p. 107)

Above all these confessions is the acknowledgement by the Holy Prophet of Amir al-mu'minin as narrated by 'Umar ibn al-Khatib himself, Abu Sa'id al-Khudri and Mu'adh ibn Jabal that the Holy Prophet said:

O 'Ali, I have exceeded you in prophethood, for there will be no prophet after me, and you exceed others in seven noble qualities. You are: i) the first who believed in Allah, ii) the best fulfiller of the promise made to Allah, iii) the best adherer to the commandments of Allah, iv) the most equitable distributor among the people, v) the best dispenser of justice (or the most clement) to the (Muslims) subjects, vi) the one who has the best insight into controversial cases, (or the most learned in judgement), and vii) the most conspicuous in virtue and honour before Allah. (Hilyah al-awliya', vol.1, pp.65, 66; ar-Riayd

an–nadirah, vol.2, p.198; al–Manaqib, al–Khwarazmi, p.61; Kanz al–'ummal vol.12, p.214; Ibn Abi'l–Hadid, vol.13, p.230)

It is also narrated by Amir al–mu'minin, Abu Ayyub al–Ansari, Ma'qil ibn Yasir and Buraydah ibn Husayb that the Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.a. h.p.) said to Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) that:

Are you not satisfied? Surely, I have married you to the foremost of my ummah who believes in Islam, and the most knowledgeable among them and superior among them in clemency. (al–Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.5, p.26;al–Musannaf, as –San'ani, vol.5, p.490; al–Isti'ab, vol.3, p.1099; Usd al–ghabah, vol.5, p.520;Kanzal–'ummal vol .12, p.205; vol.15, p.99; Majma' az–zawa'id, vol.9, pp.101, 114; as–Sirah al–halabiyyah, vol.1, p.285)

After we read the following saying of the Holy Prophet, it is no surprise for us to note that the above acknowledgements of the vast knowledge of Amir al–mu'minin and his efficiency in the field of jurisprudence and judgement were made.

I am the city of knowledge and 'Ali is its gate; he who wants to acquire (my) knowledge must come through the gate. (al–Mustadrak, vol.3, pp.l26,127; al–Isti'ab, vol.3, p.1l02; Usd al–ghabah, vol.4, p.22; Tahdhib at–tahdhib, vol.6, pp.320–32l; vol.7, p.337; Majma' az–zawa'id, vol.9, p.114; Kanz al–'ummal, vol.12, pp.201, 212; vol.15, pp.l29–130)

Also, the Holy Prophet said:

I am the store–house of wisdom and 'Ali is its gate. He who wants to acquire wisdom must come through the gate. (al–Jami' as–sahih, at– Tirmidhi, vol.5, pp.637–638; Hilyah al–awliya', vol–i, p–64; Masabih. as–sunnah, al–Baghawi, vol.2, p.275; ar–Riyad an–nadirah, vol.2, p.193; Kanz al–'ummal, vol.12, p.201)

70. It cannot be denied that after the Prophet of Islam changes came into existence in the religion when some people acting upon their imagination, amended or altered the commands of the shari'ah, although no one has the right to make alteration in the shari'ah, namely to ignore the clear commands of the Qur'an and the sunnah and enforce commands produced by his own imagination and thinking. Thus, the Qur'an contains this clear method of divorce that "(Revokable) Divorce (i.e. divorce in which resumption of conjugal relations is permissible without a marriage to another man taking place) may be twice" (Qur'an, 2:229). But in view of certain supposed advantages the Caliph 'Umar ordered three divorces to be pronounced on a single occasion. Similarly, he introduced the system of 'awl in inheritance and introduced four takbir in the funeral prayer. In the same way the Caliph 'Uthman added an adhan to the Friday prayer, ordered the offering of full prayers in place of qasr (shortened) ones, and allowed the sermon to precede the 'id prayer. In fact, hundreds of commands of this type were fabricated, as a result of which even correct commands got mixed with the wrong ones and lost their authenticity. (For changes made see: al–Ghadir, al–Amini [by Abu Bakr], vol.7, pp.74–236; [by 'Umar], vol.6, pp.83– 325; [by 'Uthman], vol.8, pp.98–387; an–Nass wa'l–ijtihad, Sharafu'd–Din [by Abu Bakr], pp.76–154; [by 'Umar], pp.155–276. [by 'Uth man], pp.284–289. See also Muqaddamah mir'atu 'l–'uqul, al–'Askari,vol.1 & 2).

Amir al–mu'minin, who was the greatest scholar of the shari'ah, used to protest against these commands and had his own views as against the Companions. In this connection, Ibn Abi'l–Hadid writes:

There is no possibility for us to deny that Amir al–mu'minin had views on the commands of the shari'ah and opinions at variance with those of the Companions. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al–balaghah, vol.19, p.161)

When Amir al–mu'minin assumed charge of the formal caliphate, revolts soon cropped up on all sides and he did not get rid of these troubles up to the last moment. Consequently, the altered commands could not be fully corrected and many wrong or doubtful commands gained currency in areas far removed from the centre. Nevertheless, the group of people who were associated with Amir al–mu'minin used to enquire about the commands of the shad 'ah from him and recorded them, as a result of which the correct commands did not disappear and the wrong ones did not become unanimously accepted.

71. Knowledge and conviction require that they should be acted upon. If they are not acted upon they cannot be called knowledge and conviction. Consequently, if a man says he knows the dangers that exist on particular path but he adopts that very path for his journey instead of the path that has no dangers, then who can say that this man had full certainty about the dangers of that path, because the consequence of such certainty should have been that he would have avoided going on that path. Similarly, the person who has belief in the resurrection and revival of life or in chastisement and reward cannot be overpowered by those things of this world that make a man neglectful to the extent of disregarding the next life, nor can he fall short in good actions for fear of chastisement and evil consequences.

72. As–Sayyid ar–Radi has not written what it was that did not happen, leaving us only with the first part of the sentence.

73. The man whom Amir al–mu'minin has referred to as his brother and whose qualities he has stated, has been taken by some commentators to be Abu Dharr al–Ghifari by some 'Uthman ibn Maz'un al–Jumahi and by some al–Miqdad ibn al–

Aswad al-Kindi; but it is not unlikely that no particular individual is referred to at all, because it is customary with Arabs for them to speak of a brother or a comrade although. they have no particular individual in mind.

74. A fool considers his ways of action appropriate, and wants his friend also to adopt the same ways, so that he should become as he himself is. This does not mean that he desires that his friend should become as foolish as he is. He cannot be thinking like this, because he does not consider himself foolish. If he in fact considered himself foolish, then he would not have been foolish. Instead, he considers his ways of action as correct, and desires his friend to be equally "wise". That is why he presents his view before him in an embellished form and desires him to act upon it. It is possible his friend may be influenced by his advice and tread on the. same path. Therefore, it is better to keep away from him.

75. If the vicissitudes and changes of this world are observed, the circumstances and condition of the people attended to and their histories noted, then from every comer edifying stories can be heard which are fully capable of arousing the mind out of its forgetful slumber, of providing instruction and of imparting teaching and clear mindedness. Thus, the creation and dissolution of every thing in this world, the blossoming of flowers and their withering, the thriving of vegetation and its withering away and the subjugation of every atom to change are such instructive lessons that they are enough to curb any hope of attaining eternity in this deceitful life as long as the eyes and ears are not closed to these instructive events.

A Persian couplet says:

The world is full of stories of folk gone by, but unless one lends an ear to it, its call is weak.

76. The idea here is that lighting may flash a hundred thousand times, tempests may rise, the earth may quake and mountains may collide with each other, but as long as the fixed period of life has yet to run its course no occurrence can cause any harm, nor the typhoon of death put out the flame of life; for there is a fixed hour for death, and nothing can cut it short before that time. In this way, obviously death itself is the watchman and guardian of life.

The hemistich of a verse says: What is known as death is the watchman of life.

77. The occasion and circumstances surrounding this saying as related by as-Sayyid ar-Radi were that when at the time of the Battle of Jamal Amir al-mu'minin sent Anas ibn Malik to Talhah and az-Zubayr with the purpose that he should recall them the Prophet's saying to the effect that: "You two will fight 'Ali and will commit excess over him", he came back and stated that he had forgotten to mention it. Then, Amir al-mu'minin uttered these words about him. However, it is said that Amir al-mu'minin said the sentence on the occasion when he wanted Anas to confirm the Prophet's saying. "Whosoever master I am, 'Ali is his master. O My God, love him who loves 'Ali and hate him who hates 'Ali". Consequently, numerous persons have testified to this saying but Arias kept quiet. Then, Amir al-mu'minin, said to him, "You too were present at Ghadir Khum, what is keeping you silent on this occasion?" and he said, "I have grown old and my memory does not serve me well". Then, Amir al-mu'minin, pronounced this curse. (Ansab al-ashraf, al-Baladhuri, [concerning the biography of Amir al-mu'minin], pp.156-157; al-A'laq an-nafisah, Ibn Rustah, p.221; Altai's al-ma'arif, ath-Tha'alibi, pp. 105 - 106; Muhadarat al-udaba', ar-Raghib, vol.3, p.293; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.4, p.74; Arjah al-matalib, ash-Shaykh 'Ubaydullah al-Hanafi, pp. 578, 579, 580).

In this connection, Ibn Qutaybah ('Abdullah ibn Muslim ad-Dinawari [213/828 - 276/889] writes:

People have related that Amir al-mu'minin asked Anas ibn Malik about the Prophet's saying: "O My God, love him who loves 'Ali and hate him who hates 'Ali," and he replied, "I have grown old and I have forgotten it." Then 'Ali said: "If you are a liar, Allah may afflict you with white spots which even the turban may not cover. (al-Ma'arif, p. 580)

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has also supported this view and, denying the incident mentioned by as-Sayyid ar-Radi, writes:

The incident mentioned by as-Sayyid ar-Radi that Amir al-mu'minin sent Anas ibn Malik to Talhah and az-Zubayr is an unrecorded event. If Amir al-mu'minin had sent him particularly to recall to them the the Prophet's saying concerning them, then he could hardly have come back and said that he had forgotten it because when he left Amir al-mu'minin and went to these two persons he should have admitted and remembered the saying, and therefore how could he, on his return after an hour or a day, plead that he had forgotten it and deny it. This is something that cannot happen. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.19, pp.217 - 218)

78. We have already explained the meaning of the word "ya'sub" in the foot-note of saying No.262-I, and pointed out that this title was given to Amir al-mu'minin by the Holy Prophet himself and we quoted some of his different utterances on this subject.

Here we quote one of the traditons in which this title appears. It is narrated by Abu Layla al-Ghifari, Abu Dharr, Salman, Ibn

'Abbas and Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman that the Holy Prophet used to say:
Soon after my death there will be discord. When it occurs, adhere to 'Ali ibn Abi Talib since he will be the first person to see me and the first person to shake hands with me on the Day of Judgement. He is the greatest man of truth (as-siddiq al-akbar), and he is the discriminator (faruq) from among this ummah who discriminates between right and wrong, and he is the ya'sub (leader) of the believers while wealth is the ya'sub of the hypocrites. (In addition to the references given in the above-mentioned foot-note, see also Fayd al-qadir, vol.4, p.358; Kanz al-'ummal, vol.12, p.214; Muntakhab al-kanz, vol.5, p.33; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.13, p.228; Tarikh ash-Sham, Ibn 'Asakir, (on the biography of Amir al-mu'minin), vol.1, pp. 74 - 78; as-Sirah al-halabiyyah, vol.1, p.380; Dhakha'ir al-'uqba, p.56; Yanabi' al-mawaddah, p. 62, 82, 201 and 251).
79. The purpose behind this criticism by the Jews was to show that the prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad was a controversial matter, but Amir al-mu'minin clarified the exact focus of controversy by using the word "after him" as against "about him", namely that the controversy was not about his prophethood but about his succession and vicegerency. Then, commenting on the position of the Jews he pointed out that those who were today criticising the mutual differences among Muslims after the Prophet were of the same kind as those who had begun to waver about belief in the Unity of Allah even in the lifetime of Moses. Thus, when, on becoming free of the slavery of the Egyptians they reached the other side of the river and saw the figure of a calf in a temple in Sina', they asked Moses to get a similar figure for them, whereupon Moses rebuked them for being still as stubborn as they were in Egypt. This meant that a people who were so immersed in desire for idol-worship that even after being initiated into the belief in the Unity of Allah they became restless on seeing an idol and made the request for a similar idol to be made for themselves had no right to criticise any difference among Muslims.
80. The man who is over-awed by his adversary is sure to be defeated because in facing a foe physical prowess is not enough but steadfastness of heart and strength of courage is also necessary. When the adversary loses courage and feels sure that he will he defeated then he will certainly be defeated. This is what happened to the adversary of Amir al-mu'minin; he was so affected by his acknowledged reputation that he was sure of death, in consequence of which his spiritual power and self confidence came to an end and eventually this mental state dragged him to his death.
81. 'Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas had advised Amir al-mu'minin to issue a letter of appointment to Talhah and az-Zubayr as the Governors of Kufah and to retain Mu'awiyah as the Governor of Syria till such time as his position became stabilized and the government gained strength. In reply to which Amir al-mu'minin said that he could not expose his own religion to danger for the sake of the worldly benefit of others, adding that "therefore instead of insisting on your own point you should listen to me and obey me.
82. In the year 38 A.H. Mu'awiyah sent 'Amr ibn al-'As to Egypt with a large force. 'Amr ibn al-'As called Mu'awiyah ibn Hudayj for assistance. They brought together the supporters of 'Uthman and waged a war against Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr and captured him. Mu'awiyah ibn Hudayj beheaded him and stitching his body into the belly of a dead ass, burnt it. Muhammad was at that time twenty-eight years old. It is reported that when the news of the tragedy reached his mother, she fell into a great rage and indignation. And `A'ishah, his paternal sister, took a vow that, as long as she was alive, she would never eat roasted meat. She cursed Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, 'Amr ibn al-'As and Mu'awiyah ibn Hudayj after every prayer.
When Amir al-mu'minin heard the news of Muhammad's martyrdom be became immensely sad. He wrote in very grieved language to Ibn 'Abbas who was at Basrah about the tragic death of Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr.
Hearing the news of Muhammad's martyrdom Ibn 'Abbas came from Basrah to Kufah to offer his condolences to Amir al-mu'minin.
One of the spies of Amir al-mu'minin came from Syria and said:
O' Amir al-mu'minin! When the news of Muhammad's murder reached Mu'awiyah, he went to the pulpit and praised the group who took part in his martyrdom. The people of Syria rejoiced so much at hearing the news that I had never seen them in such delight before.
Then, Amir al-mu'minin uttered the above saying. He further said that although Muhammad was his stepson, he was like his own son. (at-Tabari, vol.1, pp.3400-3414; Ibn al-Athir, vol.3, pp.352-359; Ibn Kathir, vol.7, pp.313-317; Abu'l-Fida', vol.1, p.179; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.6, pp.82-100; Ibn Khaldun, vol.2, part2, pp.181-182;al-Isti'ab, vol.3, pp.1366-1367; al-Isabah, vol.3, ppA72-473; al-Gharat, ath-Thaqafi, vol.1, pp.276-322; Tarikh al-khamis, vol.2, pp.238 239)
We have written before (in the footnote to Sermon No.67) concerning the biography of Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr.

83. The meaning is that obligations should be so discharged that there is no occasion for putting forth excuses, because after all in making excuse there is a hint of shortcoming and humbleness, even though it may be true and correct.
84. There are a few grades of denial of favours and ingratitude. The first is that a person may not be able to appreciate (the real significance of) a favour; for example, the sight of the eyes, the speech of the tongue, the hearing of the ears and the movements of the hands and feet. These are all favours bestowed by Allah but many people do not realize them to be favours, and do not entertain feelings of gratitude. The second. grade is that a person may see a favour and appreciate it but may not feel grateful for it. The third grade is that a person may oppose the Bestower of the favours. The fourth grade is that instead of using the favours granted by Him a person may use them in committing sins against Allah. This is the highest grade of denial of favours.
85. When anyone's star is auspicious and his luck is good, he steps automatically towards the goal in view, and his mind confronts no perplexity in determining the correct way of approach; but the person whose luck is about to ebb stumbles even in the light and his mental faculties become paralysed. Consequently, when the downfall of the Barmakids began, ten persons from among them assembled for consultation about a matter but were not able to take a decision even after long discussion. Seeing this Yahya said, "By Allah, it is a forerunner of our decline and a sign of our downfall that even ten of us have not been able to settle a matter, although while when we were in ascendancy one of us used to solve ten problems easily.
86. The result of lack of restraint and care in respect of small sins is that a man becomes rather careless in the matter of sins, and, by and by, this habit produces boldness for larger sins. Then, he begins to commit them without hesitation. Therefore, one should regard small sins as a harbinger of bigger sins, and avoid them, so that the stage for committing big sins does not come.
87. What worse defect can there be than that a man should criticise those defects in others which exist in himself. The requirement of justice is that before casting one's eye on the defects of others one should look at his own defects and realize that a defect is a defect whether it be in others or in oneself.
A Persian couplet says: Looking at other's defects is neither property nor manliness. Better look at your own self since you are full of defects.
88. If Allah considers it appropriate to keep a man living while he is confined to a closed house, then He is certainly powerful enough to provide the means of living to him, and just as a closed door cannot prevent death in the same way it cannot prevent the entry of livelihood, because the Might of Allah, the Almighty is equally capable of either.
The meaning is that a man should be content in the matter of livelihood because whatever is destined for him will in any case reach him wherever he may be.
A Persian couplet says: Livelihood like death will reach a man even if the door be closed, but greed keeps people (unnecessarily) anxious.
89. "Fa'l" means something from which one augurs well while "tiyarah" means something from which one augurs evil. From the point of view of religious law auguring evil from anything has no basis and it is just the product of whim.
However, auguring well is not objectionable. For example, when after the immigration of the Prophet (from Mecca to Medina), the Quraysh announced that whoever apprehended the Prophet would be given one hundred camels as prize. Thereupon, Buraydah ibn al-Husayb al-Aslami set off in his search with seventy of his men arid when they met at a halting place the Prophet asked him who he was and he said he was Buraydah ibn al-Husayb al-Aslami. Buraydah said: "The Holy Prophet was not auguring evil instead he used to augur good." On hearing this, the Prophet remarked: "barada amruna wa salaha" (our consequence will be wholesome). Then he asked him what tribe he came from and on his replying that he was from Aslam, the Prophet remarked: "salimna" (we would be safe). Then he asked from which scion he was and when he replied that he was from Banu Sahm, the Prophet remarked: "kharaja sahmuka" (your arrow has missed the aim). Buraydah was much impressed by this pleasing conversation and inquired from the Prophet who he was. The Prophet replied, "Muhammad ibn 'Abdillah". Hearing this, he spontaneously exclaimed, "I do stand witness that you are the Messenger of Allah", and forsaking the prize announced by the Quraysh acquired the wealth of Belief. (al-Isti'ab, vol. 1, pp. 185-186: Usd al-ghabah, vol. 1, pp. 175-176).
90. What Amir al-mu'minin means is that man does not enjoy regular mastery over anything, but such mastery as he is assigned by Allah, and so long as this mastery lasts the obligations of the shari'ah also continue, whereas when the

mastery is taken away the obligations too are lifted off, since in such a case the laying of obligations would mean placing of responsibility beyond capacity which cannot be allowed by any wise or prudent person. This is why Allah has placed the responsibility of performing various acts after having conferred the necessary energy in the limbs. It follows that this responsibility would remain only so long as the energy subsists and that on the disappearance of the energy the responsibility for action would also disappear. For example, the obligation to pay Zakat (tax) applies only when there is wealth; but when Allah would take away the wealth He would lift off the liability to pay Zakat because in such a case the laying of obligation is against prudence.

91. If feeling and conscience is alive even the remembrance of a sin destroys peace of mind because tranquility and happiness are achieved only when the spirit is free from the burden of sin and one's robe is not polluted with disobedience. And this real happiness is not bound by time but on whatever day a man desires he can avoid sin and enjoy this happiness, and this very happiness will be the real happiness and the harbinger of 'Id.

92. Despite efforts throughout life a man does not always achieve all the successes of life. If on some occasions he succeeds as a result of effort and seeking, on many others he has to face defeat and to give up his objectives admitting defeat before fate. A little thinking can lead to the conclusion that when things of this world cannot be achieved despite effort and seeking, how can the success of the next world be achieved without striving and seeking.

A Persian couplet says: You hankered after the world but did not attain the objective. O Allah, what would be the result when the good of the next world has not even been sought.

93. The good or bad quality that is found in man springs from his natural temperament. If the temperament produces one quality, his other qualities will also be akin to this one because the dictates of temperament will be equally effective in either. This, if a man pays zakat and khums it means that his temperament is not miserly. Therefore it is expected that he would not be niggardly in spending on other items of charity as well. Similarly if a man speaks a lie it can be expected that he will indulge in backbiting too, because these two habits are similar to each other.

94. 'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwam (1/622-73/692), whose mother was Asma', sister of 'A'ishah (daughter of Abu Bakr), had grown in his dislike of the Banu Hashim especially towards Amir al-mu'minin to such a stage that he was able to change the opinion of his father, az-Zubayr, against Amir al-mu'minin although the latter was the son of his father's aunt. That is why Amir al-mu'minin said:

az-Zubayr had always been from us the Ahlul Bayt (our household), until his ill-owned son 'Abdullah grew up. (al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p.906; Usd al-ghabah, vol.3, pp.162-163; Ibn 'Asakir, vol.7, p.363; Ibn Abi'1-Hadid, vol.2, p.167; vol.4, p.79; vol.20, p.104)

'Abdullah was one of the instigators of the battle of Jamal. His aunt 'A'ishah, his father, az-Zubayr, and the son of his mother's uncle Talhah, had fought against Amir al-mu'minin.

Thus, Ibn Abi'1-Hadid writes :

It was 'Abdullah who urged az-Zubayr to fight (in the battle of Jamal), and made the march to Basrah seem attractive to 'A'ishah. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.4 p.79)

'A'ishah loved her nephew 'Abdullah very much. To her he was like the only child of a mother, and none in those days was more beloved to her than him. (al-Aghani, Abu'l-Faraj, vol.9, p.142, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.20, p.120; Ibn Kathir, vol.8, p.336).

Hisham ibn 'Urwah relates :

I have not heard her ('A'ishah) praying for anyone as she used to pray for him ('Abdullah). She gave ten thousand Dirhams (as a gift) to the one who informed her of 'Abdullah's safety from getting killed (by al-Ashtar in the fight of the battle of Jamal), and prostrated to Allah in thanks-giving for his safety. (Ibn 'Asakir, vol.7, adid, vol.20, p.111)pp.400,402; Ibn Abi'l-H

This was the reason of 'Abdullah's authority over her and his complete command over her affairs. He was the one who directed and guided her in the direction he wished.

However, 'Abdullah's hatred against the Banu Hashim had reach such a stage that according to the narrations of a group of historians :

During his ('Abdullah's) Caliphate (in Mecca) he did not send blessings on the Holy Prophet in his Friday prayer speech (khutbah) for forty Fridays. He used to say: "Nothing prevents me from mentioning the Prophet's name except that there are a certain men (i.e. Banu Hashim) who become proud (when his name is mentioned).

In another interpretation :

Nothing prevents . . . except that the Prophet has a bad household who will shake their heads on the mention of his name (Maqatil at-talibiyyin, p.474; Muruj adh-dhahab, vol.3, p.79;at-Tarikh, al-Ya'qubi, vol.2, p.261; al-'Iqd al-farid, vol.4, p.413; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.4, p.62; vol.19, pp.91-92; vol.20, pp.127-129)

'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr said to 'Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas:

I have been concealing my hatred toward you, the people of this house (i.e. the Household of the Prophet) for the last forty years. (al-Mas'udi, vol.3, p.80; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.4, p.62; vol.20, p.148)

He also used to hate Amir al-mu'minin in particular, defame his honour, abuse and curse him. (al-Ya'qubi, vol.2, pp.261—262; al-Mas'udi, vol.3, p.80: Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.4, pp.61, 62—63, 79)

He gathered Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah (the son of Amir al-mu'minin) and 'Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas with seventeen men from the Banu Hashim including al-Hasan ibn al-Hasan ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib and imprisoned them in the shi'b (a small mountain valley) of 'Arim. He intended to burn them with fire, so he placed plenty of wood at the entrance of the shi'b. Meanwhile, al-Mukhtar ibn Abi 'Ubayd ath-Thaqafi dispatched four thousand soldiers to Mecca. On their arrival, they attacked 'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr unexpectedly and rescued the Banu Hashim. 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr made an excuse for his brother's ('Abdullah) deed saying that this action of his brother's was a result of the Banu Hashim's refusal to swear allegiance to him ('Abdullah), like the action of 'Umar ibn al-Khattab towards the Banu Hashim when they gathered in the house of Fatimah and refused to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr. So, 'Umar brought wood and intended to burn the house on them. (Maqatil at-talibiyyin, p.474; al-Mas'udi, vol.3, pp.76—77: al-Ya'qubi, vol.2, p.261; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.19, p.91; vol.20, pp.123—126,146—148; Ibn 'Asakir, vol.7, p.408; al-'Iqd al-farid, vol.4, p.413; Ibn Sa'd, vol.5, pp.73—81; at-Tabari, vol.2, pp.693—695; Ibn al-Athir, vol.4, pp.249—254; Ibn Khaldun, vol.3, pp.26—28)

In this connection, Abu'l-Faraj al-Isfahani writes:

'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr always instigated others against the Banu Hashim and pursued them (in his aim) by every worst method; he inspired against them and spoke against them on the pulpits; and remonstrated against them. Sometime Ibn 'Abbas or someone else from them (Banu Hashim) raised an objection against him. But afterwards, he changed his way and imprisoned Ibn al-Hanafiyyah in a prison at the shi'b 'Arim. Then, he gathered Ibn al-Hanafiyyah along with other members of the Banu Hashim who were present (in Mecca) in a prison and collected wood to set fire to it. This was because of the news that had reached him that Abu 'Abdillah al-Jadali and other followers of Ibn al-Hanafiyyah had arrived (in Mecca) to support Ibn al-Hanafiyyah and fight 'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr. Therefore, he hastened to do away with the prisoners. But when this news reached Abu 'Abdillah al-Jadali, he came there at the time when the fire was already set on them, then he put out the fire and rescued them. (al-Aghani, p.15)

So, all these prove the word of Amir al-mu'minin about him.

95. If a man ponders over his original condition and the eventual breaking up and ruining of his body he will be compelled to admit his lowliness and humble position instead of being proud and vain, because he will see that there was a time when he did not exist and Allah originated his existence with a humble drop of semen which took the shape of a piece of flesh in the mother's womb and continued feeding and growing on thick blood. When on completion of the body he set foot on the earth he was so helpless and incapable that he had neither control over his hunger and thirst nor on sickness and health, nor any command over benefit or harm, or any authority over life and death, not knowing when the energy of limbs may exhaust, feeling and sense may leave, eyesight may be taken away, power of hearing may be snatched and when death may separate the spirit from the body and leave the latter to be cut into pieces by vultures and kites or for worms to eat it in the grave.

An Arabic couplet says : How does one whose origin is semen and whose end is a carcass dare be vain?

96. This means that a comparison can be made among the poets when their imagination runs in the same field; but when the expression of one differs from the other, and the style of one varies from that of the other it is difficult to decide who is defeated and who has won the field. Consequently, from various considerations one is preferred over the other and someone is considered greater for one consideration and the other for other consideration, as the famous saying goes :

The greatest poet of Arabia is Imriu'l-Qays when he rides; al-A'sha when he is eager for something and an-Nabighah when he is afraid.

Nevertheless, despite this categorization Imriu'l-Qays is regarded to be in a high position among poets of the first era

because of the beauty of his imagination, the excellence of his description, his inimitable similes and rare metaphors, although many of his couplets are below moral standards and speak about obscene subjects. But in spite of this obscenity the greatness of his art cannot be denied, because an artist looks at a poetic production from the point of view of art ignoring the other factors which do not affect art.

97. This is the prophecy about the decline and fall of the Umayyads that proved true, word for word. This rule was founded by Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan and ended with Marwan ibn Muhammad al-Himar in 132 A.H. after a life of ninety years, eleven months and thirteen days. The Umayyads period was second to none in tyranny, oppression, harshness and despotism. The despotic rulers of this period perpetrated such tyranny that it put blots on Islam, blackened the pages of history and injured the spirit of humanity. They allowed every kind of ruin and destruction only to retain their own personal authority. They led armies to Mecca, hurled fire on the Ka'bah, made Medina the victim of their brute passions, and shed streams of Muslim blood. At last, this bloodshed and ruthlessness resulted in revolts and conspiracies from all sides and their internal strife and agitation and their mutual fighting paved the way for their ruin. Although political unrest had set in among them earlier yet during the days of al-Walid ibn Yazid open disturbances began to occur. On the other side Banu al-'Abbas (the 'Abbasids) also started preparations and during the reign of Marwan al-Himar they started a movement under the name of "al-khilafah al-Ilahiyyah" (the Caliphate of Allah). For successful piloting of this movement they got a martial leader Abu Muslim al-Khurasani who, in addition to his knowledge of political events and occurrences, was also an expert in the art of warfare. Making Khurasan as the base he spread a whole net against the Umayyads and succeeded in bringing the 'Abbasids to power.

In the beginning this man was quite unknown and it is for this unknowness and low position that Amir al-mu'minin likened him and his associates to the hyena as this simile is used for low and humble people.

98. Generally purchases are made from helpless people in such a way that taking advantage of their need and necessity, things are purchased from them at cheap rates and are sold to them at high prices. No religion allows taking advantage of such helplessness and extreme need, nor is it permissible in ethics that profiteering should be resorted to at the time of others' helplessness.

99. The Holy Prophet used often to urge and order the ummah to love Amir al-mu'minin and forbid them to bear any hatred against him. Moreover, the Holy Prophet used to regard the love of Amir al-mu'minin as the sign of Faith (iman) and the hatred of him as the sign of hypocracy (nifaq) (as we have already mentioned on the foot-note of No.45).

Now, we quote one of the traditions of the Holy Prophet with regard to this subject. It has been narrated through fourteen companions that the Holy Prophet said :

Whoever loves 'Ali, he surely loves me; and whoever loves me, he surely loves Allah, and whoever loves Allah, He will cause him to enter Paradise.

Whoever hates 'Ali, he surely hates me; and whoever hates me, he surely hates Allah, and whoever hates Allah, He will cause him to enter the Fire.

And whoever hurts 'Ali, he surely hurts me, and whoever hurts me, he surely hurts Allah, (surely, those who hurt Allah and His Messenger, Allah has cursed them in the present world and the world to come, and has prepared for them a humbling chastisement [Qur'an, 33 :57]). (al-Mustadrak, vol.3, pp.127—128; 130; Hilyah al-awliya', vol.I, pp.66-67; al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p.1101; Usd al-ghabah, vol.4, p. 383; al-Isabah, vol.3, pp.496-497; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.9, pp. 108—109, 129, 131, 132, 133; Kanz al-'ummal, vol.12, pp.202, 209, 218—219; vol.15, pp.95—96; vol.17, p.70; ar-Riyad an-nadirah, vol.2, pp.166, 167, 209, 214; al-Manaqib, Ibn al-Maghazili, pp.103,196, 382)

At the same time, the Holy Prophet used to caution the ummah against exaggeration in (Amir al-mu'minin's) love of him in exceeding the bounds of Islam in love for him. One who does so is called ghali, i.e. he who believes that the Holy Prophet or Amir al-mu'minin or any of the Shi'ite Imams is god, or attributes to them the special attributes of Allah, or believes that the twelve Imams are prophets, or makes any claim which they (the Holy Prophet and Imams) did not make about themselves.

On the contrary, the Holy Prophet had also forbidden any offence or denigration concerning them (Imams); and he used to blame those who lay false and baseless accusations against them as well as those who hate and bear malice.

It was for this reason that the Holy Prophet sometimes used to refrain from mentioning some of the excellent qualities of Amir al-mu'minin as Jabir ibn 'Abdillah al-Ansari narrates:

When Amir al-mu'minin approached the Holy Prophet with the news of the conquering of Khaybar by himself (Amir al-mu'minin), the Holy Prophet said to him: "O' 'Ali, had it not been for some groups of my ummah who may say about you, what the Christians say about 'Isa, son of Maryam. I would have said (something) about you so that you would not pass before any Muslim but that he would seize the dust from the tracks of your feet demanding blessing from it. But it suffices to say that you hold the same position in relation to me as Harun held in relation to Musa except that there shall, in all certainty, be no prophet after me." (Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.9, p. 131; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.5, p.4; vol.9, p.168; vol.18, p.282; Manaqib 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, Ibn al-Maghazili, pp.237—239; Manaqib 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, al-Khwarazmi, pp.75—76, 96, 220; Kifayah at-talib fi manaqib 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, al-Ganji, pp.264—265; Arjah al-matalib, pp.448, 454; Yanabi' al-mawaddah, pp.63—64, 130—131)

The Holy Prophet had also informed the Muslim ummah that there will appear two types of deviated groups among the Muslims who will exceed the bounds of Islamic principles towards understanding Amir al-mu'minin, as he himself has related:

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his descendants, called upon me and said: "O' 'Ali, there is a resemblance between you and 'Isa son of Maryam, whom the Jews hated so much that they laid a false accusation against his mother, and whom the Christians loved so much that they assigned to him the position which is not for him."

(Then, Amir al-mu'minin continues) Beware ! two types of persons will fall into ruin over me: The one who loves (me) who will eulogize me for what is not in me; and the one who hates (me) whose detestation against me will lead him to lay false and baseless accusations on me. Beware ! I am not a prophet, and nothing has been revealed to me. But I act according to the Book of Allah and the sunnah of His Prophet as far as I can. (al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.1, p.160; al-Mustadrak, al-Hakim, vol.3, p.123; Mishkat al-masabih, vol.3, pp.245—246; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.9, p.133 ; Kanz al-'ummal, vol.12, p.219; vol.15, p.110; Ibn Kathir, vol.7, p.356)

The above mentioned sayings of Amir al-mu'minin (in this foot-note) as well as in the text have been reported from the Holy Prophet when he said to Amir al-mu'minin:

O' 'Ali, two types of persons will fall into ruin over you: The one who loves exaggeratingly and the liar who lays false accusation. (al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p.1101)

Also, he said to him:

Two categories will be ruined over you: The one who loves exaggeratingly and the hater who bears malice. (Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.5, p.6)

The famous scholar of tradition 'Amir ibn Sharahil ash-Sha'bi (19/ 640 — 103/721) has confirmed this saying that these two categories appeared and both became disbelievers and were ruined. (al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p.1130; al-'Iqd al-farid, vol.4, p.312)

100. The belief in the Unity of Allah is not complete unless it is supported by belief in freedom of Allah from all imperfection; that is, one should regard Him above the limitations of body, shape, place or time and should not subject Him to one's own imagination and whims, because the being who is contained within imagination and whims cannot be Allah, but a creation of the human mind, while the field of mental activity remains confined to things which are seen and observed. Consequently, the greater man would try to appreciate Him through illustrations connected by the human mind or his imaginative efforts and the remoter he would get from reality. In this connection, al-Imam Muhammad al-Baqir says : Whenever you contain Him in your imagination and whim he will not be Allah but a creation like yourself and revertable towards you.

Justice means that whatever the form of injustice and inequity it should be denied about Allah and He should not be given such attributes which are evil and useless and which the mind can in no way agree to attribute to Him. In this connection, Allah says :

And perfect is the word of your Lord in truth and justice; There is none who can change His words, and He is the All-hearing and the All-knowing. (Qur'an, 6:115)

101. The friendship that is based on love and sincerity makes a man free from ceremonial formalities, but the friendship for which formalism is necessary is unstable and such a friend is not a true friend, because true friendship requires that a friend should not be a cause of trouble for the friend. If he is a cause of trouble he will prove tedious and harmful and this harmfulness is a sign of his being the worst friend.

Source URL: https://www.al-islam.org/nahjul-balagha-part-2-letters-and-sayings

Links

[1] http://www.al-islam.org/nahjul-balagha-part-1-sermons

[2] https://www.al-islam.org/printpdf/book/export/html/20827

[3] https://www.al-islam.org/printepub/book/export/html/20827

[4] https://www.al-islam.org/printmobi/book/export/html/20827

[5] https://www.al-islam.org/person/allamah-sharif-razi

[6] https://www.al-islam.org/tags/hadith-collections

[7] https://www.al-islam.org/tags/ahl-al-bayt

[8] https://www.al-islam.org/tags/nahj-al-balagha

[9] https://www.al-islam.org/person/imam-ali