

NAHJUL BALAGHA: A DIVINE BEACON OF CONSOLATION FOR A WOUNDED WORLD

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No one can deny the fact that from the beginning up to today, humanity has been facing different challenges in man-made-society against its survival. Because in communal riots, often people are killed on the basis of region, religion and sectarian variations, but no follower dies, except human being. In pandemic and epidemic, human being suffers. In natural calamity, human being falls in examination. On this terrible and horrible occasion, every one demands a peace with divine justice irrespective of caste and creed, religious and belief and race and colour to get him a liberty from these harmful situations, so that tortured humanity can be consoled. The silent demand of this peace and justice universally sighs in heart of victim as supplication at the threshold of Monotheism. Someone asked Imam Hasan (a.s.) that how far earth from heaven. He beautifully sums up the feeling of such person that the lament of a victim. In order to restore this peace and justice, Almighty Allah has already assured each and every person who has been hit by injustice and discrimination:

And they who act unjustly shall know to
what final place of turning they shall turn
back

This Quranic assurance will root out oppressions from the land of Allah and establish the peace with Divine justice on the land of Allah for entire mankind. So the human world is universally looking forward to this beam of anticipation. However this is an imagination and imagination can perform its role whenever it will be converted into a physical character, so that it can enter in the society as a representative of Almighty to interpret the dream as per the objective of Almighty as well as the desire of humanity. In Islamic teachings, for consoling tortured humanity, this Quranic assurance before the

mankind, it converts into holy physical character as a vicegerent of Almighty Allah within a sacred personality of Imam Al-Mahdi (a.s.) who is a grandson of Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (a.s.), from the progeny of Hazrat Fatma Zahra (a.s.) and the descendent of Imam Husain (a.s.) and He is our Twelfth and Last Imam (a.s.) who will reappear after a long occultation from The Holy Kaba to fulfill Allah's assurance to bestow the peace with Divine justice in this world. Such a personality who has those attributes, he is called in Islamic Term as Imam.

Nahjul Balagha is a golden collection of sermons and circulars of Hazrat Ali bin Abitalib (a.s.),

which compiled by 400 A.H. renowned scholar As-Syed Al-Sharif Al-Radhi. It consists of 238 Sermons, 79 Circulars and 500 Words of Wisdom. This holy book has received a status as a great Islamic book after Holy Quran and Ahadees of Holy Prophet (a.s.). No doubt, this marvellous book is a creativity of Hazrat Ali (a.s.), but really it is a glad tidings from the side of Creator of worlds towards human world. Let us make an observation:

Amir al-Mu'mnin Hazrat Ali bin Abitalib (a.s.) panegyrizing the distinction to recognize Allah, Holy Prophet and His Holy Household as a brand ambassador of Allah towards humanity, says:

Any one of you who dies in his bed while he had knowledge of the rights of Allah and the rights of His Prophet and members of the Prophet's house, will die as a martyr. His reward is incumbent on Allah.¹

He also says:

On you lay the obligation of obedience to the person about whom you cannot plead the excuse of ignorance.

Here, we must go through the remarks of Allama Mufti Jafar Hussain sahib Qibla to understand above mentioned extractions from 188 and 156 Sermons of Nahjul Balaghah respectively:

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 he who remains ignorant of him cannot be excused because the 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.

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 defense) when he stands before Allah on the Day of Judgment.

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.

Hazrat Ali bin Abitalib (a.s.) producing witness to the Monotheism of Allah and the Last Prophethood of Hazrat Muhammad (a.s.) with Holy Progeny of Prophet (a.s.) and reminiscence of 12th and last Imam Al-Mahdi (a.s.) :

He left among us the standard of right. Whoever goes further from it goes out of Faith; whoever lags behind it is ruined. Whoever sticks to it would join (right). Its guide is short of speech, slow of steps, and quick when he rises. When you have bent your necks before him and pointed towards him with your fingers his death would occur and would take him away. They would live after him as long as Allah wills, till Allah brings out for you one who would collect you together and fuse you after diffusion. Do not place expectations in one who does not come forward and do not lose hope in one who is veiled, because it is possible that one of the two feet of the veiled one may slip while the other may remain sticking, till both return to position and stick. Beware! The example of the descendants of Muhammad (S.A.) is like that of stars in the sky. When one star sets another one rises. So you are in a position that Allah's blessings on you have been perfected and He has shown you what you used to wish for.

Hazrat Ali bin Abitalib (a.s.) reports the progeny of the Prophet (a.s.) as lamps in the times of darkness and difficult time, and obviously says the reappearance of Imam Al-Mahdi (a.s.):

They took to the right and the left piercing through to the ways of evil and leaving the paths of guidance. Do not make haste for a matter which is to happen and is awaited, and do not wish for delay in what the morrow is to bring for you. For, how many people make haste for a matter, but when they get it they begin to wish they had not got it. How near is today to the dawning of tomorrow.

O' my people, this is the time for the occurrence of every promised event and the approach of things which you do not know. Whoever from among us will be during these days will move through them with a burning lamp and will tread on the footsteps of the virtuous, in order to unfasten knots, to free slaves, to divide the united and to unite the divided. He will be in concealment from people. The stalker will not find his footprints even though he pursues with his eye. Then a group of people will be sharpened like the sharpening of swords by the blacksmith. Their sight will be brightened by revelation, the (delicacies of) commentary will be put in their ears and they will be given drinks of wisdom, morning and evening.

Hazrat Ali bin Abitalib (a.s.) mentions the affairs and occurrences following the reappearance of Imam Al-Mahdi (a.s.) :

The world will bend towards us after having been refractory as the biting she-camel bends towards its young and 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.

Hazrat Ali bin Abitalib (a.s.) describes the qualities of his grandson, Imam Al-Mahdi (a.s.) and the prevailing justice in his regime:

He will be wearing the armour of wisdom, which he will have secured with all its conditions, such as full attention towards it, its knowledge and exclusive devotion to it. For him it is like a thing which he had lost and which he was then seeking, or a need which he was trying to fulfill. If Islam is in trouble he will feel forlorn like a traveller and like a (tired) camel beating the end of its tail and with its neck flattened on the ground. He is the last of Allah's proofs and one of the vicegerents of His prophets.

Hazrat Ali bin Abitalib (a.s.) illustrates the future about the reappearance of Imam Al Mahdi (a.s.):

He will direct desires towards (the path of) guidance while people will have turned guidance towards desires, and he will turn their views to the direction of the Qur'an while the people will have turned the Qur'an to their views.

Above mentioned these observations of Nahjul Balagha are an evidence that Imam Al-Mahdi (a.s.) will finally play a vital role to save and serve the whole human nation by setting up of Peace with Divine Justice. Because he has pious and sacred attributes to command entire humanity for seeking the salvation and these attributes reflect in his personality and portrait his Divine Image as a Divine Leader that's why Imam. So, the leadership for guidance of mankind is His own right. According to Nahjul Balagha, awaiting or coming of Imam Al-Mahdi (a.s.) can not only be considered as a faith and belief of Muslims, but also it must be acknowledged as a need of entire human world without any option, because time is about to take an approval of the importance of this sanctified Sine Qua Non. This is a right time to make a thorough study of Nahjul Balagha to find out a right way for seeking the salvation. Therefore, we can say that Nahjul Balagha is a Divine beacon of consolation for a wounded world.

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