

## مراقبه در نهج البلاغه

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### چکیده

مراقبه از ریشه‌ی رقب در لغت به معنای گردن است. با توجه به این که انسان در نظارت عمیق و همه جانبه گردن خود را به حالت کشیده نگه می‌دارد فلذا برای نظارت خدا بر انسان و نظارت انسان بر اعمال و حالات خویش و ممنوع خویش مراقبت گفته می‌شود. مراقبت خدا بر انسان و انسان بر خود یک وجه اشتراکی در خصوص تکامل روحی و اخلاقی انسان دارد. ولی فرق نظارت خدا بر انسان با نظارت انسان بر خویش از این جهت است که مراقبت و نظارت خداوند همه جانبه بوده و هیچ نقص، کاستی و اشتباه ندارد. نتیجه این نظارت به خود خداوند بر نمی‌گردد. مراقبت انسان بر حالات و رفتار خویش به وسعت مراقبت خداوند نمی‌رسد و احتمال دارد که همراه با غفلت نیز باشد. در این تحقیق ابعاد موضوعات فوق و همچنین اقسام مراقبت از دیدگاه امام علی(ع) بررسی شده است.

**کلید واژه‌ها:** امام علی (ع)، مراقبه، نهج البلاغه، نظارت خدا، نظارت انسان

## Meditation in Nahj al-Balagha

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### Abstract

“Muraqaba” (meditation) literally is derived from the root of “رَقَب” meaning neck in Arabic. Given that Man in his deep and comprehensive monitoring keeps his neck in pulled mode, so God’s monitoring and supervision over man and man’s monitoring over his moods and his fellows is called meditation. God's monitoring for man and man’s for himself, have common aspects on his spiritual and moral evolution. But the difference between God's supervision and human monitoring and surveillance over himself is in this sense that God’s is all-encompassing, with no deficiencies and no mistake. Its results of this monitoring will not return to the God, while human monitoring of his states and his behavior is not to the extent of God’s care and may also be along with neglect. This paper studies dimensions of the above issues from viewpoints of Imam Ali (as).

**Keywords:** Imam Ali (AS), meditation, Nahj al-Balagha, God surveillance, man’s monitoring

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## **Introduction**

The teachings of religion of God are given to man in a revelation. Some of these teachings have been placed in the initial creation of human nature, and does not need revelation in the proper sense. Loving mother and children and the ugliness of oppression and supporting truth are principles that exist in human nature. However, God puts some of the unknowns of human being through revelation.

Religious teachings are different issues; some are personal and individual, and some have public and social aspects. Some of them are relation between man and his fellow man, and some are human relationship with God, and some supposed to have some of both. In regulating the relationship between man and God, some religious teachings are related to surveillance and maintaining of this relationship (The relationship between God and man). For example, if human has been faithful to his covenant with God in the past and present or not? On the other hand God has care on acts of human. Care also sometimes manifested in the form of monitoring fellow man. Jurisprudential entities such as enjoining good and forbidding wrong in this format can be included. Among the mystical religious texts Nahj al-Balagha has a special feature. The book has doctrinal and theological aspect and the aspect of mysticism and morality as well as other aspects. It gives special importance to relations with God and always encouraging people to deepen this relationship. According to the mystical aspect of the book Nahj al-Balagha in human societies neglected; in this study, we tried to address care (or meditation) as one of the steps of mystics.

There are different kinds of facets and aspects of care, which in this study, in accordance with the library methods will be discussed to respond to the uncertainty of the place, the concept and the types of care with an emphasis on Nahj al-Balagha.

## **1) Semantics**

### **1-1) Conduct**

In an essay that was attributed to Allama Bahr al Ulum:

“Know that scholars of the path have suggested stations and obstacles for the wayfarer and they are described the journey to them, but the number of stations and their order have differences; and its told to be 7 the least and 700 the most and some have said seventy thousand.” (Bahr al Ulum, 1988, p74)

He writes about the truth of conduct and its key: “The conduct and the key to it, is capturing the body and soul under the flag of faith that jurisprudence (fiqh) of organs and soul show it. After this immolation of soul and spirit under the flag of divine glory, and all obstacles and stations in this process are contained.” (Same, p75)

Firstly, he considers education necessary and obligatory at the beginning of the journey and then seeking help from grace of God is the secret of success. This trip is subject to very things that among them are: 1. leaving habits 2.determination 3.kindness and tolerance 4. faith 5. stability and durability 6. meditation, etc.

### **1-2) Position**

Position is a degree of which has been ingrained in the wayfarer.

Position also is residence place of Sufis occupied by him. It is Sufis' status and dignity that is reached due to its special observance.

Two points need to be mentioned here:

I) The wayfarer can't reach higher positions unless he has not completed the lower position; and before reaching the next level, cannot recognize and fulfill the past levels in a good way.

II) Progression in these positions are not regulated and the same for everyone. Each wayfarer has its own conditions. For example, the "popular" complete with rapture and do not need conduct; while the "lovers" have to conduct, or they will not get into any position and station. Some go fast and some move slowly. (Yasrebi, 2005, p95)

### **1-3) Meditation**

Meditation in mystics is that the wayfarer wholeheartedly understands that God is aware of all states of his heart and mind, and fully understands his all the inner secrets (Ghani, vol. 2, 2001, p319). Some say that meditation means the wayfarer is careful not to do any forbid indecency. (Sajjadi, 1983, p424) Khwaja Abdullah Ansari based on his triple logic considers meditation to have three degrees: Note that always puts steps in the right way; paying attention to the fact that God is watching all; considering that he should lay step towards real unity. (Ansari, 1982, p67) People of meditation also are different types.

Allama Bahr al Ulum in explaining meditation writes: "And it is being realized and conscious of themselves in all circumstances, so that do not infringement what has set out and vowed to do..." (Bahr al Ulum, 1988, p74-78)

Those that According to Husayn bin Ali Damghani are secret protectors and aware of the souls, these are the beginners in meditation, the second condition is what Ahmad bin Ata said: “Your best are those who care the right with help of God by passing the non-right and follow Mustafa (pbuh) in their actions; the third group, however, are those who take care of their God and ask him to consider and respect them meditating.” (Siraj Tusi, Al Mulamma fi Altaswif, p55)

Of the orders of Ali (AS) can surmise that at least in the early stages, meditation depends on the will and discretion of the wayfarer. This means that at the beginning of his journey with respect to the notes or any other means of his master he becomes sensitive to meditation; multiplicity of such consideration makes the intentional meditation become self-achieved passively and from here meditation turns from position into state.

## **2) the basic rudiments of meditation**

Meditation is a state in which the wayfarer seeks constantly the beloved and the way to beloved.

Meditation is based on two types of efforts: the first attempt to approach the right, the second attempt to clean the inside. Both can be reached by intensification of austerity and trying to destroy the strangers.

In the meditation should be paid to renounce inner thoughts. Denial of inner thoughts is tough austerity to cleanse the mind of any attention and to remembrance of God. (Yasrebi, 2005, p95)

Meditation is based on the knowledge that the man has about God, in other words, it is according to the awareness of God

makes the wayfarer a man of meditation. So the first base in meditation is that God knows all things and details and nothing, however small, not far away the scope of God's knowledge. In addition, oversight of God affects all affairs of the world, particularly the human and has promised to oversee all human actions and said that they had not been on their own; but bit by bit, their actions will take account: “do people think that they are left alone by saying: 'we are believers, ' and will not be tried?” (Quran, AL-ANKABOOT (THE SPIDER), 1)

So God sees His servants although they do not see him, and the Prophet (pbuh) said: “worship God as if you see Him and if you do not see him, he sees you.” (Muttaqi Hindi, 1397 AH, 5250, 5252, 5254 and Majlesi, 1404 AH, vol. 74, p. 76)

Bin Arabi knows striving and meditating on studying the path to divine piety as duty of man in this world, through which (education) to find and real witnesses in the real right become possible, because to see and to be seen are impossible without awareness and the awareness is linked with sightings. He writes:

“We are not entitled to view annihilation and amortization in the right in the world; many great men were avoiding this meaning, because it is wasting the time that should be spent on the endeavor and meditation with piety for education in divine science and in the Hereafter defect would be visible in the rank; because sight will be as much as knowledge of God in the world. The world is for education in science by striving, and the hereafter is a place of rest and observation. So the time spent to view in the world is lost, if you studied the science here would result in exceeding your sight in the afterlife...” (Bin Arabi, 1375, p 50)

Of course, Bin Arabi denies real contradiction between meditation and observation, but accepts observation in the world by care and effort. He writes:

“And piety and meditation and endeavor are not incompatible with observation here, but in that condition the viewing will be also emerging. And also observation here is like a man met with the King in a city of the kingdom, and when they met in another city the former acquaintance would lead to exceeding King’s favor, except there is no difference between stranger and familiar.” (Same, p 51)

### **2-1) Care in evil incantations and realizing it from angels incantations from the perspective of Bin Arabi:**

Bin Arabi after dealing with angels and evil and differences between them to enter the two ways, addresses care of the wayfarer as the remedy and human duty, and says:

“And when evil incantations come to you keep yourself by attention and meditation from it, and beware that it gets into your meditation which would make dominate over you, and as you keep yourself it would be disgraced and banished by the angels; because He protects who regard Him as God.” (Same, p 56)

### **2-2) Care for the spiritual and physical and intellectual appearances opposite provisions to the law:**

Bin Arabi notes about the rise of minutes from the Angel Gabriel to the ordinances that are against religion that avoid saying "What is this?" because this is the same attention to it. Then he says:

“Notice that after entry in private judicial "Nothing is like



Him" two self-regulations should be appointed: first, either one of the forms of spiritual and physical and intellectual ways appears to you and says: "Ana Allah" says this by penetrating the right identity in things, which God has appearance in any of objects in a special way, as you say in answer Moses' people: "God does not fit in any symbol", because he is free from all constraints. And say He emerges in any way He wants, and then maintain that since it will benefit you. And when the job is completed, be working in mentioning and meditating him constantly. Second, demand nothing but the right from the right, and do not allocate attempt except to Him.

"It is contrary to the journey that the seekers begging God anything except God." (Saadi)

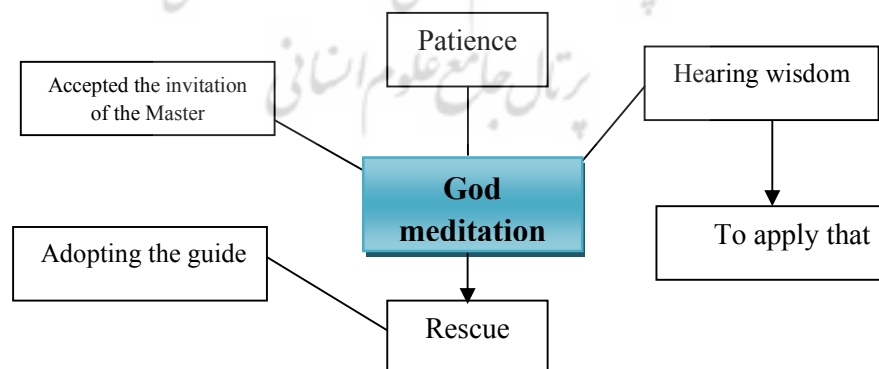
And if you offered the whole world, obtain with politeness. This means to obtain the same amount that you are required to obtain. And also take it as it embodies the right, and the manifestation is the same appearance, and do not stop on this gained." (Same, p 57)

### 3) Facilities of meditation

What to object, individual or mode is meditation granted to? In other words, man (= wayfarer) must find the meditation to what kind of being? In Nahjolbalagha meditation has belonged to the God; this means that the wayfarer should be realizing that God is his supervisor and should not neglect God's rigorous, comprehensive monitoring; and does not neglect avoiding violation of God's commandments and certified optimal way: "God bless that man who ... is always careful about God and." ((Nahj al-Balagha, sermon 76, p 103)

That phrase defines optional semantic network of meditation; because the meditation of God will be realized according to the concepts before and after. Without hearing the wisdom and observing it, listening to invite of the mentor, being guided and fearing of sin are not fulfilled. Of course, if all these things be fulfilled desirable man of Ali (AS) will be achieved. The important thing in this meditation is not for the word "Allah", but this meditation is attributed to the word "Rabb".

In fact, the human observer feature of "Allah" is expressed in the word "Rabb" as in the above words. The phrase "afraid of their sins" is not to relate to before. In another phrase of Nahjolbalagha, meditation is considered as a branch of patience and is deeply connected to it; that is meditation cannot be reached without patience and patience also becomes objective to achieve by meditation. So meditating in this phrase belongs to "Rabb = God". In the lower stages wayfarer should meditate on death not to come down on him at once. This type of meditation brings about acceleration in doing good things: "Anyone who is careful to death hurries to [doing] good deeds." (Nahj al-Balagha, Wisdom 31, p 473)



The meditation can be divided into the following:

3-1) **First** stage of meditation is meditation of God over servants especially over wayfarers. God has knowledge over the whole universe. He will also oversee all human organs. The wayfarer in meditation should reach a point in where naturally and without interference his will to know that God has considered observers from within and outside for him, in a way that there is no dimension of him such as his thought, fantasy, imagination, sense and body is not out of control of God. Having such cognitive and experiential monitoring makes wayfarer careful about his all movements and states, however, the observers are not appointed only for wayfarers, but all human beings are under the supervision of such caregivers but the wayfarers' understanding on one hand and God's expectation of them on the other hand makes more seriousness and importance in considerations of the wayfarers: "Servants of God! Know that guards from yourselves and spies from your organs and true protectors have been appointed on you that remember your deeds and number of breaths and darkness of night can't cover you and any closed door does not hide you from them." (Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 157, p 222)

It is expressed in the above words that God has placed three types of caregivers for monitoring human actions: caregivers of their own, eyes of their organs and angels from the outside to monitor their actions.

Of course, as noted, caregivers of God have no significant difference among wayfarers and others in caring, but because of their understanding their attention is far more than the rest of people and this leads to wayfarers' advantage to others.

### 3-2) Taking care of himself by the servant;

Everyone is supposed to take care of all their deeds to be safe from divine scheme of God and not to be subject to wrath of him and do not leave their original range and do not have the will for superiority and corruption on earth, since "Home of the Hereafter is put for those that do not have the will of superiority and corruption and finally the righteous succeed." (Al-Qasas / 83)

This task is more important for the way seekers than others, because if they do not pay attention to themselves and not care their essence of existence God leaves them to their own and thus they would go out of the way of moderation and would be caught in the trap of extremes and finally become the most hated servants of God that: "God picks the two more than the other enemies, first whom God had left him to his own, so such a person is distracted from middle way". (Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 16, p. 58) So if someone does take care of himself indeed, has not realized his own prestige and is an instance of the words of Ali (AS) that he said: "It suffices on one's ignorance who does not know his extent." (Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 17, p. 58)

Servant's care has several different types that are mentioned below:

#### 3-2-1) man's taking care of his heart and soul

It is quoted in the sources the hadith of infallible (AS) seeker of the truth must always be careful of his heart. That is the love of God not to be replaced by love of other than God and do not pollute the seeker's heart.

Including Ali (AS) said: "It is appropriate that man is dominant of his own soul and to take care of his heart and maintain his tongue." (Tamimi Amedi, 1366, p. 797, H-26)

In another hadith from Imam we read: “Place a caregiver from your own over you!” (Ibid., P. 144, H. 203)

### 3.2.2) Taking care in calculating own actions

One thing that is emphasized religious leaders in human training is that man will deal on account of his actions before the Day of Judgment. Among the traditions is the speaking of Imam Ali (AS): “Everyone who calculates his own actions and self will be of benefit and everyone who is oblivious of himself is to be among the losers and everyone fears remain safe and sound and everyone who learns to be aware and sighted and everyone who was aware and sighted understands and everyone knew became scientist.” (Nahj al-Balagha, Wisdom, 99; p. 444)

Or else he said: “O servants of God! Measure rather than being taken measured, and before they take you to account, account yourself ...” (Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 89, p. 89)

According the above it is clear that one of the applications of taking care is calculation of acts. While the calculation like meditation is one of the stages of the path of journey.

### 3.2.3) caring tomorrow and the future

On walk through to get to the truth the wayfarer should not only look at today but always have to be careful about tomorrow and the future (the Hereafter) as well. Therefore, religious leaders say thoughtful people are those who take care of tomorrow and also of their resurrection.

Imam Ali (AS) has said in this regard: “O servants of God, fear opposition of God and fear the one who thinking (about God) has filled his heart .... And he is today careful of the next day.

### 3-3) caring servant of the servant

"Help each other in the good things, not in sin and enmity."  
(Maeda / 2) One of the most important good things is people taking care of each other on the path of obedience so that thanks to such affinity avoid deviation from the right path. This cooperation finds in some cases legal obligation and men are obliged up to assist each other in the continuation in the path of God. Enjoining good and forbidding wrong as one of the alternatives of human care of each other is mandatory on this basis. But in some other cases this collaboration is optional and that is if a man wants to walk on the path of faith. This is where the relationship between the disciple and the master comes and task is on the master to put efforts to help disciples: "God bless the man who heard and received a wisdom and called to guidance and approached, asked a guide for help and was rescued. Constantly kept God in mind and feared of sin." (Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 76, p 103)

So disciple's rescue is in being under care of someone who has put strenuous efforts on to take care of himself. If wayfarer cannot finally finish the act of care instead he can benefit from the help of others in the field and by reaching for a compassionate and navigator leader save from ordeal of ignorance and depravity and when came to the final level of resistance, consider his duty to help the others.

### 3-4) caring servant of God

When the man came proud and successful in former cares can be careful of divine monitoring and match his actions under this supervision. Here servant knows God watching his actions and

on this basis does not walk the line and draws himself out of the divine guiles to be healthy and to reach the destiny. In this respect wayfarer is always careful of God's monitoring and does not forget it for a moment: "Had his God constantly in mind" (Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 76, p 103) At this point the human eye is open and takes advantage of the various developments in the field of the universe so that do not forget divine commands and instructions for a moment.

Therefore the man in all his actions and decisions should be careful of his Lord to avoid sin and occurrence of slip. In this regard, Ali (AS) has ordered man several times to take care of his Lord. Some of these orders of Imam have come in Nahj al-Balagha and some other hadith sources.

Among these are the orders of Imam in Nahj al-Balagha:

"God bless the man who learned well when heard words of wisdom and to accept the guidance and asked help from the conductor and leader and survived; to respect the will of God, fear of being sinner." (Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 75, p 70)

Elsewhere he says:

"God bless the man who is careful of God in his actions and fear of sin and fights with his lascivious and refutes their false hopes.

Other face this stage of meditation is that the wayfarer certainly knows that God is watching him and angels have been appointed to monitor actions to take action to record them. Care finds here its original meaning and whatever high stages the wayfarer approaches, the way how to care will change. In this situation wayfarer does not care that he neglected his actions and commands; rather, is seeking to avoid cause of distance between

him and Allah and thus lose beloved even for a moment. Meaning of “ibn al-vaqt” (opportunistic) of the wayfarer comes true at this stage.

“Sufi is ibn al-vaqt in metaphor, but smooth one is free of time and condition.” (Rumi 1363, 3/1426)

Wayfarers watch their actions and are not polluted to rebellion and parting maker sins, in this way the much greater efforts the closer to correct and reward the seeker will be and the heart remains safe from strangers’ domination and only beloved is placed in it.

Anyway caring makes wayfarer at all times to be remembered and never neglect his God, even without his permission do nothing. It is said: “Abdullah bin Omar on a journey saw a servant who was pasturing sheep. He Said: “Sell one of these.” The servant said: “They are not mine.” Abdullah said: “Tell to the owner that a wolf took it.” The servant said: “What can I say to God?” (Qushayri, 1361, p 291)

#### Conclusion

There are different types caring such as the care of God to man and care of man to God and that of man to himself. In human care, understanding and knowledge of God as a prerequisite to care, is of particular importance. Man without understanding, cannot be careful of him and not of others and not take care of God. Importance of recognizing in taking care in mystical texts, including the works of Bin Arabi, Nahj al-balagha, is well explained. God's caring of man and man's caring of himself are common in human spiritual evolution. Distinction between the two is something that can be realized with an



emphasis on Nahj al-Balagha in terms of territory of caring and the possibility of error and lack of it.

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