

Illustration of Death in Nahj-al-Balaghah

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Abstract

Image is one of the most effective instruments in Nahj-al-Balaghah to convey the thoughts and concepts to the readers. Imam Ali (a.s.), makes the abstract meanings imaginable and touchable with the help of images. He has used the illustration elements in various parts of Nahj-al-Balaghah to bring the reader's mind closer to the facts and their understanding of realities. His illustrations of the death attract readers to the imagination world, so that they feel themselves in that scene and field. Carefulness in the selection of words and method of their combination and using various types of rhetoric forms with the pleasant song of its phrases have given a freshness to his descriptions So that it fascinated and impressed the audience.

This article has studied and analyzed eight cases of death image through sermons of Nahj-al-Balaghah. These eight cases show other images of death too. The terrible images of death in these portraits have been drawn in such a manner that they motivate the emotions, shake the depths of the human being and awake the slept conscience.

Key Words:

Image, Illustration, Death, Imam Ali (a.s.), Nahj-al-Balaghah.

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Introduction

In different times and various ages, the best instrument to convey the human emotions and thoughts from the passionate hearts and minds to the people thirsty for knowledge has been a balanced speech equipped with literary decorations. Nothing like a speech decorated with literary arrays has the power to reflect the inner side ideas. The role of eloquence and rhetoric techniques in creating greater speech impact is undeniable.

One of the most effective instruments to convey the thoughts and concepts to the addressees is to decorate those concepts with imagination tools. "Image" is the specific and suitable tool in the expressive style of the Qur-an. The Qur-an makes the abstractive meanings tangible and imaginative with the help of images. (Seyed Qotb, 1988: 44).

Seyed Qotb, the Egyptian thinker is one of the most important Qur-an researchers who had a special attention to the artistic images of the Qur-an. He has written a book on this subject-matter on "The Technical Image in the Qur-an" in 1945. In his books, he writes, "The artistic image in the Qur-an is an image mixed with color, movement and music, the resonance of the words and melody of phrases and prose rhythm such that it fully captures the eye, ear, sense, fantasy, intelligent and conscience.. (Seyed Qotb, 1988: 45).

Nahj-al-Balaghah as the "Brother of the Qur-an" is in agreement with the Qur-an on this subject-matter. In this valuable book, Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has decorated his materials and concepts with imaginary tools, to provide the addressee with a more simple and deep route in understanding the concepts and admonitions, so that he/she could distinguish the route of light from darkness.

The element of image in Nahj-al-Balaghah, or in other words, the illustrations which is displayed in Nahj-al-Balaghah has an eminent, effective and distinguished position in conveying the concepts. Imam Ali (a.s.) in different parts of Nahj-al-Balaghah has used illustration elements to bring the mind closer to the tangible facts and our understanding of realities. He infatuates the addressee with a clear and expressive method. Thus, the

imaginative expression has a pivotal role in Nahj-al-Balaghah discourse and using illustrations in conveying the concepts and understanding the facts is undeniable.

Among these illustrations, there is the illustration of death. Imam's descriptions of death have unique characteristics which is not observable in any other works. The incomparable and unique literature and illustrations of that Hazrat in this field attracts individuals to the fantasy world in which they feel themselves in the field. Also carefulness in the selection of words and their method of combination along with the pleasant melody of the phrases has granted such a freshness to the descriptions of that Hazrat that each addressee is attracted and associated with it.

Concerning death illustration by Emir of Believers (a.s.), George Jordac writes, "Artistic miracle in literary techniques is that the artist could display the natural dreadful scenes with the help of art well and we see that the son of Abi Taleb has achieved a perfect artistic position on this case and has drawn the dreadful image of death through a beautiful pen. He has expressed speeches which have arisen from a deep emotion and have taken inspiration from a pleasant imagination. It is a drawing of a very great art and nobody can reach to the level and source of this technique. The great and elite artists of the Europe are unable to illustrate the terrible image of death with a beautiful colorful melody and poetry. (Jordac, 1977: 149).

Having considered these features, we intend to study and analyze a part of the illustrations employed on the subject-matter of death through Nahj-al-Balaghah sermons.

What is illustration?

"تصوير" in Arabic, i.e. "image" and shape whose plural form is صور and صُور. (Ibn Manzoor, 1994:473 /iv). The word "صورت" is the verbal noun of the verb صَوَّر and its infinitive is تصوير in Taf'eil form.

Zamani(d. 386 A.H.) considers image in the embodiment of spiritual affairs within the visual tangibles. (Shadi, 1991:18)

Abu Helal Asgari (d.395 A.H.) attributes the beauty of metaphors in the Qur-an to the

presentation of unseen into visual affairs. (Asgari, 1981:229).

Jorjai (d. 471 A.H.) has enumerated the expressive types such as simile, allegory and metaphor as the most important components for the formation of an image. (Ahmad al-Raqeb, 2008:47).

Image in the view of Seyed Qotb, the Egyptian thinker and theoretician means any kind of sensual presentation of the meaning either this sensual data emphasizes on traditional rhetorical types or on other real phrases which cause the motivation of fancy faculties, thought is not relied on figurative forms. (Ahmad al-Raqeb, 2008: 48).

C.D. Louis, the British poet considers the image as a tableau made of words types. He believes that simile or metaphor can create an image but at the same time, it is possible to find some descriptive interpretations which without such elements have the power of creating amazing and magnificent images. (Sabagh, 1409:489).

The Large Speech Dictionary reads, "Literary image, is any kind of speech array which is presented in various forms such as simile, metaphor, figurative form, irony and as likes which are employed to create mental images and to motivate emotion. (Anvari, 2003: iii, 1766).

Some scholars have considered image as the embodiment: Image embodies phenomena, concepts and subject-matters and is the birth of emotion and idea. (Alkovaz, 2007:357). However, embodiment is a part of image, since embodiment is to give a sensual aspect to a spiritual issue and image includes the simile of rational into sensual and sensual into tangible. It is a pervasive term which uses different instruments such as letters, verbs, dialogue, etc. (Yasouf, 2009:109).

In total, it should be said that in the image, the speech is employed in such a way in which concepts and phenomena are embodied and imagined before the addresses and are converted into observable shapes and views, so that the word will be released from the sluggish and fragility status and enters into a live and joyful world and consequently it will penetrate into the depth of the heart of the addressee. (Asgari, 1981:229).

In order to create illustration, Imam Ali (a.s.) uses different methods some of them includes the followings:

-Using the dynamic and live words and phrases, employing rhetorical techniques and literary and discourse arrays, very precise description of affairs and phenomena and to personify and embody the inanimate creatures.

The Meaning of "Death" (موت)

Ibn Manzour in *Lesan al-Arab* and Turayhi in *Majma al-Bahrain* have defined موت into counter-life. (Ibn Manzour, 1994:90/ii) and (Turayhi, 1996:221/ii).

Ibn Faris considers the origin of the term "موت" as ذهاب القوه من الشىء, i.e. leaving the power from something and defines it as something against the life (Ibn Faris, 1404:283/v).

موت means annihilation and obliteration of life. (Mustafa, 1982: 196/xi).

In Mofradat, Raqeb divides "موت" into types:

1. Death meaning annihilation of the force of growing: يحيى الارض بعد موتها - الروم. / ١٩ who gives life to the earth after it is dead.
2. Death meaning the annihilation of senses power يا ليتنى مت قبل قدا - مريم / ٢٣ Ah, would that I had died before this.
3. Death meaning the annihilation of rationality faculty which is the same ignorance. انك لا تسمع الموتى - النمل / ٨٠

Truly thou canst not cause the dead to listen

4. Sadness which darkens the life:

و ياتي الموت من كل مكان و ما هو بميت - ابراهيم / ١٧

Death will come to him from every quarter, yet will he not die.

5. Sleeping which is the light death and death the deep sleeping:

و هو الذى بتوفاكم بالليل (الانعام / ٦٠)

It is He who doth take your souls by night
Raqeb Esfahani, 1992:781 /I).

In the Qur-an, two words have been used for the word "death": موت/توفى means the lack of life and its signs and related to the body but the word

“توفى” is from the origin of *توفى* meaning taking something fully and perfectly. (Tabatabai, 2014: xii, 356) and related to human's soul and spirit. In other words, at the time of death, the body set will stop functioning and the activities of body powers are stopped. (موت) and the human soul and self is taken fully by the special angles of death and human will continue life in the hereafter.

In the Qur-an, the word “موت” has not used on abstract self and soul. Allameh Tabatabaiea writes, “By self in the verse (كل نفس ذائقه الموت) (every soul will taste the death), human not the human soul. (Tabatabai, 2014:286 /xiv).

What is noticed from the meaning of “موت” in this article is the same meaning providing for earthly and material body. In other words, by death in different parts of this research, it means the stoppage of body set from any movement and discontinuation of body forces which is created concurrent with the leaving of soul from the body. It is worth noting that in this article, eight cases of death illustrations in Nahj-al-Balaghah sermons are studied and analyzed which must be added that these eight cases also show us the other illustrations in one way or another.

Illustration of the Death in Nahj-al-Balaghah

1. The first image: Death Arrows

ايها الناس انما انتم في هذه الدنيا عرض تنتضل فيه المنايا

Sermon 144

Oh, people, indeed you are the target of the death arrows in this world.

In this tableau which has been imagined by Imam and its sample is observed in the Wisdom 191 too, a beautiful metaphor is seen. However, Imam has used the word “غرض” for the human metaphor, since human himself provides the preliminaries of the death and its tools such as disease and killing consequences. He has employed the attribute of “throwing arrows” for this human action because it is as death themselves throw the arrows of plaques. He has used the word “غرض” for the people as a metaphor, because they are the target of the death arrows by diseases and incidents. As the target is the goal of the arrows which are thrown towards

it. The ratio of archer to the death is on the metaphoric basis, because the one who makes human the target of disease arrow is the one who has created disease in him. Thus, the figurative form which has been used here is both in the singular of the word “منايا” and in the sentence of “تنتضل فيه المنايا” (Ibn Meysam, 1996:580/v).

Ibn abi Alhadid has written this material below this entry, “Deaths have been compared with the individuals which are competing in throwing arrows. Some people are killed, some are drowned, some fall into water falls and some others remain under debris or die in a bed. (Ibn Abi al-Hadid, 1404:91/ix).

“غرض” is the same thing which they throw arrows towards it and in Persian it is equal to “target”. The term “تنتضل”, as this term is used on those who took part in arrow throwing competitions, shows that as if the plagues of the world compete with each other to target the human life. The term “منايا” which is the plural form of “منيه” means death and refers to the different forms of death either individual or collective ones. (Makarem Shirazi, 1999:630/v).

2. The second image: Caught on the claws of death

و انتفعوا بالذكر و المواعظ فكان قد علقتم مخالبا المنيه و انقطعت منكم علائق المنيه و دهمتمكم مقطعات الامور و

السياقه الى الورد المورود

Sermon 85

Utilize the notices and admonitions. I see the claws of death have penetrated in your body and desires have left you. Then the difficulties of death and passive world have moved towards you and moving toward resurrection day has begun.

In this tableau, Imam notices to the human weakness vis-à-vis the power of death and the painful moments of death agony and its quivering states. As death is expected by all humans and there is no specific date and time for it and each moment, it might come to the human, so Imam (a.s.) puts forth it as an accomplished act.

“علقتكم” comes from the “علق” originally means the intensive relation and interest in something. This word is used on the case of brutal animal who grinds its teeth on the throttle of the hunted animal and sucks its blood or cut it into pieces with its claws. In the above sentence, death has been compared with such a fierce animal. “مخالب” the plural form of “مخلب” means the animal claws which is taken from “خلب” meaning to tear apart the skin. “دهمتكم” from “دهم” means covering. This term is used on the case when something dominates over the other and encompasses it. In the above phrase, it has the same meaning. “مفطعات” from “فطغ” means to frighten and to imagine something as huge and “مفطعات الامور” refers to large and dreadful incidents which makes human terrified. (Makarem Shirazi, 1999:495 /iii).

In the above phrase, the word “مخالب” which means claws has been used for death as an ironical metaphor and along with the word “علوق”, it has made the “ترشيحيه” metaphor, because it has compared the death to a fierce animal who torn away the hunted animal. Furthermore, it reminds that the worldly desires including wealth and positions and other belongings will annihilate with the arrival of death and the death person is encountered by intoxications of death, tomb torment and other dangers of the hereafter.

By “سياقت” it means moving towards tomb in a humble way and by “ورد مورد” is means the Plain of Judgment. (Ibn Meysam, 1996:585/ii).

3. The Third Image: A Moving Caravan

فان الغايه امامكم و ان وراكم اساعه تحذوكم تخفلوا فانما
بتنظر باولكم اجرکم

Sermon 21

Truly, the end of your job is ahead of you. The Day of Resurrection or death is following you and move you ahead. Get light (throw away the heavy loads) to join the Caravan. Truly, they have their first travelers until your last travelers join them and to arrive into the day of resurrection.

In describing this speech of Imam (a.s.), Seyed Razi has said that his speech of Imam

(a.s.), if compared with any other speech, with the exception of the Prophet, that will be higher and overpass it. For example, from this very speech of Imam (تخففوا تلحقوا) no shorter and more meaningful phrase has not been heard so far. The depth of it is greater than any other speech. This sentence will remove the thirst of each thirsty person.

In this tableau whose sample has been also presented in Sermon 167, there is a reference to this point that the whole human world, is as a united caravan in which a group are moving in front of it and a group is in the middle and the other group at the end of the caravan. All pave one route and will join together in a large resurrection day.

The term “الغايه” (end of the job) on resurrection, heaven and hell is due to the fact that the life in this world is an introduction for the eternal life in the hereafter. That it stats “امامكم”, i.e. there is no doubt that whoever you are, and whatever position you may have, the end of your job is there. (Makarem Shirazi, 1999:17 /ii).

By hour in this phrase, it means the small resurrection day which means the certainty of the death. The reason that the small resurrection day is at the back, because human naturally hates death and escapes from it and based on custom, whatever human escapes from it is located at the back. As death is coming next and finally grasps human, so the death being at the back and joining to human is a rational delay but it has been compared to something which has a sensual delay. The word “وراء” back which expresses the sensual direction has been used in form of a metaphor.

But that the death sing a song for human (تحذوكم) states this fact that as singing will move the camels ahead slowly, so the reminding the death and hearing the voice of pioneers makes humans distressed and unhappy and prepares them for the death and moving towards meeting the Lord. Thus, as camels paves the long and hard roads by song, human also paves the hereafter routes.

But this miraculous brevity (تخففوا تلحقوا) has been presented in a conditional meaning and

ironic metaphor. The word, “تلحقوا” is one of the components of the condition. With this explanation, if you get light, you will achieve the destination. By being disburdened, it has an irony on instructing towards a real piety which is the strangest tool to get proximity to the Truth. By “تلحقوا”, it means reaching to the degrees of the Preceding, i.e. the companions (saints) of God. (Ibn Meysam, 1996:657-658/ I).

In the above image, the emphasize with “ان” and a noun clause which is to prove something and the repetition of “كم” pronoun and agreement between the words, music and melody of words have doubled the impact of the speech.

4. The Fourth Image: The Surprise Attack by Death at the Climax of Human Rebellion

هَمَّتْ فَجَعَاتُ الْمَيِّتَةِ فِي غَبْرِ جِمَاحِهِ وَ سَنَّ مَرَاحِهِ فَظَلَّ سَادِرًا وَ بَاتَ سَاهِرًا فِي عَمَرَاتِ الْأَلَامِ وَ طَوَارِقِ الْأَوْجَاعِ وَ الْأَسْقَامِ بَيْنَ أَخٍ شَقِيقٍ وَ وَالِدٍ شَقِيقٍ وَ دَاعِيَةٍ بِالْوَيْلِ جَزَعًا وَ لَادِمَةً لِلصَّدْرِ فَلَقًا وَ الْمَرْءِ فِي سَكْرَةٍ مُلْهِمَةٍ وَ عَمْرَةٍ كَارِثَةٍ وَ أَنَّهُ مُوجِعُهُ وَ جَذْبُهُ مُكْرَبُهُ وَ سَوَاقِهِ مُتَعَبَةٌ ثُمَّ أَدْرَجَ فِي أَكْفَانِهِ مُنْبَسًا وَ جَذَبَ مُنْقَادًا سَلَسًا ثُمَّ أَلْقَى عَلَى الْأَعْوَادِ رَجِيعَ وَصَبٍ وَ نَضْوَ سَقَمٍ تَحْمِلُهُ حَفْدَةُ الْوَالِدَانِ وَ حَشْدَةُ الْأَخْوَانِ إِلَى دَارِ غُرْبَتِهِ وَ مُنْقَطِعَ زُورَتِهِ وَ مُفْرِدَ وَحْشَتِهِ

Sermon 83

Fatal illness overtook him while he was still in his enjoyments and perplexed him. He passed the night in wakefulness in the hardships of grief and pricking of pains and ailments in the presence of real brother, loving father, wailing mother, crying sister, while he himself was under maddening uneasiness, serious senselessness, fearful cries, suffocating pains, anguish of suffocating sufferings and the pangs of death. Thereafter he was clad in the shroud while he remained quiet and thoroughly submissive to others. Then he was placed on planks in such a state that he had been down-trodden by hardships and thinned by ailments. The crowd of young men and helping brothers carried him to his house of loneliness where all connections of visitors are severed. Thereafter those who accompanied

him went away and those who were moaning for him returned and then he was made to sit in his grave for terrifying questioning and slippery examination.

In these phrases, Imam presents an image of the end of life of a proud and rebellious human that how in painful diseases, humans spend the agonizing moments while their relatives and friends are crying. He has drawn this image in such a way that shakes the hearts.

In the phrase “دهمته فجعته لامنيه” from “دهم” means pervasiveness and covering to something. It refers to a state as if pains and hardships of death like a curtain and coverage encircles the human. In the phrase of “غبر جماحه”, “غبر” is the plural form of “غابر” means remaining or remnant and “جماح” from “جمح” means rebel and seeking carnal desires and refers to the emphasize of human on rebellion. In the phrase “سنن مراحه”, “سنن” is singular and means method and “مراح” from “مرح” means the intensity of happiness which is associated with rebel and employing the divine graces in the false route. (Makarem Shirazi, 1999:432/iii) and refers to the continuation of the ignorance and pleasure-living route.

“فضل سادرا” means he spends his day in a perplexed state. “وبات ساهرا” means he spends his night in lack of sleep. (Shoushtari, 1997:168/ xi). The two incomplete verbs of *ضل* and *بات* specify the hard states of day and night of the individual. *ضل* signifies an action in the day and *بات* provides for night. (Ibn Manzour, 1994:415/xi). “سادرا” means perplexed indicating ironically a very intensive pain and perplexed and disappointed of treatment and *ساهرا* has been used in its own real meaning showing that the individual has passed the night in wakefulness. Also the interlaced rhyme which exists in the two mentioned sentences doubles the beauty of the phrase.

In this sentence, pains have been compared to whirlpools which immerse

humans in themselves. و طوارق الوجاع و الاسقام In this sentence, pains and diseases like an army attack a human who is at the climax of rebellion. In fact, in this sentence, there is a beautiful simile and a fine metaphor which has an identification inside.

بين اخ شقيق و والد شقيق و اعنه بالويل جرعا و لادمه للصدر قلعا. from لادمه is a brother of one father and mother. originally means beating something over something else, so the women who are beating on their head, face and chest in lamentation for sad events, are called لادمه. (Makarem Shirazi, 1999: iii, 432) and دابعه بالويل جرعا refers to his mother and sister. و لادمه للصدر قلعا refers to his wife and daughter. (Shoushtari, 1997:169/xi).

Of course it can be said that as in the first sentence, there is a reference to brother and father, in the following sentence, that restless woman should be a sister and that woman who is beating on her chest should be the mother of that person. Also the set of prose rhythms and taxis increase the beauty and effectiveness of the phrases.

و المره فى سكره ملهته و غمرهكارته و انه موجعه و جذبه مكره و سوجه متعبه originally means a dog, who had its tongue lolling out from thirst and unhappiness. Then this word has been applied on the case of those who are pursuing something intensively and literally are panting for it (Makarem Shirazi, 1999:433/iii). Here ironically it means as a result of unbearable agonies of the death. Of course, there is also مهليه which means something that makes human busy with itself (Ibn Abi al-Hadid, 1404: 272/vi). غمره means the intensity and hardship of something. انه means moaning and موجعه means painful. (Makarem Shirazi, 1999:433/iii). جذبه means absorption and tugging which refers to the absorption of spirit from the body by the Angel of Death. مكره from كرب means intensive entanglement and the phrase of جذبه مكره implicitly means agony of death and the exit of spirit from the body. (Ibn Abi al-Hadid, 1404:272/vi).

It should be known that by “a painful absorption” which occurs to the body at the time of agony of death is not like a thorn which is broken in one member of the body, but it is a pain which is applied on the self and encompasses all members and parts of the body and penetrates to the depth of heart. Opposite to the local pains which is allocated to hands or legs, the agony of death is pervasive and immerse all veins and nerves and the whole body.

It is as if all veins, arteries and nerves are removed from the body. It has been sometimes compared with a thorn which is inside the body. The difficulty comes to the maximum level when the body parts are constantly and gradually die and this prolongs agony of the death and is followed with a frequent hardship and suffering. (Ibn Meysam, 1996:560/ii).

سوجه originally means riding (running) which refers to riding the spirit from the body. (Ibn Abi al-Hadid, 1404:272/vi).

متعبه means the intensity of pain and hardship which is in fact a reference to the same state of agony of the death and transfer into the another world. Still the use of various types of parallel prose rhythm and their confrontation and formation of taxis and type of selection and melody of words and their combinations gives an extraordinary attraction to these phrases.

ثم ادرج فى اكفانه مبلسا و جذب منقادا سلسا

Then they clad him in the shrouds when he is disappointed fully and pulls him this or that way while he remains quiet and thoroughly submissive to others. مبلسا and منقادا are in the role of present. مبلس in the above sermon means disappointed and by it, it means the disappointment of return in the side of the dead people (Makarem Shirazi, 1999:436/iii) and منقادا means the surrendered of the state of the dead person and سلسا means softness and easiness and shows the quality of carrying the dead body towards the tomb.

ثم القى على الاعواد رجيع و صب و نضو سقم then he puts his tired and suffered body which has

become thin as a result of diseases fully on the planks of the coffin.

اعواد means planks and ironically means a wooden coffin. (Ibn Abi al-Hadid, 1404:272/vi). In the phrase رجيع و صب و نضو سقم there is the metaphor of مكينه. In these two sentences they are two attributes which are used for disease and thinness of the camel. Imam (a.s.) has used them as a metaphor for the diseased people. The word رجيع because of its prolongation and frequency, has been applied on the dead body, as the camel gets tired and unable as a result of frequent travel. The word نضو I used due to the degradation and thinness which comes from disease, as the frequent trips diminishes the power of the camel. (Ibn Meysam, 1996:561/ii).

نحمله حفده الولدان و خشده الاخوان الى دار عزبته و منتقطع روزنه و مقرد و خشته

Children, grandchildren and the group of friends carry his coffin on their shoulders and transfer him towards the strange house and the place of discontinuing his visit and a venue where he will be left without anybody.

حفده means grandchildren and حشده means a population who have consensus to do a job (Makarem Shirazi, 1999:437/iii).

دار غربته و منقطع زورته و مفرد وحشته

All refers to the tomb and lack of companion and being alone of the dead body, because all his relatives and friends are afraid of him and do not stay before him even for a moment and leave him there with his action alone (and terrifying questions on his deeds) (Ibn Abi Alhadid, 1404:272/vi).

5. The Fifth Image: Death, An Unconquerable Enemy

فان الموت هادم لذاتكم و مكدر شهواتكم و مباعد طياتكم زائر غير محبوب و قرن غير مغلوب و اتر غير مطولب قد اعلفتكم حباله و تكفتكم عوائله و اقصد تكم مغابله و عظيمت فبكم سطوته و تتابعت عليكم عدوته و قلت عنكم نبوته فيوشك ان تغشاكم دواجي ظلله واختدام عليله و حنادش غمراته و غواشي سكراته و اليم ازهاقه و دجو اطباقه و خشوبه مداقه.

Sermon 230

Because death is annihilator of your pleasures and darkens your heart desires. It also distances the destination of your travel (and deters from reaching your goals). It is a visitor who is never loveable and is a non-defeating opponent and non-traceable murderer. Its traps have entangled your hands and feet and its difficulties have encircled your being. Its arrows have targeted you and its dreadful image is huge in your view. Frequent attacks are made against you and it makes no error in its strikes. It is not far when the dark shadows of death cover you and intensity of its disease afflict you and the intensive darkness of its damages to overcome you and the darkness of death agonies dominate you and painful agonies of exiting of spirit from your body occurs on you (and comes towards you fast) and its dark curtain to fall down before you and you are forced to drink the unfavorable syrup of the death.

The tableaux which we see direct the views towards themselves and make the hearts happy and to be aware. The dreadful image of death in this tableau has been drawn such that it motivates the emotions and makes the depth of human existence shaky and awaken the slept consciences. These images are full of dynamism, exiting, life, movement and embodiment of the mental concepts within the framework of live images which besides prose rhythms and frequent and beautiful metaphors, music, proportionality and pleasant harmony of word and meaning, has doubled the beauty and impact of the word.

The Death Terrifying Features

1. It breaks down the life pleasures. هادم لذاتكم
2. It darkens the tendencies and desires. مكدر شهواتكم
3. It distances the establishment between the trips from each other due to the reason that it brings human towards the hereafter and that place is also the farthest venue of him from his household members. Thus, it has used طيات as a metaphor for the places of hereafter trip. مباعد طياتكم

4. Imam Ali (a.s.) uses the word (زائر) (pilgrim) for this reason that rushes toward human as metaphor for the death and as the one whom comes to meet a human usually is loveable, using the unfavorable visitor attribute for this visitor who is the death, Imam Ali (a.s) separates him from a regular visitor to make human notice to unfavorably state of death and makes effort to do good deeds. (زائر غير / محبوب)
5. Imam (a.s.) has used the term (قرن) as opponent with the feature of being undefeatable for the death metaphor in order to prepare human to encounter with the death. (قرن غير مغلوب).
6. Death is like a person which is unmatched in bravery and the word (واتر) has been used with the attribute of “unfavorable” for the death metaphor which means he can separate hearts from each other and make them die but it is not possible to ask it for ransom and to be revenged. (واتر غير مطلوب).
7. Death from this perspective that annihilate the human has been compared with the net of fishermen and the word “حبال” with the attribute of اعلاق which is of the comparison vehicle has been used as metaphor for bodily diseases and unhappiness leading to death. قد اعلقتكم حباله
8. The eight feature for the death is that the sadness of death and its calamities have encircled your whole presence. تكفتكم غوائله
9. As the plagues which cause the death are like wide and sharp arrows which disturb the body and kill the human, thus Hazrat has used the word معابل in the same meaning as a metaphor and by mentioning the word اقتصدتكم which means to target as one of the comparison vehicle, it has promoted it. اقتصدتكم معابله
10. He has compared death into a despotic ruler or a brutal animal with sharp claws and teeth who annihilate the person due to their dreadful position and for this purpose he has used the word سطوت for it as a metaphor. عظمت فيكم سطوته
11. The eleventh attribute which he has used for the death is that it has compared it to despotic person who attacks someone unjustly and for this occasion, he has used the word عدوه as a metaphor. تتابعت عليكم عدوته
12. In this attribute (epithet), death has been compared to a sharp and cutting sword which becomes less blunt and has used the word نبوه as a metaphor for it to describe it in lowness. One of the literary fine points in these nine recent characteristics that in all nine cases, a parallel prose rhythms have been observed in Imam (a.s.)’s speech. It starts from the sentence of unfavorable pilgrim and ends in the sentence of قلت عنكم نبوته (less possibility for any error in its targets). قلت عنكم نبوته
13. The word ظل which means a tangible shadow has been used as a metaphor for the deadly diseases which is intangible. He has compared the diseases to darkening clouds because Imam(a.s.)’s intention in uttering these words is to terrify human of death and the darkening and dark-generating clouds are the best instruments to create fear for the human who sees himself at the threshold of the death. As the holy Qur-an also refers to it: When a wave covers them like the canopy of clouds, they call upon Allah ... Which is a beginning for the fear of death. فيوشك ان تغشاكم دواجى ظلاله
14. Death which is sent down on human has been compared to a man that takes the opponent strongly and angrily and annihilates and for this reason, he has used the attribute احتدام which means anger and hot temper as a metaphor for the deadly diseases. و احتدام عله
15. The term حنادس which means darkness has been used as a metaphor for the dispositions of human when facing the death as a result

of agonies and unconscious states which one needs to be afraid of it. (وحنادس غمراته)

16. Also he has employed the word غواشى as a metaphor for the states in which death comes to him as a consequence of unconsciousness and the external senses and perception and detection faculties and understanding are taken away from him. غواشى سكراته

17. The painful speed and acceleration of death which at that state, suddenly a mass of pains encompasses him. واليم ارهاقه

18. The pervasive darkness of death, the unconscious states which is added at the time of death on human and disables his faculties in understanding and for this purpose, he has used the word اطلاق as a metaphor for the pervasiveness of these states and has described it as دجو and intensity of darkness. That is the meaning of the phrase دجو اطلاقه. However there is a possibility for another meaning that it might mean darkness which occurs to the dead person as a result of covering the tomb. ودجو اطلاقه

19. The metaphor of tasting has been used for the overtaking of the death and for further emphasize and to feel the hardships of it, he has employed the attribute of جشوبت which means toughness and violation. وجشوبه مذاقه (Ibn Meysam, 1996:190-193/iv).

6. The Sixth Image: The Flaunting of Death inside the Human

اجْتَمَعَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَكْرَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَحَسْرَةُ الْقَوْتِ فَفَتَرَتْ لَهَا أَطْرَافَهُمْ وَتَغَيَّرَتْ لَهَا أَلْوَانُهُمْ ثُمَّ إِزْدَادَ الْمَوْتِ فِيهِمْ وَتَوَجَّأَ فَحِيلَ بَيْنَ أَحَدِهِمْ وَبَيْنَ مَنْطِقِهِ وَإِنَّهُ لَبَيْنَ أَهْلِهِ يَنْظُرُ بِبَصَرِهِ وَيَسْمَعُ بِأُذُنِهِ عَلَى صِحَّةٍ مِنْ عَقْلِهِ وَبَقَاءٍ مِنْ لُبِّهِ يُفَكِّرُ فِيهِمْ أَقْتَى عُمْرِهِ وَفِيمَ أَذْهَبَ ذَهْرَهُ وَتَبَدَّرَ أَمْوَالَهُ جَمَعَهَا أَعْمَصَ فِي مَطَالِبِهَا وَأَخَذَهَا مِنْ مُصْرَحَاتِهَا وَمُشْتَبِهَاتِهَا قَدْ كَرِهْتَهُ تَبَعَاتُ جَمْعِهَا وَأَشْرَفَ عَلَى فِرَاقِهَا تَبَقَّى لِمَنْ وَرَاءَهُ يَنْعَمُونَ فِيهَا وَيَتَمَتَّعُونَ بِهَا فَيَكُونُ الْمَهْنَأُ لِعَيْبِهِ وَالْعِبَاءُ عَلَى ظَهْرِهِ وَالْأَمْرَةُ قَدْ عَلِقَتْ رُهُونَهُ بِهَا فَهُوَ يَعْصُ يَدَهُ نَدَامَةً عَلَى مَا أَصْحَرَ لَهُ عِنْدَ الْمَوْتِ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ وَ

يَرْهَدُ فِيمَا كَانَ يَرْعَبُ فِيهِ أَيَّامَ عُمْرِهِ وَيَتَمَتَّى أَنْ أَلَذَى كَانَ يَغْبِطُهُ بِهَا وَيَحْسُدُهُ عَلَيْهَا قَدْ حَازَهَا ذُونَهُ فَلَمْ يَزَلِ الْمَوْتُ يُبَالِغُ فِي جَسَدِهِ حَتَّى خَالَطَ لِسَانَهُ سَمْعَهُ فَصَارَ بَيْنَ أَهْلِهِ لَا يَنْطِقُ بِلِسَانِهِ وَلَا يَسْمَعُ بِسَمْعِهِ يُرَدُّ طَرْفَهُ بِالنَّظَرِ فِي وَجُوهِهِمْ يَرَى حَرَكَاتِ أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ وَلَا يَسْمَعُ رَجْعَ كَلَامِهِمْ ثُمَّ إِزْدَادَ الْمَوْتِ التَّبَاطُأَ بِهِ فَقَبِضَ بَصَرَهُ كَمَا قَبِضَ سَمْعَهُ وَخَرَجَتِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ جَسَدِهِ فَصَارَ جِيفَةً بَيْنَ أَهْلِهِ قَدْ أَوْحَشُوا مِنْ جَانِبِهِ وَتَبَاعَدُوا مِنْ قُرْبِهِ.

Sermon 109

The hardship of death agony and sadness of annihilation encircled them. Their hands and legs got shaky and lost the color against it. Then death put its claws on them further until it makes a distance between him and the tongue of each of them. At this time, amid his relatives, he sees with eyes and hears with ears. His wisdom is healthy and his intellect is intact. He thinks how he has spent his life in a vain and has spent his age in such a route ... However death moves ahead inside his body until his ear like his tongue ceases functioning and then cannot talk among his relatives or cannot hear with ears. His eyes are constantly circling around. He sees the movement of their tongue but cannot hear the voice of their talks. Then death grapples with him further and his eyes like his ears does not function and his spirit moves out of his body and he is converted into a corpse among his companions which everybody is afraid of him and avoid getting closer to him.

In this tableau, portraying the details of death and death agony and the Emir of Believers(a.s.) in fact presents a pictorial report of the those sad moods. Imam has presented a moment-to-moment drawing of the end of life and start of death such that each reader could embody it before his eyes and each listener is affected as if he sees himself on those states that want to farewell to the life. In a shaking words, Imam awakens the humans who ignore these extraordinary moments, so that they could prepare necessary livelihood for this dreadful and long journey before the time for which there is not a return route and any way to compensate or to provide anything.

Below these phrases, Ibn Meysam writes, “The descriptions which have been made by Imam Ali (a.s.) on these statuses is such that from the viewpoint of eloquence and rhetoric, there is nothing more and better than that. The intention of that great man of these statements is to remind the sinners about the hardships of death and their awakening from the ignorance dream and fall in the false and the necessary of action for the journey into the hereafter world. (Ibn Meysam, 1995:110/iii).

He also quotes an example from Torah about the death hardship and agony and says, “Death is like a tree with many thorns which penetrates into the human body and each thorn (like a hook) is tied to one of the veins and nerves and suddenly a very strong human separates that tree from the body and torn to pieces those veins and nerves. (Ibn Meysam, 1995:111/iii).

Examining this sentence more closely.

اجْتَمَعَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَكْرَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَ حَسْرَةُ الْفَوْتِ

It is specified that two heavy assaults are made against human at the threshold of death. First, the assault of death throes and that is a state like giddiness of being drunk as a result of arrival of death and it sometimes overcome his intellect and brings him to a extraordinary distress and restlessness. The other one is a regret for losing what he has made efforts and suffered in his long life to put them together. (Makarem Shirazi, 1999: 585).

The phrase فَفَتَّرَتْ لَهَا أَطْرَافَهُمْ وَ تَغَيَّرَتْ لَهَا أَلْوَانُهُمْ portrays the flaunting of death inside the human that penetrates into his being moment by moment. Imam has used the word *ولوح* for the arrival of death into body and separation of soul from the each body members as a metaphor and has compared it to the arrival of one object into the other one and by it, he means the intensity of the impact of death in bodies and weakness of the tongue in speaking. (Makarem Shirazi, 1999: 335).

In this speech, فَجِيلَ بَيْنَ أَحَدِهِمْ وَ بَيْنَ مَنْطِقِهِ gives information that at the time of dying, tongue ceases functioning prior to eye and ear. This

awareness is based on the knowledge which Imam (a.s.) has over the secrets of the nature. It should be known that speech of that Hazrat on this case is not applied on the general case but his intention is some of the people and mostly those who dies in a natural death and then the members of the mentioned senses cease to function in this way. (Ibn Meysam, 1995:113/iii).

The phrase:

وَإِنَّهُ لَيَسِنَ أَهْلُهُ يَنْظُرُ بَبْصَرِهِ وَيَسْمَعُ بِأُذُنِهِ عَلَى صِحَّةٍ مِنْ عَقْلِهِ وَبَقَاءٍ مِنْ لَبِّهِ

refers to this painful state which human could see with eyes, hear with ears and has a healthy intellect but could not utter any words and explain his desires.

The phrase: يُفَكِّرُ فِيهِمْ أَفْنَى عُمْرِهِ وَ فِيهِمْ أَذْهَبَ ذَهْرِهِ

shows the calculation of the self and regret over the works which he has done and repentant for the shortages which he has done towards divine commandments and sadness over ignorance when there was an opportunity (for action). (Khoyea, 1400: 335/vii).

The phrase:

فَلَمْ يَزَلِ الْمَوْتُ يُبَالِغُ فِي جَسَدِهِ حَتَّى خَالَطَ لِسَانَهُ سَمْعُهُ فَصَارَ بَيْنَ أَهْلِهِ لَا يَنْطِقُ بِلِسَانِهِ وَلَا يَسْمَعُ بِسَمْعِهِ

refers to a stage at the time of death in which the tongue and ear cease functioning but the eye still sees. (Shoushtari, 1997:375/xi).

يُرَدِّدُ طَرْفَهُ بِالنَّظَرِ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ يَرَى حَرَكَاتِ أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ وَلَا يَسْمَعُ رَجْعَ كَلَامِهِمْ.

His main body organs cease functioning one after another. Neither there has remained an expressive tongue nor a hearing ear. It is very painful that he sees the talks of the companion with eyes but cannot hear their message by ear. They try to establish a communication with him but he has not power to establish a communication with them. (Makarem Shirazi, 1999:589/iv).

ثُمَّ إِزْدَادَ الْمَوْتُ الْتِبَاطًا بِهِ فُقِبْضَ بَصَرُهُ كَمَا قُبِضَ سَمْعُهُ.

ثم إزداد الموت التباطأ به فقبض بصره كما قبض سمعه comes from *لبط* means sticking and mixing with something. (Makarem Shirazi, 1999:590/iv). It is in fact an irony to the state when the death has taken the whole being and the spirit is at the

threshold of full exit from the body. In this state when his eye like ear cease functioning.

وَخَرَجَتِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ جَسَدِهِ فَصَارَ جِيفَةً بَيْنَ أَهْلِهِ.

And finally the soul leaves the body and at this time, he is like a corpse among his family.

قَدْ أَوْحَشُوا مِنْ جَانِبِهِ وَتَبَاعَدُوا مِنْ قُرْبِهِ.

His family members and companions who have lived with him for a long time do not live to stay besides him anymore and afraid of staying besides him.

During the human life, there is no moment more painful and sad than the time of agony, The moment of separation from friends, relatives and children. The moment of saying farewell to the world and whatever exists in the world. Finally, the moment of transfer into a new world which might be mixed with huge problems and very painful consequences. Imam's illustration of these hurting moments is so effective as if human sees himself in those hard states. All of them are an alert to us to provide a livelihood in this perishing times for the age of our survival.

Of course, this point should be mentioned that the agonies of death and the dreadful incidents at the time of death agony depend on the human's intention and action which can change that moment into the most dreadful moments of the life or the most beautiful moments of the life.

7. The Seventh Image: Departure towards the Main Homeland

و اوصيكم بذكر الموت و اقلال الغفله عنه و كيف غفلتكم عما ليس يغفلكم، وطمعكم فيمن ليس يمهلکم فكفی واعظا بموتی عایتموهم حملوا الی قبورهم غیر راکبین، و انزلوا فیها غیر نازلین، فكانهم لم یكونوا للدنيا عمارة، و كان الاخره لم تزل لهم دارا او حشوا ما كانوا یوطنون، و اوطنوا ما كانوا یوحشون، واشتغلوا بما فارقوا، و اضاعوا ما الیه انتقلوا.

Sermon 188

I recommend you to the remembering the death and diminishing ignorance of it. How are you ignoring something which does not ignore you ? How do you show greed towards something which does not give you deadline? The best preachers and admonisher for you are the dead people whom you see them with your

eyes that are being conveyed towards the cemetery ,while they have no option and are being placed into the tomb while they might not want(They become strange towards the world such that they have never made effort to develop it. They join the hereafter such that it has been always their homeland. (Yes), they distance and feel intimidation of where used to be their homeland and place where they used to afraid of it. To what things were they busy in the world that they finally separated from it and they corrupted the place where they were transferred to it (hereafter).

In this part of the sermon, Imam refers to an important point which can be a strong motivation for virtue which was discussed in the part before this discussion and that is reminding the death.

The first phrase of this speech is about the remembering of the death and lack of ignoring it as paying attention to death prevents human from committing sins and remind him of returning to the divine justice scene and fulfillment of his promises and makes human to be less interested in and reluctant towards transient pleasures and the world. The late Allameh Shoushtari writes below this phrase: The most smart people is the one who remember the death more than others. (Shoushtari, 1997: 357/xi).

In the next phrase, the ignorance of people of death has been considered as an astonishing issue and has reprimanded them in question form that why are they ignorant of death while the death is not ignorant of them and arrives suddenly and does not give any deadline to anybody. Then in order to attach more significance to this issue, he states that seeing the death among them is the best cause to take an admonition. Expressing the status of the dead people who are every day exposed to the views of the human individuals, he remind them the death. He has specified some features which may serve as a source of learning a lesson as follows;

1. In appearance, the dead person is being carried towards graveyard on the shoulders of the people in riding manner but this riding has not been selected by him, so they are the load and not the riders.

2. They are put into tombs not with their own intention and satisfaction. Though they have been in the world for a long time and have tried to cultivate their world and have been tied to it, but now they have taken away their hands from the world and have gone as if they have never been in the world and hereafter has always been their residence.

And also a reference to the fact that everything comes to an end at a moment and they distance from the world as if they have never lived in it and they got close to the hereafter as if they have been living there from eternity. (Makarem Shirazi, 1999: vii, 269)

3. Another feature which has been stated by him about these dead people is that their places and routes where there used to be their residences have been left.

4. Now they have been settled in a place where it was fearful to them in the past and were escaping from it, i.e. tomb which is the first place of the hereafter and they reside in it.

5. They are sticking to and busy with a world which have been separated from it. A self which has had an interest in the world for many years and busy with its pleasures, this love and interest has been replaced with and institutionalized in his being, now when he is separated from it, he is floundering to reach his beloved but does not reach it. However he looks at the past sorrowfully and is busy with that but the sadness of separation from the beloved one has put him in a hard torment.

6. They have devastated the hereafter which they have been transferred to it now because in the world, they have not performed anything which could be useful for their hereafter world. (Ibn Meysam, 1996:332/iv).

By “I” in the phrase *ليس يهملكم* is Angel of the Death. (Shoushtari, 1997:358/xi). And by “We”, in two phrases *او حشوا ما كانوا يوطنون* and *او طنوا ما كانوا يوجشون* is the Hereafter.

8. The Eight Image: Death, the Largest Fact of the Life

فَإِنَّهُ وَاللَّهِ الْجِدُّ لَا اللَّعِبُ وَالْحَقُّ لَا الْكُذِبُ وَمَا هُوَ إِلَّا الْمَوْتُ
أَسْمَعَ دَاعِيَهُ وَأَعْجَلَ حَادِيَهُ فَلَا يَغُرَّتْكَ سَوَادُ النَّاسِ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ
وَقَدْ رَأَيْتَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكَ مِمَّنْ جَمَعَ الْمَالَ وَحَدَرَ الْأَقْلَالَ وَأَمِنَ

الْعَوَاقِبَ طُولَ أَمَلٍ وَاسْتِنْعَادَ أَجَلٍ كَيْفَ نَزَلَ بِهِ الْمَوْتُ فَأَزْعَجَهُ
عَنْ وَطْنِهِ وَأَخَذَهُ مِنْ مَأْمَنِهِ مَحْمُولًا عَلَى أَعْوَادِ الْمَنَائِمَا يَتَعَاطَى بِهِ
الرُّجَالُ الرَّجَالِ حَمَلًا عَلَى الْمَنَائِبِ وَإِسْكَاءَ بِالْأَنَامِلِ أَمَا رَأَيْتُمْ
الَّذِينَ يَأْمُلُونَ بَعِيدًا وَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَشِيدًا وَيَجْمَعُونَ كَثِيرًا كَيْفَ أَصْبَحَتْ
بُيُوتُهُمْ قُبُورًا وَمَا جَمَعُوا بُورًا وَصَارَتْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ لِللَّوَارِثِينَ
وَأَزْوَاجُهُمْ لِقَوْمٍ آخَرِينَ لَا فِي حَسَنَةٍ يَزِيدُونَ وَلَا مِنْ سَبِيئَةٍ
يَسْتَعْتِبُونَ.

Sermon 132

I take oath to Allah that what I state is serious and not a joke and is right and not false. This is not anything but the death which has brought his voice heard to the ear of all alive people and calls everyone towards itself fast. Be aware many live things do not make you ignore of yourself. You have seen yourself that someone who compiled assets and avoided poverty and with long desires and far thinking of death saw himself secure of the outcome of affairs, how death captured him and distanced him from his homeland and escaped him from his secure place, when he is carried on the death planks and transferring from one hand to the other hand in order to be carried on shoulder and take it by finger tips. Have not you seen those with long desires and those who erected high and firm places and collected plenty of assets, how their houses were converted into graveyard and what they had accumulated went away and exposed to the wind.

In these direct, expressive and shaking views, Imam (a.s.) has portrayed the end of the life of the neglectful rich people and those feeling proud for glory and in particular at the time of abrupt death. The views that removes the negligence curtains from the human eyes and awaken every unnoticed listener. What is noticeable in these very interesting images is the movement and life which the immobile and silent concepts and elements have found.

The pronoun of *فانه* which is in the beginning of the sermon is either referring to the previous speech by Imam in this sermon (this phrase is a part of that long sermon) or its reference is the signified speech of that Hazrat which is based on alerting and warning. That is to say what I

make you fear of it is nothing but the death. (Ibn Meysam, 1996:277/iii).

As death is an inevitable and certain reality for all humans, in his speech, Imam (a.s.) has made an emphasize here with various types of emphasizes. In the viewpoint of Allameh Khoyea, author of Menhaj al-Bera'a, these ten types of emphasize include:

ان the pronoun of dignity, noun phrase, divine majesty oath, جد. , the الف and لام which has been put on it, لا الكذب, لا اللعب, الحق, and using the حصر in the sentence of .. ما هو الا.. (Khoyea, 1400: viii, 299)

اسمع is a verb and داعى is its subject and its pronoun refers to موت and its object of the verb is جميع الناس which is eliminated, i.e. the caller and herald of death has brought his voice to the ear of everybody. حذاء is from the حذاء meaning someone who makes busy the camels with his special song and makes them to do a fast movement. This sentence also includes verb and subject and also the omitted object of verb. (Makarem Shirazi, 1999:438/v).

The sentence “فلا يغرنك سواد الناس من نفسك” can have two meanings. First: If you see the mass of people who are alive and health, this should not deceit you and make you ignorant of death. Second: Be careful not to be tempted by the mass people and tricked that “to think about life rather than death”. (Makarem Shirazi, 1999:439/v).

By سواد الناس it means the multiplicity and massive state of people. That he has attributed proudness to سواد ناس i.e. the mass public, is due to the fact observing the multiplicity and mass people may be a source of this pride and negligence. (Ibn Meysam, 1996:277/iii).

Ibn Abi al-Hadid says, “من” means باء that is to say be careful not to be deceived because of yourself, your health and your young age. (Ibn Abi al-Hadid, 1404:270/ viii).

The concept of the sentence:

نَفْسِكَ وَقَدْ رَأَيْتَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكَ مِمَّنْ جَمَعَ الْمَالَ وَحَذَرَ الْإِقْلَالَ،

is that you have seen that those who complied assets prior to you and distanced from poverty.

In the phrase: وَأَمِنَ الْعَوَاقِبَ طُولَ أَمَلٍ وَأَسْتَبْعَادَ أَجَلٍ the two word (طول واستبعاد) are indirect objects (Shoushtar, 1997: xi, 208) and its concept is that feeling to be secure of the consequence because of long desires and thinking that someone is far from death.

كَيْفَ نَزَلَ بِهِ الْمَوْتُ فَأَزَعَجَهُ عَنْ وَطَنِهِ وَأَخَذَهُ مِنْ مَأْمِنِهِ

Did you see that how the death fall on them and sent them out from their homeland and took away them from their secure place.

ازعج from ازعاج means uprooting and relocating. (Makarem Shirazi, 1999: 439/v).

In the phrase:

مَأْمِنِهِ مَحْمُولًا عَلَى أَعْوَادِ الْمَنَائِيَا يَتَعَاطَى بِهِ الرَّجَالُ الرَّجَالَ حَمَلًا عَلَى الْمَنَابِكِ وَإِمْسَاكَ بِالْأَنَامِلِ

when the dead person was being carried on death planks and conveyed from one hand to the other hand in order to be carried on the shoulders of people and to be taken by finger tips.

يتعاطى به الرجال الرجال it means coffins and by اعواد المنايا

it means that the carriers of coffins leave it to the other one and transfer from one hand to the other hand. (Ibn Meysam, 1996:277/ iii).

حملا و امساكا are either present time or indirect object. (Khoyea, 1400:298/viii).

And taking with fingers tips الانامل meaning with hands and a denomination for the whole with a partial name. (Khoyea, 1400:301/viii).

أَمَا رَأَيْتُمْ الَّذِينَ يَأْمُلُونَ بَعِيداً وَيَبْنُونَ مَشِيداً وَيَجْمَعُونَ كَثِيراً

Have not seen those with long desires and those who erected high and firm places and accumulated plenty of assets.

اما رأيتهم is interrogatory on figurative basis.

(Ibn Meysam, 1996:278/iii).

كَيْفَ أَصْبَحَتْ بُيُوتُهُمْ قُبُوراً وَمَا جَمَعُوا بُوراً

How their houses were converted into cemetery and what they had accumulated went away. بورا means destruction and annihilation.

وَصَارَتْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ لِلْوَارِثِينَ وَأَزْوَاجُهُمْ لِقَوْمٍ آخَرِينَ

and their assets were transferred to their inheritors and their wives were married with others.

Here, the other speech of Imam comes into the mind who stated, “عجبت لمن نسى الموت و هو يرى الموت” I am surprised how someone has forgotten the death while he sees the dead people”.

لَا فِي حَسَنَةٍ يَزِيدُونَ وَلَا مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ

They neither have power to add to their good deeds nor they can apologize for their sins.

The passive verb of يستعْتَبُونَ refers to the fact that after their transfer into the hereafter, they will not be given permission to apologize for their sins, because adding to good deeds and apologizing for the sins are the in the world of obligations and life whereas the hereafter is the world of reward and retribution.

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مَعْذِرَتُهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ.

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So on that Day no excuse of their will avail the transgressors nor will they be allowed to make amends. (Khoyea, 1400:301/viii).

Conclusion

Illustration in *Nahj al-Balaghah* has a outstanding, distinguished and effective position in conveying the concepts. Imam Ali (a.s.) has used the illustration elements in order to make the mind closer to the tangible facts and understanding the realities. The pictorial expression has a pivotal role in the discourse of *Nahj al-Balaghah* and using it in the transfer of concepts and understanding the facts is inevitable.

Death is a fact for which there is no way to escape. The images of death in *Nahj al-Balaghah* has unique characteristics which makes each addressee to be infatuated and accompany it, The purpose of these image buildings is to make human notice to death and the Hereafter, so that in the light of this notice and remind, human could make effort to compensate and take the route of repentance and have a firm will to amend his behavior and finally to provide a provision from this transient word for the eternal abode.

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