

Words of Light

A good collection of maxims and wonderful words on different social and educational issues were transmitted from Imam Abu Muhammad (a.s.), and these are considered to be from the treasures of the Islamic literature. Here we present to readers some of the imam's wonderful sayings:

The Preference of The Ahlul Bayt (a.s.)

Imam Abu Muhammad (a.s.) said,

“We have ascended to the peaks of truth by the feet of prophethood and guardianship, and lit the seven ways with the banners of magnanimity. We are lions of battles, sources of generosity. Sword and pen are among us now, and the banner of praise and knowledge later on. Our grandsons are the successors of religion, allies of certainty, lamps of nations, and the keys of generosity. A generous one has put on the garment of choice for the loyalty that we have known in him, and the Holy Spirit in the Heavens, and he tasted from our gardens early fruits. Our Shi'a are the rescued party, and the pure group. They have been as a dress and protection for us, and assistance against oppressors.... Springs of life will gush out for them after flames of Fire... and all bad years...’

Sheikh al-Majlisi commented on these statements by saying, ‘This is absolute wisdom, and an ample blessing that even deaf ears can hear and high mountains shake for. Peace and blessings of Allah be on them...’¹

The imams of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) had a very high position near Allah, Who had endowed them with virtues and knowledge that no one of the human beings other than them had ever been endowed with. Allah had made them the guides to His contentment, and the leaders to His obedience. They all were and are lamps to nations and keys of generosity in this life, and in the afterlife they will be the intercessors and bearers of the banner of al-Hamd (praise), and Allah has given them the Highest Paradise.

His Recommendation To His Adherents

Imam Abu Muhammad (a.s.) preached and advised his Shi'a by saying,

“I recommend you to fear Allah, be pious in your religion, strive for Allah, be truthful in speaking, give deposits back to their owners, whether he be good or evil, increase prostration, and to be good to neighbors. By these (principles) Muhammad (a.s.) came with his mission. Associate with your kin, attend their funerals, visit their sick, and carry out their rights, for if anyone of you is pious in his religion, truthful in his speech, he gives deposit back to its owner, and treats people kindly, then it shall be said about him: “this is a Shi'a”, and this shall please me.

Fear Allah, be good and do not be bad! Attract every love to us, and keep any obscenity away from us, because whatever good is said about us we deserve it, and whatever bad is said about us is not in us. We have a right in the Book of Allah, kinship to the messenger of Allah, and purification from Allah that no one other than us claims but a liar. Mention Allah excessively and remember death! Recite the Qur'an and send peace and blessings on the Prophet (a.s.), because the sending of blessings on the Prophet (a.s.) has ten good deeds. Keep in mind what I have recommended to you! I pray to Allah to protect you (I bid you farewell), and send peace on you.’²

A Valuable Advice

Imam Abu Muhammad (a.s.) said,

“Avoid begging people as long as you can tolerate, for every day has a new goodness. Insisting on asking others deprives one of his gravity except when a door may be opened to you for a good entrance. And how close slapping is to a rash one! Jealousy might be a kind of the manners of Allah the Almighty. Luck has degrees, so do not hasten towards a fruit that it is not ripe yet because it is picked only at its time. He, Who manages your affairs, is more aware of the time that is good for you (to pick the fruit). Trust in His experience in your affairs and do not hurry for your needs at the beginning of your time, as then your heart may be distressed and despair may overcome you. Know that coyness has a certain extent and if it is exceeded, it shall turn to weakness; generosity has a certain extent and if it is exceeded, it shall be extravagance; economy has a certain extent, and if it is exceeded, it shall be stinginess; and courage has a certain extent and if it exceeded, it shall be recklessness...’³

Preaching

Imam Abu Muhammad (a.s.) often and always advised his companions, reminded them of the afterlife, and warned them against the sedition and deception of the worldly life. Once, he said,

“You are in short lives, and few days, and death comes unexpectedly. Whoever sows good shall harvest happiness, and whoever sows evil shall harvest regret. Every sower shall reap what he has sowed. No

slow one is preceded by his luck, and no careful one gets what has not been determined for him. Whoever is given good, Allah has given him that, and whoever is saved from an evil Allah has saved him from it.’⁴

Pondering On Allah

Imam Abu Muhammad (a.s.) said,

“Worship is not abundant fasting and praying, but worship is abundant pondering; it is the continuous thinking of Allah.’⁵

In his traditions, the imam established the bases of faith in Allah, and the most important one of which was thinking of Allah, and pondering on His wonderful creation because that would lead man to the absolute faith in Allah, the Great Creator.

Wisdom of Fasting

Imam Abu Muhammad (a.s.) said, ‘Allah has imposed fasting so that the wealthy might suffer hunger and be kind to the poor.’⁶

Dispraising The Hypocrites

Imam Abu Muhammad (a.s.) said, ‘What a bad man he is who has two faces and two tongues! He praises his brother when he is present and eats his flesh (backbites him) when he is absent. He envies him if he is given (becomes in good state), and betrays him if he is afflicted.’⁷

Pious And Impious

Imam Abu Muhammad (a.s.) said, ‘The love of the pious to the pious is a virtue for the pious, the hatred of the impious towards the pious is a merit for the pious, and the hatred of the pious towards the impious is disgrace for the impious.’⁸

Wonderful Short Maxims

The following are some of the wonderful maxims transmitted from Imam Abu Muhammad al-Askari (a.s.). He said,

1. “If fate is inevitable, then for what purpose is supplication (of man to other than Allah)?”
2. “A believer is a blessing for a believer and an authority on an unbeliever.”
3. “The heart of a fool is in his mouth, and the mouth of a wise man is in his heart.”

4. "Anger is the key to every evil."
5. "A spiteful one is the least comfortable."
6. "The most pious of people is he who refrains before suspicion. The most worshipful of people is he who keeps on obligations. The most ascetic one is he who refrains from unlawful things. The best mujtahid is he who refrains from sins."
7. "Let no secure livelihood make you too busy to perform an obligatory deed."
8. "He, who exceeds in something, is like one who lacks that thing."
9. "Whenever a mighty one gives up the truth, he becomes low, and whenever a low one keeps to it, he becomes mighty."
10. "The friend of an ignorant is always tired."
11. "There are two qualities such that there is no quality above them; faith in Allah and the serving of brothers."
12. "The impertinence of a child in childhood before his father makes him undutiful in adulthood."
13. "It is not from politeness to show joy before a distressed person."
14. "Better than life is that, which if you lose, you shall hate life, and worse than death is that which if comes to you, you shall love death."
15. "Taming an ignorant person and preventing a person with unchanging habits from those habits are as a miracle."
16. "Humbleness is a blessing that is not envied."
17. "Do not be generous to someone with what may be heavy on him."⁹
18. "He, who advises his brother secretly, does him good, and he, who advises him openly, does him wrong."
19. "How bad from a faithful it is when he has a desire a thing that degrades him."
20. "It is sufficient in order for you to be polite that you avoid what you hate in others."
21. "Beware of every silent, intelligent one."
22. "If all the people of this world were intelligent, the world would be ruined."
23. "The weakest of enemies in cunning, is he who shows his enmity."

24. "The best of your brothers is he who forgets your wrong against him, and remembers your kindness to him."
25. "Good figure is apparent beauty, and good mind is hidden beauty."
26. "He, who is friendly with Allah, feels aversion towards people."
27. "He, who does not regard people, does not regard Allah."
28. "Vices have been put in a house whose key is lying."
29. "When hearts are active, put into them, and when they detest, bid them farewell."
30. "Following after one from whom you hope is better than remaining with one from whose evil you do not feel safe."
31. "Ignorance is an enemy and discernment is authority, and he, whom patience does not make suffer agonies of anger, shall not feel the ease of heart."
32. "The gift of a generous one makes you beloved to him, and the gift of a mean one makes you low to him."
33. "Whoever is such that piety is his habit, and virtues are his garments, shall be victorious over his enemies by his good praise, and shall be fortified against defects by his good mention."
34. "He, who praises an undeserving one, becomes as an accused person."
35. "No one knows (the reality of) a blessing except the grateful, and no one is grateful to a blessing except the knowing."
36. "Staying up makes sleep more pleasant, and hunger makes food more delicious."
37. "Reaching Allah the Almighty is a journey that is not achieved except by riding at night."¹⁰
38. "He, who does not know how to prevent, does not know how to give."
39. He said to al-Mutawakkil, the Abbasid caliph, "Do not expect good will from one whom you have offended, or loyalty from one whom you have betrayed, or sincerity from one whom you have suspected, because the hearts of others towards you are like your heart towards them."
40. "It is from ignorance to laugh with no reason."
41. "The speech of Allah has preference over all speeches, just as He holds preference over His creation. And our speech has preference to the speech of people, just as our preference over them."

42. “It is from humbleness to greet everyone you pass by, and to sit in other than the distinctive place in a meeting.”
43. “The worthiest people of (your) love are those who comfort you.”
44. “From the disasters that break one’s back is a neighbor who, if sees a good deed, conceals it, and if sees a bad deed, spreads it.”
45. “(In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful) is closer to the greatest Name of Allah than the iris of the eye to its white.”
46. “Do not dispute with others so that you lose your gravity, and do not joke so that it is dared against you.”
47. “Whoever is satisfied to sit in other than the distinctive place in a meeting, Allah and His angels send blessings on him until he leaves the meeting.”
48. “Polytheism in people is more inconspicuous than the creeping of ants on a black cloth in a dark night.”
49. “Hearts have ideas from fancy, while minds shake and get more knowledge out of experiments, and taking lessons leads to reasonability.”
50. “Predominant fates are not prevented by struggling (against them), and determined livelihoods are not gained by greediness and requesting... submit yourself to fates and know that you shall not get except what has been determined for you.”

1. Bihar al-Anwar, vol.78 p.338.

2. Bihar al-Anwar, vol.78 p.372.

3. Nuzhat an-Nadhir, p.50-51.

4. Bihar al-Anwar, vol.78 p.338.

5. Ibid., p.373.

6. Kashf al-Ghummah, vol.3 p. 193, Man La Yahdhuru al-Faqih, vol.2 p.43.

7. Bihar al-Anwar, vol.78 p.373.

8. Al-Majalis as-Saniyyah, vol.2 p.663.

9. Because that someone finds that he has to answer with the same.

10. Spending the night with worshipping.

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