Nahj al-Balaghah for Children





Ahlul Bayt World Assembly

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A small selection from the great collection of speeches, sermons, letters, and sayings of Imam Ali (a). Short passages with pictures.

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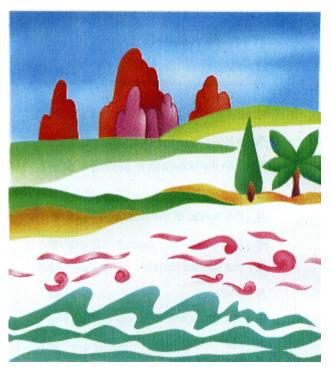
Introduction

Welcome to the Nahj al-Balaghah, the world of Imam Ali, may peace be upon him.

Here is a small selection from the great collection of speeches, sermons, letters, and sayings of the Imam, next only to the Qur'an in its beauty.

This work, which is one of the masterpieces of Arabic prose is difficult to translate, especially for a children's book. Yet we have tried to select the simplest of its passages which can be useful for children. These small passages, together with the illustrations, are a small window into the great world of Imam Ali, peace be on him, who was the most perfect of human beings after the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his Household.

The creation



He made the creation

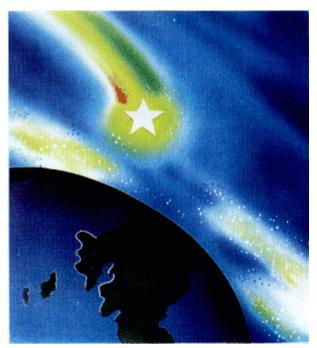
without any example and without the

advice of a counsel

or the assistance of a helper.

(Sermon 155)

The earth



He created the earth and

suspended it,

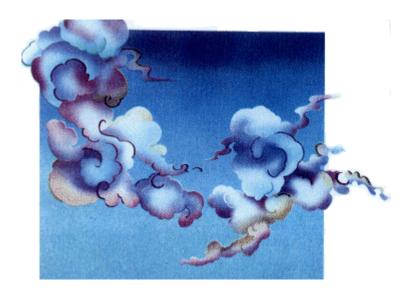
retained it without support,

made it stand without legs,

and raised it without pillars.

(Sermon 185)

The winds



He brought out the creation

by His power

and made the winds blow

With His compassion.

(Sermon 1)

The moon



Then He decorated the heavens

with the stars and the light of the meteors and set the shining sun and the bright **moon** in an orbit that rolls around.

(Sermon 1)

The night



Praise be to Allah

when **the night** falls

and darkens,

and praise be to Allah

when the stars shine and set.

(Sermon 48)

The sun

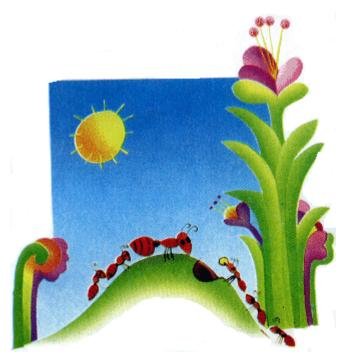


Look at

the sun and the moon,
the plants and the trees,
the water and the stones,
at the alteration of day and night,
the gush of the oceans,
the great number of the mountains
and the height of their peaks,
at the difference of languages
and the variety of tongues.

The Ant

(Sermon 185)



Look at the ant

with its small body

and delicate form.

See how it crawls on the earth

and leaps at its livelihood.

It carries the grain to its hole

and stores it in its storage.

It collects during the summer for the winter,

and during strength for the period of its weakness.

(Sermon 185)

The Feet



Glorified is Allah

who has given feet

to the ant and the gnat,

and created those bigger than them,

the fishes and the elephants.

(Sermon 165)

The Locust



If you wish,

I will tell you about the locust.

Allah gave it two red eyes,

with pupils like two moons,

made its small ears,

opened for it a suitable mouth,

and gave it a keen sense.

He gave it two front teeth to cut with

and two sickle - like feet

to grip with.

(Sermon 185)

The Birds



The birds are subject to His

commands.

He knows the number of their feathers

and the count of their breaths.

He has made their feet stand on water

and on land.

He knows all their species.

There is the crow,

and the eagle,

the pigeon,

and the ostrich.

(Sermon 185)

The Peacock



The most amazing among them

is the peacock in its creation,

which Allah has created

in the finest harmony

and arranged its hues

in the best composition,

with wings well tacked together

and a long trailing tail.

(Sermon 165)

The Bat



An example of His delicate product,
a marvel of His creation,
and a sample of His profound wisdom,
is what we see in **the bat**,
which shrinks from the daylight,
although daylight moves everything else
to action,
and is active in the night,
although the night stops the activity
of every other living being.

(Sermon 155)

The Fishes



God is aware of the cries

of the beasts in the forests,

of the sins of the people in private,

of the movements of the fishes

in deep oceans,

and the uproar of the waters

by strong winds.

(Sermon 198)

Livelihood



Every thing submits to Him,

and everything exists by Him.

He is the recourse of every poor,

the honour of the lowly,

the might of the weak,

and the comfort of the grieved.

He hears the speech of every speaker,

and knows the secret thoughts of

one who keeps silent.

He provides the **livelihood** of every living thing,

and to Him returns everything that dies.

(Sermon 109)

David



David

The receiver of the Psalms

and the reciter of the dwellers of paradise, used to make

baskets of palm leaves

with his own hands,

and he would say to his companions,

"Which of you will help me sell them?"

He ate bread made of barley

bought with that money.

(Sermon 160)

Herbs



Moses said:

"O my Lord, surely I have need of whatever good you may send down upon me."

And by God,

he asked Him only for bread to eat,

because he used to eat herbs

of the earth

and the greenness of the herbs

could be seen

under the skin of his belly

due to his leanness!

(Sermon 160)

Winter



I will tell you about Jesus,

son of Mary.

he had a stone for his pillow,

wore coarse dress,

and ate rough food.

His lamp at night was the moon,

and the earth's vast expanse east and

west, his roof during winter.

His dessert and relish were

what grows on the earth for cattle.

His feet were his means of transport

Good Tidings

and his two hands his servant.

(Sermon 160)



Then Allah sent Muhammad, may God
Bless him and his Household,
as a witness,

a bearer of good tidings,

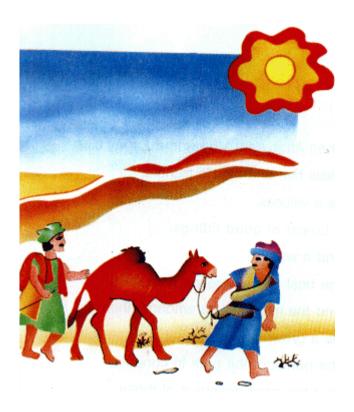
and a warner.

the best of the creation as a child, and the most chaste amongst them as a grown up,

the purest of the pure in conduct, and the most generous of those who are approached for their generosity.

(Sermon 105)

The People of Arabia



Allah sent Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his Household, as a warner for all the worlds,

and as the trustee of His revelation,

while you, the people of Arabia,

followed the worst of creeds

and were the most ill placed.

You lived amongst harsh rocks

and venomous serpents.

You drank muddy water

and ate coarse food.

You shed each others blood

And broke the ties of kinship.

Idols stood amongst your midst

And sins held you in their bondage.

(Sermon 26)

Idols



Allah sent Muhammad (S.A.W.)

with truth

so that He may take out His people

from the worship of idols

towards His worship

and from obeying Satan

towards obeying Him.

(Sermon 145)

The Holy Prophet



Follow your **Prophet**, the best of the

good and purest of pure, may

God bless him and his Household.

He is the example for one to follow,

and comfort for one

who seeks happiness.

The most beloved of servants to God

is one who follows His Prophet

and walks in his footsteps.

He, may God bless him and his

Household,

would sit on the ground

when eating food,

and he would sit like a slave.

He would mend his shoes with his own

hands

and patched his clothes himself.

(Sermon 160)

The Revelation



When the Revelation descended on the

Prophet, may God bless him and his

Household, I heard a wailing cry.

I said: "O messenger of Allah,

what is this wailing?"

He replied,

"This is Satan, who has lost

all hope of being worshipped.

O Ali, you see what I see,

and you hear what I hear,

only that you are not a prophet.

But you are a minister

and on the path of virtue."

(Sermon 192)

The Stars



Behold!

The example of the Household of

Muhammad (S.A.W.)

is like the stars of the heaven:

when one stars sets

another one rises.

(Sermon 100)

The Rain



The riser has risen,

the sparkler has sparkled,

the appearer has appeared.

Allah has replaced

one people with another.

We awaited these changes

as the famine stricken await the rain.

Certainly the Imams are

the vicegerents of Allah

over his creatures,

and they make people know Allah.

No one will enter Paradise,

except he knows them

and they know him.....

(Sermon 150)

The Qur'an



Certainly the Qur'an

is wonderful in its outward form,

and its inner meanings

are profound.

(Sermon 18)

Leader



To them (the Household of the Prophet)

pertain the noblest of human virtues described in the Qur'an, and they are the treasures of the Beneficent Allah. When they speak, they speak the truth, but when they keep quiet, no one can out strip them. The leader should speak truthfully to his people, and put all his intelligence to work. He should be one of those who work for the next world, because he has come from there and would return to it.

The Tree of Prophethood

(Sermon 154)



We are the tree of Prophethood,

the place of descent

of Divine revelation,

the place of frequenting

of the angels,

and the mainsprings of knowledge.

Those who help us and love us

await (God's) mercy,

and those who regard us

with enmity and hatred

await to be subdued

(by the Almighty's power

and punishment).

(Sermon 109)

A Lamp in the Darkness



Amongst you, I am

like a lamp in the darkness.

Everyone making his way

through the darkness

have to get light from it.

(Sermon 187)

A Grain of Barley



By God,

were I given all the seven heavens

with all they contain

in order that

I may disobey God

by depriving an ant

from the husk of a grain of barley,

I would not do it.

(Sermon 224)

Two Loaves of Bread



You should know that

your Imam has settled for

two worn pieces of clothing

out of the (comforts of the) world,

and two loaves of bread for his meal.

(Letter 45)

Mosquito



The annihilation of the world

after bringing it into being

is no stranger than its

origination and creation.

How can it be so?

For even if all its living beings,

birds and beasts,

the animals of the stable and the

pasture,

all the genera and species of beings,

the dull and the intelligent of the world's

nations

-were all of them together try

to create a mosquito,

they will be incapable

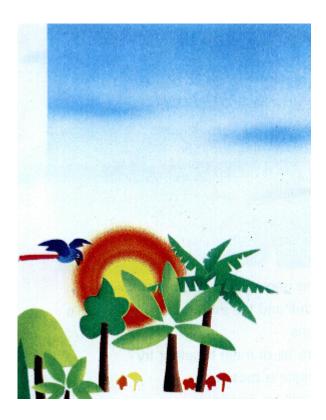
of bringing it into being,

and will not know

how it has been created.

(Sermon 185)

Paradise



Today is the day of preparation

and Tomorrow is the day of the contest.

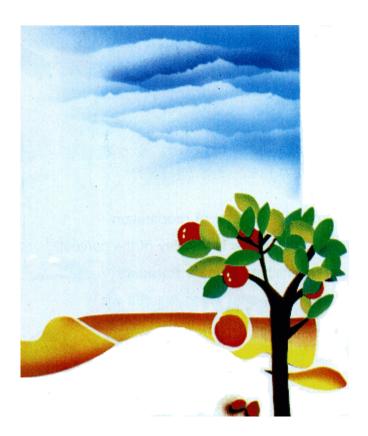
The finishing point is **Paradise**,

and those who fail to reach it will

land in hellfire.

(Sermon 28)

The Earth's Produce



Certainly, Allah makes His creatures suffer when they do evil works, by diminishing the earth's produce, by holding back the blessings, and by blocking the sources of benefit, so that those who wish to repent may repent...

(Sermon 143)

Water



You should know

that every action is the fruit of a tree.

A tree cannot go without water,

and water is of various kinds.

A tree that receives good water,

is healthy

and its fruit is sweet.

A tree that grows on bad water

is vicious, and its fruit bitter.

(Sermon 154)

With Insight



One who sees with his heart,

and acts with insight,

considers before doing anything

whether his action would

be to his benefit or harm.

If it is beneficial for him,

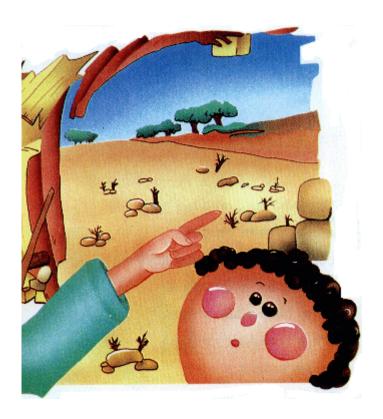
he performs it,

but if it is harmful,

he refrains from it.

(Sermon 154)

Off The Road



One who acts without knowledge

is like one who walks off the road.

Then his deviating from the clear path takes him farther and farther away from his destination.

But one who acts with knowledge

is like one who walks on the clear path.

Therefore, one should see

whether he is moving forward

towards his goal or going backwards.

(Sermon 154)

The Spring Of Hearts



Learn the Qur'an,

for it is the most splendid of all speech;

and become learned in it,

for it is the spring of the hearts.

Cure yourselves with its light,

for it is a remedy for sick hearts.

Recite it in the best manner,

for it is the fairest of accounts.

(Sermon 110)

Prayer



Commit yourselves to **prayer**

and be watchful over it.

Pray as much as you can

and seek nearness to God through it.

(Sermon 199)

The Sacred House



Allah has made obligatory upon you

the pilgrimage (Hajj)

to His sacred house,

which is the qiblah

for mankind.

(Sermon 1)

Jihad



Jihad

is one of the gateways of Paradise

which Allah has opened

for the elect among His friends.

(Sermon 27)

The Strongest



Remember that wood of the tree

which grows in the desert

has the strongest fibres,

while the luxuriant greenery

has the softest barks.

The bushes of the desert

make an enduring fuel,

Whose fire is slow in dying off.

(Letter 45)

Life



O God, send out for us Your rains,

Your bounty,

Your provision, and your mercy,
and give us water in a measure
that would benefit us, satiates our thirst,
and makes the land green with grass,
wherewith all that has withered may grow,
and come to life all that has died,
a rain which brings abundance,
produces plenty of fruits,
watering the plains,

flooding the valleys,

dressing the trees with foliage,

and bringing the prices down.

Surely You are able to do whatever

You will.

(Sermon 143)

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