

Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - Ali on the Life of the World

Evil of the world

In another sermon, Ali dwelt on the evils of the world as follows: "Beware! The world stands on the threshold of decay and destruction. Its mouth sounds the farewell notes of annihilation. It is uncanny and uncharitable. With great rapidity it turns its back. Alas, the world drives its inhabitants into pitfalls of destruction. Through the hands of death it drags its exasperated neighbors to annihilation. Its transparent water becomes, bitter and its sparkling spring becomes opaque in the next world. It has nothing to offer except the leavings which stick to utensils after the meal, or the wet piece of stone which is kept in the mouth to quench parching thirst. Whatever is in the world is superficial, mortal and perishable. O followers of God! Then get ready to leave this abode whose in-dwellers are destined to taste death. Take heed lest the desires and lust should overwhelm you and this transitory life should appear a long one to you and its short sojourn be taken as a long one by you. By God, if you grumble and moan like the wretched camels of burden, shed bitter tears like a pigeon and implore forgiveness of God like those monks who have renounced the world and having renounced your worldly goods and family, you come out to seek nearness to God so that He may exalt your lot or forgive some of your sins which the angels have recorded in your book of deeds. All these things will have little value as compared with the reward which awaits you if you follow my instructions. By God, if for the love of God, you melt your hearts away and for the love of His rewards and fear of His punishment your eyes shed blood instead of tears and you live in this condition till this world lasts, even then your indefatigable and untiring efforts can be of no match for the numerous blessings which God has so kindly and bountifully bestowed upon you. You can never return the thanks of the Almighty Lord for the guidance He has so mercifully shown to us."

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